

BENEFITS

DLA Preparation Checklist

Everything you need before, during and after the DLA form. Print, tick and keep.

Before you call 0800 121 4600

Your DLA claim is backdated from the day you make this call — not when you return the form. Make the call first, prepare the form after.

- ☐ Call DLA on 0800 121 4600 (open Mon–Fri, 8am–6pm)
- ☐ Note the date of your call — this is your claim date
- ☐ Ask for the DLA1A Child form to be posted out
- ☐ Ask how long they expect delivery to take

Evidence to gather

You do not need everything before you start. Begin with what you have.

- ☐ Diagnostic letter or paediatrician report (if you have one)
- ☐ Most recent school SEND report or IEP
- ☐ Letters from OT, SALT or CAMHS
- ☐ Medication list, prescriptions, dosages
- ☐ A 2–4 week diary of care needs (use the next page)
- ☐ Notes on a worst day, an average day, and a good day
- ☐ Sleep diary if sleep is disrupted

How to describe care needs

DLA is awarded on the level of care your child needs **compared to a non-disabled child of the same age**. Describe a hard day, not a good day. Specifics beat adjectives.

Strong phrasing to use:

- “Even with prompting...”
- “Requires constant supervision because...”
- “Takes [X] minutes longer than expected for age...”
- “Distress level: [describe behaviour, not label]”
- “Without intervention they would...”

Care needs — typical day

Mornings (waking, dressing, breakfast)

School / nursery preparation

After school / restraint collapse

Mealtimes

Bath / hygiene

Bedtime and sleep

Communication needs

Sensory needs throughout the day

Safety supervision

After you send the form

- Keep a photocopy or scan of every page you send
- Send by tracked / signed-for post
- Note the date posted
- Expect a decision in 8–12 weeks
- If refused or low award, you can ask for a mandatory reconsideration within one month

This is general guidance, not legal advice. Citizens Advice and Contact (contact.org.uk) offer free help with DLA forms.