



**Independent  
Age**

Trusted  
Information  
Creator



Patient Information Forum

# Pension Credit

**Extra money to boost  
your retirement income**



## Thank you

We would like to thank those who shared their experiences as this guide was being developed, and those who reviewed it for us.

## What do you think?

We welcome your feedback on our publications. We use your comments to plan future changes.

If you'd like to help us develop our information products, you can join our Readers' Panel. To find out more, call **020 7050 6560** or visit **[independentage.org/readers-panel](https://independentage.org/readers-panel)**.

## Our publications

In this guide you'll find references to our other free publications. To order them, call **0800 319 6789** or visit **[independentage.org/publications](https://independentage.org/publications)**.

If you would like this information in a different format (such as large print or audio CD), call us on **0800 319 6789** or email **[operations@independentage.org](mailto:operations@independentage.org)**.

While we make every reasonable effort to ensure that our information is accurate at the time of publication, we do not accept any liability arising from its use. Our information should not be used as a substitute for professional advice. The inclusion of other organisations does not constitute an endorsement from us.

The sources used to create this publication are available on request.

© Independent Age 2022

Author: Independent Age

Production: Ellice Thatcher

Design: Maria Brosnan

Photography: Lee Townsend cover; Leanne Benson pp3, 9;

Katie Michell, p12

# Contents

1. What is Pension Credit?	<b>2</b>
2. Who can get it?	<b>4</b>
3. How much could I get?	<b>8</b>
4. How do I claim?	<b>11</b>
5. Anisah's story	<b>12</b>

The information in this guide is relevant from 6 April 2022 to 5 April 2023.

Date of publication: April 2022

Next review date: April 2023

We spoke to older people about their experiences. Their quotes appear throughout. We have changed the names of some of the interviewees who wished to be anonymous. Some of the images seen throughout this guide are posed by friends of Independent Age.

The PIF TICK is the UK-wide Quality Mark for Health Information.

# 1. What is Pension Credit?

Pension credit is a benefit which 2.5 million older people are entitled to.

Pension Credit is extra money from the government to top up your pension income. It also acts as a passport to other entitlements, such as:

- help with housing costs and Council Tax
- help with NHS costs, including free dental treatment and check-ups, and travel costs for NHS treatment
- free sight tests and vouchers towards glasses or contact lenses
- cold weather payments.

When you're 75 or over, you can also apply for a free TV licence if you're getting Pension Credit.



Making a claim is simple. All it takes is a free online application or phone call. Visit [gov.uk/pension-credit/how-to-claim](https://www.gov.uk/pension-credit/how-to-claim) or call **0800 99 1234**.



## 2. Who can get it?

There are two types of Pension Credit: Guarantee Credit and Savings Credit. This guide looks at Guarantee Credit and how it affects your income.

You can get Pension Credit if you're over State Pension age and your income is less than £182.60 a week (for a single person) or less than £278.70 a week (for a couple).

These are the 2022/23 standard amounts that the government has set. However, you may still qualify if you have a higher income than that and you're a carer, disabled, or have certain housing costs. See **chapter 3** for more details.



### Good to know

You can only claim Savings Credit if you reached State Pension age before 6 April 2016, so this guide just covers Guarantee Credit. Call us on **0800 319 6789** for more information on Savings Pension Credit.

## What's my State Pension age?

State Pension age is gradually increasing. You can check your State Pension age at [gov.uk/state-pension-age](https://www.gov.uk/state-pension-age) or by calling the Future Pension Centre on **0800 731 0175**.

## I am over State Pension age but my partner isn't

If you're in a couple and only one of you is over State Pension age, you may need to claim Universal Credit instead of Pension Credit. If you think this might affect you, call Citizens Advice on these numbers:

- Citizens Advice England – **0800 144 8848**
- Citizens Advice Scotland – **0131 550 1000**
- Citizens Advice Wales – **0800 702 2020**.

You can also call the Pension Service on **0800 731 7898** for advice before you make a claim.

## What about my other benefits?

Receiving Pension Credit does not affect any other benefits you get – you can continue to receive them as before.

## What about my savings?

You can still get Pension Credit if you have savings, although savings or investments over £10,000 will reduce the amount you can get. For every £500 (or part of £500) you have over £10,000, it's assumed you have an extra £1 of weekly income.

Whether your savings are low or high, it could still be worth applying for Pension Credit.

Here are a couple of real-life examples of people who benefited from receiving Pension Credit in different ways.

### If your savings are low...

Sangita is 72, lives in her own home, and is still paying off her mortgage. She has an income of £146.25 a week from her State Pension and her private pensions. She also gets Attendance Allowance and she has £500 in savings.

After having a welfare benefits check, Sangita found that she could get £105.75 a week in Pension Credit, and that as a result of receiving this, she would no longer have to pay her £1,200 Council Tax bill. She was also advised that she could get a loan of £3.51 a week to help towards the interest on her mortgage.



### If your savings are high...

Leo, who is 76, has savings of £20,000, and an income of £156.60 a week from his State Pension and other private pensions.

Because of his savings, Leo is only entitled to £6.00 a week in Pension Credit, but as a result of getting this benefit, he now gets a large reduction in his Council Tax bill, which had previously been over £1,300. He can now also get a free TV licence, as well as all the help with NHS costs that comes with getting Pension Credit.



Our factsheet **Pension Credit** has more examples about how Pension Credit is worked out.

“ Pension credit has made a big difference to myself and my husband. We have enough to live on without too much scrimping.

## 3. How much could I get?

The amount of Pension Credit you get will depend on your circumstances, but it's always worth applying.

It's worked out by taking your income away from the minimum amount the government says you need to live on.

The minimum amount isn't the same for everyone. You might be entitled to a higher rate than the standard weekly rates of £182.60 a week for a single person and £278.70 a week for a couple. For example:

### Carer's Addition

If you're entitled to Carer's Allowance, you can get a Carer's Addition of £38.85 a week added to the minimum level of income you're entitled to.



For more information on Carer's Allowance, read our guide **Carer's Allowance** or call our Helpline on **0800 319 6789**.

## Severe Disability Addition

You may be able to get a Severe Disability Addition of £69.40 a week if you're claiming one of these disability benefits:

- Attendance Allowance (or Constant Attendance Allowance)
- the middle or high rate care components of Disability Living Allowance
- the daily living component of Personal Independence Payment
- Armed Forces Independence Payment.



You won't qualify if someone is being paid Carer's Allowance for looking after you, but you can get the Severe Disability Addition if the person caring for you has an underlying entitlement to Carer's Allowance.

You'll only qualify if you live alone or with someone who isn't counted for these calculations – for example, if they're severely sight-impaired (blind) or claiming certain disability benefits. These rules are complex, so call our Helpline on **0800 319 6789** for more information.



### To do

To see how much you could be entitled to, try our online benefits calculator at **[independentage.org/benefit-calculator](https://independentage.org/benefit-calculator)** or call our Helpline on **0800 319 6789** to arrange a free benefits check.

## 4. How do I claim?

### There are a few different ways you can claim Pension Credit.

The quickest ways to apply are online at **gov.uk/pension-credit/how-to-claim** or by calling the Pension Credit claim line on **0800 99 1234**. You can also contact a local voluntary organisation (such as Citizens Advice) or ask someone to call the Pension Service to request a paper form for you.

Before you claim, make sure you have a note of:

- your income, savings and investments
- your National Insurance number
- your bank details
- your housing costs, such as mortgage interest, service charges or ground rent
- the same details for your partner, if you have one.

You can apply for Pension Credit up to four months before you reach State Pension age. You can apply after you reach this age too. But your claim can only be backdated by three months, provided you qualified for Pension Credit at that time.



## Anisah's story

I retired from my career as a nurse when I was 56 – I had major problems with my back after lifting a patient at work and had to wear a steel corset for years. I have many other health issues too, some caused by the malnutrition I suffered during the war.

For some reason, I was given a low pension. In those days, I often had to choose between eating or turning on the heating. I just didn't have enough money.

Social services told me about Pension Credit. I've been receiving it for ten years now, and that's when I started to live again.

I've been able to eat healthier food and keep myself warm. Pension Credit has also changed my life because of the other benefits I've been able to access, such as the free eye care and dental treatment.

If you're not coping with the amount of money you have, asking for Pension Credit is not asking for charity: it's asking for what's rightfully yours.

“ Social services told me about Pension Credit. I've been receiving it for ten years now, and that's when I started to live again.

## About Independent Age

At Independent Age, we want more people in the UK to live a happy, connected and purposeful later life. That's why we support people aged over 65 to get involved in things they enjoy. We also campaign and give advice on the issues that matter most: health and care, money and housing.

For information or advice – we can arrange a free, impartial chat with an adviser – call us on freephone **0800 319 6789** (Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 6.30pm) or email us at **[advice@independentage.org](mailto:advice@independentage.org)**.

You can also support this work by volunteering with us, joining our campaigns to improve life for older people experiencing hardship, donating to us or remembering us in your will.

For more information, visit **[independentage.org](https://www.independentage.org)** or call us on **0800 319 6789**.



Independent Age  
18 Avonmore Road  
London  
W14 8RR

020 7605 4200  
[charity@independentage.org](mailto:charity@independentage.org)  
[independentage.org](https://www.independentage.org)  
Helpline 0800 319 6789



Like our page **Independent Age**



Follow us **independentage**



Follow us **@independentage**



Subscribe to **IndependentAge**

© Independent Age 2022

Independent Age is the operating name of the Royal United Kingdom Beneficent Association  
Registered charity number 210729 (England and Wales) SC047184 (Scotland)