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Vaccine Damage Payment

1. Overview

If you're severely disabled as a result of a vaccination against certain diseases, you could get a one-off tax-free payment of £120,000. This is called a Vaccine Damage Payment.

Effect on benefits you receive

A Vaccine Damage Payment can affect benefits and entitlements like:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Working Tax Credit
- Child Tax Credit
- Universal Credit
- Pension Credit
- Housing Benefit
- Council Tax Reduction (<https://www.gov.uk/council-tax-reduction>)
- Employment and Support Allowance

The effect the payment will have depends on a number of things. This includes the payment being put into a trust and the payments being made from it.

You should let the office that deals with your benefit or tax credit claim know if you've got a Vaccine Damage Payment. You can get contact details from letters they have sent you.

2. What you'll get

A Vaccine Damage Payment is a tax free one-off payment of £120,000.

How you're paid

You'll get payment direct to you or, if you're under 18 or cannot manage your own affairs, payment will be made to trustees.

If you live with your family, your parents may be appointed as trustees.

All benefits, pensions and allowances are paid into an account (<https://www.gov.uk/how-to-have-your-benefits-paid>), for example your bank account.

3. Eligibility

You could get a payment if you're severely disabled and your disability was caused by vaccination against any of the following diseases:

- diphtheria

- haemophilus influenzae type B (HIB)
- human papillomavirus
- influenza, except for influenza caused by a pandemic influenza virus
- measles
- meningococcal group B (meningitis B)
- meningococcal group C (meningitis C)
- meningococcal group W (meningitis W)
- mumps
- pandemic influenza A (H1N1) 2009 (swine flu) - up to 31 August 2010
- pertussis (whooping cough)
- pneumococcal infection
- poliomyelitis
- rotavirus
- rubella (German measles)
- smallpox - up to 1 August 1971
- tetanus
- tuberculosis (TB)

You may have had a combined vaccination against a number of the diseases listed. For example, you might have been vaccinated against DTP (diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis) or MMR (measles, mumps and rubella).

You may also be able to get a payment if you're severely disabled because either:

- your mother was vaccinated against one of the diseases in the list while she was pregnant
- you've been in close physical contact with someone who's had an oral vaccine against poliomyelitis

What counts as 'severely disabled'

Disablement is worked out as a percentage, and 'severe disablement' means at least 60% disabled.

This could be a mental or physical disablement and will be based on medical evidence from the doctors or hospitals involved in your treatment.

When and where the vaccination must have taken place

You must normally have been vaccinated before your 18th birthday, unless the vaccination was during an outbreak of disease in the UK or the Isle of Man, or it was against:

- poliomyelitis
- rubella
- meningococcal group C
- human papillomavirus
- pandemic influenza A (H1N1) 2009 (swine flu)
- meningococcal group W before your 26th birthday

The vaccination must have been given in the UK or the Isle of Man, unless you were vaccinated as part of your armed forces medical treatment.

4. How to claim

Apply by filling out a claim form (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/vaccine-damage-payment-claim-form>). If you're under 18, your parent or guardian should claim on your behalf.

Send it to:

Vaccine Damage Payments Unit

Palatine House

Lancaster Road

Preston

PR1 1HB

You can also contact the Vaccine Damage Payments Unit to ask for a claim form:

Vaccine Damage Payments Unit

Telephone: 01772 899 944

Textphone: 0800 731 0317

Relay UK (<https://www.relayuk.bt.com>) (if you cannot hear or speak on the phone): 18001 then 01772 899 944

Monday to Thursday, 8:30am to 5pm

Friday, 8:30am to 4:30pm

Find out about call charges (<https://www.gov.uk/call-charges>)

Time limits on making a claim

You can only claim for a child once they are 2 years old.

To claim for an adult, apply by whichever is the latest of the following dates:

- on or before their 21st birthday (or if they've died, the date they would have reached 21)
- within 6 years of the vaccination

If you disagree with a decision

You can challenge a decision about your claim. This is called asking for 'mandatory reversal'

If the decision was made after 27 October 2013

Write to the Vaccine Damage Payments Unit. You must:

- explain why you think the decision is wrong
- include any new evidence to support your application - only include evidence you have not already sent

Vaccine Damage Payments Unit

Palatine House

Lancaster Road

Preston

PR1 1HB

You need to include:

- the date of the original payment decision
- your name and address
- your date of birth
- your National Insurance number

If the decision was made on or before 27 October 2013

Contact the Vaccine Damage Payments Unit for advice on challenging the decision.

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What happens next

The original decision will be reviewed. The Department for Work and Pensions will send you a new decision if they think it should be changed.

If they do not think the decision should be changed, you'll get a 'mandatory reversal notice' that will explain the reasons why. This will include the information you need to be able to appeal.

If you disagree with the outcome

You can ask for mandatory reversal again - there's no limit on the number of times you can make this request, and no time limit.

You can also appeal to the Social Security and Child Support Tribunal. The tribunal is impartial and independent of government.

There is no time limit for requesting an appeal.

Download and fill in form SSCS1 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/appeal-a-social-security-benefits-decision-form-sscs1>) and send it to the address on the form.

You'll need to choose whether you want to go to the tribunal hearing to explain your case. If you do not attend, your appeal will be decided on your appeal form and any supporting evidence.

After you submit your appeal, you can provide evidence. Your appeal and the evidence will be discussed at a hearing by a judge and one or two experts, for example a doctor. The judge will then make a decision.

It usually takes around 6 months for your appeal to be heard by the tribunal.