



Adult Carers

Rights Guide for Unpaid Carers

July 2023

Carers Rights

Who is an Adult Carer?

An adult carer is someone who is aged 18 and over and provides unpaid care (support) to a family member, relative, partner or friend who may be ill, frail, disabled or has mental health needs, and could not otherwise manage without the carer's help.

The Care Act (2014)

The Care Act 2014 came into effect in April 2015, with some elements coming into effect in April 2016. It put in place significant new rights for adult carers in England, including:

- **A duty on local Councils to prevent, reduce and delay need for support, including the needs of carers**
- **A right to a carer's assessment based on the appearance of need**
- **A right for carers' eligible needs to be met**
- **A focus on promoting wellbeing**
- **A duty on local Councils to provide information and advice to carers in relation to their caring role and their own needs**
- **A duty on NHS bodies (NHS England, NHS Trusts and NHS Foundation Trusts) to co-operate with local authorities in delivering the Care Act functions**

The above form significant statutory rights for adult carers, and shape the support available for carers in Waltham Forest.

The Health and Care Act 2022

The Health and Care Act 2022 introduced a new duty for NHS organisations. Section 91 of the Act introduced a new duty for NHS Trusts and Foundation Trusts to involve patients and carers (including young carers) in discharge planning. This applies in situations where an adult patient is likely to need care and support after their hospital discharge, and the Trust considers it appropriate to involve them or their carers in planning their hospital discharge. The new duty states that this should be done as soon as is feasible after the Trust begins making any plans relating to the patient's discharge. Under this duty, a carer is defined as an individual who provides or intends to provide care for an adult, otherwise than by virtue of a contract or as voluntary work.

[Hospital discharge and community support guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/hospital-discharge-and-community-support-guidance)

Carers and Hospital Discharge Toolkit

NHS London has launched a new Carers and Hospital Discharge Toolkit to improve the experiences of carers and the people they care for during the hospital discharge journey.

The toolkit was designed for London hospitals and community providers in partnership with Carers UK, Mobilise, Carers First, Carers Trust and the London Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS). The co-produced resource provides action-orientated top tips to better support Londoners when someone they care for is being discharged from hospital.

[NHS England — London » Carers and Hospital Discharge](https://www.nhs.uk/london/carer-and-hospital-discharge-toolkit)

Support from the Council

Carer's Assessments

The Care Act 2014 gives equal rights to adult carers and the person they are caring for. It gives carers the right to an assessment of their needs and support to meet their eligible needs, as well as information and advice.

The carer's assessment is carried out by the Council, regardless of whether the cared-for person is supported by the local authority. A carer can request this at any stage of their carer journey. The carer's assessment has been designed to assess the needs of a carer and is used to determine the type of support the carer may need. The assessment will give the carer a chance to talk about the support they need and how their caring role is having an impact on their lives. This may include areas such as health, social life, ability to work or just having time to themselves.

Following the assessment, the carer and the assessor will complete an action plan to decide the support they need. The social worker may signpost the carer to voluntary organisations who will be able to offer further information, advice, guidance and support. In some cases, the carer may be eligible to receive a personal budget (one-off payment) to provide financial assistance.

Needs Assessments for the Cared-for

The Council has a legal duty under the Care Act 2014 to carry out a needs assessment once they become aware of the person's potential needs. The assessment will look at a person's physical, mental and emotional needs, and can result in a decision to provide or arrange services for the person the carer is looking after (cared-for).

If the Council determines that care needs can be met under the Care Act, a financial assessment will need to be carried out with the cared-for, to determine if and how much the cared-for may need to contribute towards the care package that is offered by the Council.

Council Tax Benefits/Reductions

Depending on circumstances, the carers may be eligible for a discount or reduction on their council tax bill, for example, if they are:

- In receipt of benefits or on a low income
- A single person living alone (25 per cent reduction)
- Living with someone who has a severe disability such as Alzheimer's (25 per cent reduction)
- Reduction if certain adaptations have been completed in the home (reduced to a lower band)

Blue Badge

A blue badge enables people whose ability to walk is seriously impaired, or those registered severely visually impaired, either as a passenger or driver, to park close to their destination.

Freedom Pass

A Freedom Pass gives people with disabilities or visual impairments and older people (state pension age) free travel on buses, underground, trains, trams and DLR services.

Carers First

Carers First was established in Tonbridge in 1991, by carers who wanted to help others in a similar situation. Today, Carers First works with thousands of unpaid carers, providing practical information and support, making it easier for them to continue living their lives to the fullest.

Carers First also actively work with other organisations to offer direct support to carers and to provide an opportunity for carers to help shape national conversations and influence policy change.

Carers First is the dedicated carers support service in Waltham Forest, and they offer:

- Personalised information, advice and guidance
- Carers assessed via Carers Star
- Groups and one-to-one support, activities and opportunities
- Dementia carers virtual coffee break
- Benefits surgery
- Carers surgery
- Virtual yoga
- Virtual drop-ins
- Afternoon tea
- Wellbeing day
- Mental health support groups

Contact details for Carers First can be found at the back of this guide.

Support from GP

As soon as a carer recognises or identifies as being a carer, a carer should ask their GP to record/log that they are a carer on the GP records. The flagging system alerts healthcare staff if a patient is a carer and could lead to a better level of care and overall experience.

There is lots of help and assistance that GPs can offer, for example:

- Providing information and advice on medical conditions and treatments for cared-for
- Available NHS services such as patient transport to hospital appointments
- Carer may be eligible for a free annual flu vaccination
- Home visits, if the caring responsibilities make it difficult to attend appointments at the surgery
- Arranging appointments for the carer and cared-for at the same time to avoid having to visit the surgery twice
- Flexibility with appointments, should the carer need a little longer with their GP
- Providing supporting letters and information to enable the carer and the person they care for to access benefits and other services such as support from Social Prescribers

For further information, please contact your local GP surgery.

Money and Benefits

The benefits system can be complicated and confusing. Finding out what a carer is entitled to can often be difficult to understand, and many people may miss out.

You can get further information on benefits including the criteria from the Department of Works and Pension (DWP): [Benefits - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk) or contact Carers First for further support.

Carer's Allowance

Carer's Allowance is the main benefit for carers and is extra financial support for carers to use as they need to. ***This is a means-tested benefit.***

- A carer could get Carer's Allowance if they care for someone for at least 35 hours a week
- The person they care for must be in receipt of a relevant disability benefit
- The carer does not have to be related to or live with the cared-for person
- The carer will not be paid extra if they care for more than one person

Carer's Credit

Carer's Credit is a National Insurance credit that helps with gaps in your National Insurance record. The State Pension is based on National Insurance record. If a carer has gaps in their National Insurance record, it is important to cover those gaps to ensure the carer receives full pension award when they become entitled.

Carer Premium

A carer may be able to get extra money added to their existing benefits or credits if they claim Carer's Allowance (or have an underlying entitlement to it). This is called the carer premium. This is part of the calculation that works out how much financial award a carer is entitled to, and it is added to the other amounts.

Attendance Allowance

Attendance Allowance is a benefit for those over state pension age that helps with the extra costs of living with a long-term illness or disability. ***This is not a means-tested benefit.***

Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

PIP is a benefit paid to those who are between 16-years-old and state pension age, who have daily living and/or mobility needs, to help with the extra costs of living with a long-term illness or disability.

Disability Living Allowance (DLA)

Disability Living Allowance (DLA) is a benefit for children, which may help with the extra costs of looking after a child who is under 16 and has difficulties walking or needs much more looking after than a child of the same age who does not have a disability.

Other Benefits

If you have had to give up work to care, or are in receipt of a low income, then there are other benefits the carer and their partner may be able to claim.

Universal Credit

Universal Credit is a means-tested benefit for people of working age who are on a low income. It replaces six means-tested benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Housing Benefit
- Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit

Universal Credit is intended to be simpler than the current system of benefits and tax credits and is paid on a monthly basis. Entitlement is worked out by comparing basic financial needs that the government says one needs to live on with their financial resources.

Contribution based Employment Support Allowance (ESA)

A carer may get Employment Support Allowance if the person they care for has an illness or disability that affects the carer's ability to work, and they have previously worked as an employee and paid Class 1 National Insurance contributions.

Contribution based Job Seekers Allowance

A benefit paid to someone who is looking to gain employment. It supports them and their family if they have previously worked as an employee and paid Class 1 National Insurance contributions.

Pension Credit

Pension Credit is an income-related benefit to give financial assistance in retirement if you are on a low income. One can claim pension credit as soon as they reach state pension age.

Other Benefit Help

If the carer or cared-for is in receipt of any means-tested benefit, then they may also receive assistance or additional payments such as:

- Support for mortgage interest (SMI) if they are a homeowner
- A Christmas bonus payable if they are in receipt of some benefits
- Cold weather payments

And other benefits such as:

- Free eye tests from your optician
- Free single vision glasses
- Free dental check-ups
- Travelling expenses including parking to attend hospital appointments
- Free prescription

Important Contacts

Adult Social Care (Adult Carers)

Willow House
869 Forest Road
London
E17 4UH

Tel: 020 8496 3000
Email: WFDLiaison@walthamforest.gov.uk
Webpage: [Adult carers | London Borough of Waltham Forest](#)

Carers First

Information, Advice, Guidance and Groups

1 Russell Rd
Walthamstow
London E10 7ES

Tel: 0300 303 1555
Email: hello@Carersfirst.org.uk
Webpage: [Online, Phone & In Person Support for Unpaid Carers - Waltham Forest | Carers First](#)

SEND Service (Parent Carers)

Wood Street Health Centre
6 Linford Road
Walthamstow
E17 3LA

Tel: 0208 496 6503
Email: SENteam@walthamforest.gov.uk
Webpage: [Local Offer: Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) | London Borough of Waltham Forest](#)

Waltham Forest Parent Forum

99 Leyton Green Road
London
E10 6DB

Tel: 07528 433 640 or 07794 298 496
Email: walthamforestparentforum@live.co.uk
Webpage: [Waltham Forest Parent Forum | Join Us Today | Home](#)

Young Carers Programme

Leyton Family Hub
215 Queens Road
London E17 8PJ

Tel: 0208 496 2442
Email: young.carers@walthamforest.gov.uk
Webpage: [Young carers | London Borough of Waltham Forest](#)

MASH

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub

Willow House
869 Forest Road
Walthamstow
London
E17 4UH

Tel: 020 8496 2310
Email: MASHrequests@walthamforest.gov.uk
Webpage: [Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub \(MASH\) |](#)

Waltham Forest Dementia Hub

25 Sidmouth Road
Leyton
E10 5QZ

Tel: 0208 558 0647
Email: dementia.hub@walthamforest.gov.uk
Web: [Waltham Forest Dementia Hub | London Borough of Waltham Forest](#)

Alzheimer's Society Waltham Forest

Waltham Forest Resource Hub
1 Russell Road
London
E10 7ES

Telephone: 0208 556 8171
Web: [Dementia Adviser Waltham Forest | Alzheimer's Society \(alzheimers.org.uk\)](#)