



Your rights as a Young Adult Carer

As a young adult carer you have a right to be supported and to get the help you need. You have rights whether you look after someone every day or from time to time.

In the UK, young adults have protection from discrimination in employment, education and when receiving services, meaning you are protected under The Equality Act.

The following outline your rights to benefits, housing, employment and how to receive a carer assessment.

Benefits rights

While caring for someone can bring about many positives, there are still the realities of life, such as paying the bills and managing money.

A recent Carers UK survey states that 68% of carers regularly use their own income or savings to pay for care or equipment for the person they care for. It may improve your financial situation if you have an understanding of the benefits you are entitled to, outlined below.

1. Carers Allowance

If you are an unpaid carer looking after someone for 35 hours a week or more, you may be eligible for Carers Allowance. You don't have to be related to or live with the person

you care for to claim. You may be eligible if:

- You spend at least 35 hours a week caring for a 'severely disabled' person
- You don't earn more than £128 a week
- You are not in full-time education
- You are aged 16 plus
- How to claim
- You can visit www.gov.uk/carers-allowance for more information or contact Carer's Allowance Unit on 0800 731 0297.

2. Universal Credit

Universal Credit (UC) is the default benefit now usually claimed by working-age people on a low income, both working and nonworking. It is available to people



looking for work, single parents, people unable to work due to illness and those with full-time caring responsibilities.

Universal Credit includes housing costs help towards rent which replaces Housing Benefit.

Am I eligible?

- Must normally be aged 18 plus (but some 16/17-year-old can receive)
- Usually, not in full time education (but several exceptions apply)
- Must accept a 'claimant commitment' (e.g. to look for work if able to do so)
- Saving/capital under £16,000 (whether single or part of a couple)

How to claim

Universal Credit must normally be claimed online at www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit

3. ESA (Employment & Support Allowance)

There are two types of ESA: contribution-based and income-related ESA. You can no longer make

a new claim for income-related ESA – instead you have to claim Universal Credit. But many people are already receiving it and will continue to do so until Universal Credit eventually replaces it for all claimants.

It is often received by people with a long-term health condition. Contribution based ESA is now called New-Style ESA. It is based on your National Insurance contributions.

Am I eligible for New-Style ESA?

- You are signed off sick by a doctor – employed or self-employed
- You are not receiving Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)
- You are aged 16 plus and under state pension age
- You've paid substantial National Insurance in the last 2-3 tax years





For more information see: www.gov.uk/guidance/new-style-employment-and-support-allowance

4. Council Tax Reduction

If you are on a low income, you may be able to claim Council tax Reduction (also called Council Tax Support). It is separate from the single person's discount of 25%.

Am I eligible?

- You are liable to pay Council Tax where you live
- You are not normally subject to immigration control
- You are aged 16 plus and under state pension age
- You have less than £16,000 savings

For more information see www.gov.uk/apply-council-taxreduction

How can Carers Support West Sussex support me?

Carers Support have a free benefits advice service available to all registered carers. We can support you with identifying the welfare benefits available to you, likely level of entitlement and discuss the application process.

You can find more information here: www.carerssupport.org.uk/carer-benefits-advice-service

For additional support you can contact Citizens Advice www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Housing rights

Social housing

You can apply for a home through your local council. They might also call it 'social housing'. If your application is accepted, you'll go on to a waiting list of people who need a council home. Your council will then prioritise applications based on who needs a home most urgently.

Your local council will have its own rules on who can apply and who has priority for homes - this is called an 'allocation scheme'.

- You'll probably need to:
- be on a low income or not have a large amount of savings
- have lived in the area for a number of years, or have a job or family there - this is called a 'local connection'

You're more likely to get a council home if you've been given priority by



your council's allocation scheme.

This could be if you're:

- legally homeless or the council has a duty to find you accommodation if you're homeless
- moving because of a disability or serious, long-term health condition
- moving to a different area because of 'hardship' - this could be to get medical treatment, because you're in danger or to take up a new job
- in a home that's overcrowded or in poor condition

Applying for social housing

You'll likely need to apply online - check which council you need to apply to on GOV.UK.

If the council accepts your application, it doesn't mean you'll get a home straight away. You'll go on a waiting list and it could still take a long time.

Employment Rights

The UK has nearly five million working carers, which equates to 1 in 7 of all workers. You may feel under additional pressure and stress because of your caring role and have extra needs.

It's up to you whether you tell your employer about your caring responsibilities. You may prefer not to. However, if you do tell them, they will better understand the pressures you are under and you will be able to access any support they provide.

Some companies have carers policies or workplace carers support groups. The help you need could be very simple and easy to arrange – e.g. access to a private room to make calls.

National Policy Change

In September 2021, the Government announced that working carers will have the right to a week's unpaid





leave and the ability to request flexible working from the moment they start their employment. This is in response to the Government's consultation on carers' leave, launched in March 2020, in recognition of the need to better support working carers. However, the Government is yet to implement this.

What should I do?

Have a think about your own personal circumstances and what you need to facilitate you to stay in work. Then, talk to your employer who may be able to accommodate the changes or suggest other ways of allowing you to continue working.

Carer Assessment

Your needs are important That is why there are laws that tell your council that they have to find out what support you need by asking you some questions. This is called an assessment.

'Assessment' means a discussion with you to find out information about:

- You
- The caring you do

The information is needed so that the person doing the assessment can

make decisions with you about:

- Whether your situation is okay
- If more support would help you and the person you care for

An assessment (which is free) for a young adult carer isn't like an exam or about how good you are at supporting the person you care for. The focus is on whether you are getting enough support for you so that you have the same chances as other people your age.

Whole family approach

When Carers Support complete the assessment, they have to think about what your support needs are as a young adult carer. At the same time the worker has to think about supporting other people in your family. This is called a whole family approach and it is meant to build up a proper understanding of how different people in the family affect and support each other.

Who and how?

Carers Support West Sussex are able to complete an assessment for you. To arrange an assessment, you can contact us on 0300 028 8888 or email info@carerssupport.org.uk