

What's going on with Personal Independence Payments?

The government is making some changes to the Personal Independence Payment (PIP). If you receive PIP, there is a chance that these changes may affect you. Please read on for further details.

What is PIP?

- PIP has two different components, the daily living component and the mobility component. The changes affect the mobility component of PIP.
- When you apply for PIP, the DWP assesses you and you are given points.
- If you get fewer than 8 points for the mobility component you will not get the mobility component.
- If you get between 8 and 11 points you get the standard rate of £22 per week.
- If you get 12 points or more you will get the enhanced rate of £58 per week.

What happened back in March 2017?

- A December 2016 court verdict would have made it easier for people with mental illness to score 12 points in the mobility component of PIP.
- In March 2017, the Government changed the rules to prevent this verdict coming into force. The new PIP rules meant people who struggle to "plan and follow a journey" because of psychological distress could only receive a maximum of 10 points. This made it impossible for people with a mental illness to score 12 points for the enhanced mobility component of PIP unless they also had physical health problems.
- It also made it harder to get the standard mobility component of PIP.

What does the court case in December 2017 mean?

- In December 2017 the high court decided that these new rules were 'blatantly discriminatory' to people with a mental illness. They decided that the rules should be changed to reflect the December 2016 verdict, and allow more people with mental illness to get the enhanced rate.
- The Government could have decided to appeal and ask the courts to keep the rules the same. But they announced in January 2018 that they will not appeal.
- This means it will be much easier for people with a mental illness to qualify for the 'enhanced rate' of the PIP mobility component.

- If it causes someone 'overwhelming psychological distress to follow the route of a familiar journey without another person', that person will score 12 points. This means they will get an enhanced rate of £58 per week.

I have a current claim – could this affect me?

Yes, all new claims will be assessed on the new rules once these are introduced. If your assessment finds that you experience 'overwhelming psychological distress to follow the route of a familiar journey without another person' you are likely to get an enhanced rate.

I claimed after November 2016 and did not receive the enhanced rate – will this affect me?

Yes, it is likely to. The court ruling applies to previous claims as well as new claims. This means some people will be owed backdated payments of PIP. It is not clear when this will apply from, but the earliest date could be 16th November 2016.

How will I find out if I am eligible for a back payment?

The Government has said it will contact those affected. We do not know if the backdating will be an automatic process, or if new assessments will be required for anyone who was affected. Once we have more information we will update this page.