

## Benefits and Financial Support

The government has a range of benefits to provide opportunities and support.

Benefits are available for people of working age, for pensioners, for families and children, and for people with disabilities and their carers.

The system also provides additional income when your earnings are low.

There are several benefits and financial supports available which can be availed of in certain circumstances. To qualify for a particular benefit, you must meet the conditions that the government specifies.

### People of working age

Benefits and services for people of working age, for example Jobseeker's Allowance, are dealt with by Social Security/Jobs & Benefits offices around Northern Ireland.

These offices can help you with:

- finding work
- starting your own business
- managing on a low income

If you cannot work because of an illness or disability there are a number of benefits you may be entitled to.

### Pensioners and people planning for retirement

The Pension Service, which is part of the Department for Communities provides services to:

- anyone planning for their retirement
- people approaching retirement
- people who've already retired
- employers

### Families and children

Social Security / Jobs & Benefits offices look after benefits and services for families, including those:

- bringing up children, including children with special needs
- managing on a low income, including help with health costs
- expecting or bringing up children

## People with disabilities and carers

The Disability and Carers Service, which is part of Department for Communities, is responsible for benefits and services for people who are sick or have a disability, and their carers (Personal Independence Payment, Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance and Carer's Allowance).

Recent changes to the benefits system (the move to Universal Credit) will impact self-employed claimants differently to other claimants. It is important that if you are currently accessing benefits or if you are likely to in the future, that you get appropriate advice to avoid or reduce the impact on your income.

## Where to get help

### Make The Call helpline

To enquire if you're getting all the benefits, services and supports you're entitled to. Freephone: 0800 232 1271

### Tax and Benefits Advice helpline

For advice on tax and benefits.

Freephone: 0800 988 2377

### Welfare Reform helpline

If you are concerned about changes to your benefits.

Freephone Advice NI: 0808 802 0020

Visit your local Citizens' Advice centre:

**[www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/northern-ireland/](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/northern-ireland/)**