

# **Benefits: Family allowance no. FAM1**

**This leaflet tells you about family allowance, which may be available if you are bringing up children. It includes information on how to claim and frequently asked questions.**



**States of Guernsey  
Social Security**

If, after reading this leaflet, you still have unanswered questions, please contact us on **222506**.

This leaflet should be read with Leaflet 50, which contains all the current benefit payments and contribution rates, available from [www.gov.gg/familyallowance](http://www.gov.gg/familyallowance)

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***This leaflet is for guidance and must not be treated as a complete and authoritative statement of the law.***

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# General

## What is family allowance?

Family allowance is a weekly benefit payable to families who are bringing up children. It is not based on income or savings but you do need to be living in Guernsey or Alderney.

## Who can get family allowance?

You can get family allowance if you're responsible for a child and they are:

- A. under school leaving age; or
- B. Under 18 and still in full-time education at school or college

Normally the child will be living with you, but you may also get the allowance if the child lives with someone else and:

- A. you are paying money to bring them up; and
- B. the amount you pay is the same as, or more than, the weekly rate of family allowance; and
- C. the person the child lives with is not already getting family allowance for them.

## Who can't get family allowance?

Family allowance can't be claimed if:

- A. the child lives away from the Island all the time; or
- B. the child is being cared for under the mandate of the Committee for Health & Social Care
- C. The yearly household income is the same as, or more than, £120,000.

## **How much will I get?**

Family allowance is paid at the same rate for each child in your family. The current rate is set out in Leaflet 50, which is available on the website [www.gov.gg/familyallowance](http://www.gov.gg/familyallowance).

## **Claiming**

### **How do I claim?**

To make a claim for family allowance you should complete a claim form (FAM 12). This is available by calling the Pensions & Allowances helpline on **222506** or printing one from the website [www.gov.gg/familyallowance](http://www.gov.gg/familyallowance).

The family allowance claim form is also used to apply for a Health Benefit card for your child. This allows you to claim a grant towards the cost of seeing a doctor or nurse.

### **When should I claim?**

You should make a claim for family allowance as soon as you have responsibility for supporting a child. The claim should be made within 3 months of:

- A. the birth of your child; or
- B. a child becoming a member of your family; or
- C. you arriving in the Island; or
- D. you paying towards the cost of supporting a child.

If your claim is received more than 3 months after this time, it will be treated as late claim. This means that you may lose some of your entitlement.

## **Who should make the claim?**

Family allowance will only be paid once for a child. Any person who is responsible for a child can make a claim for family allowance. But, it is normally claimed by the parent who has day to day care of the child.

Before deciding who should claim, please read the information in the section 'what happens to my Social Security contributions while I'm claiming?' (page 8).

If you are not sure who should make the claim please call the Pensions & Allowances helpline on **222506**.

## **What information do I need to provide?**

If your child was born in Guernsey or Alderney we can get confirmation of their birth from the Greffe. But, if your child was born outside of Guernsey or Alderney we will need to see their original birth certificate. We are unable to accept photocopies.

Please contact the Pensions & Allowances helpline on **222506** if you have any difficulties providing birth certificates. Please do not delay sending in your claim form.

## **How will my allowance be paid?**

Family allowance is payable from the first Monday after your entitlement began. The allowance will be paid into your bank account weekly in advance.

## **What happens to my Social Security contributions while I'm claiming?**

If you aren't working and you are:

- A. aged 20 or over; and
- B. getting family allowance for a child under 16

a contribution credit will be awarded each week, to protect your contribution record for pension purposes.

## **What if I've lived away from Guernsey or moved here from another country?**

If you have lived away from Guernsey or arrived here from the UK, Isle of Man or Jersey you will normally qualify for family allowance straight away. But, if you arrive from another country you may have to wait before you can receive payment.

You should call the Pensions & Allowances helpline on **222506** to discuss your circumstances and how this may affect your claim.

## **How do I claim for another child?**

If you want to claim for a new child in your family you just need to fill in another claim form (FAM 12). This is available by calling the Pensions & Allowances helpline on **222506** or printing one from the website [www.gov.gg/familyallowance](http://www.gov.gg/familyallowance).

When the claim has been received you will be paid an additional allowance for the new child.

## **Other information**

### **How are claims decided?**

In law, the Administrator of Social Security is responsible for deciding claims. You will be told of the decision in writing. If you are not satisfied with the Administrator's decision, you may appeal to an independent Tribunal within 28 days. The Tribunal consists of an independent chairman and two other members.

### **How long is family allowance payable for?**

If your child is in full-time education, family allowance can continue to be paid until the August following their 19th birthday.

We will normally write to you when they approach school leaving age to check if their education is going to continue. It is important that you reply to this letter otherwise your allowance may be stopped. But, if your circumstances change beforehand or you move address you should let us know without delay. Please call the Pensions & Allowances helpline on **222506**.

## **Can I transfer the family allowance to another person?**

Yes. If another person in your family decides to stay at home to care for a child or has day to day responsibility for a child, you can decide to transfer your claim. But, this means that the other person will also get the contribution credit.

If you want to discuss transferring your claim, please call the Pensions & Allowances helpline on **222506**.

## **What if I change my address?**

It is important that we always have your current address, so please let us know straight away if you move. We need this information to write to you when your child approaches school leaving age.

Please note, family allowance is not payable if you leave the Island permanently or are away from Guernsey or Alderney for more than 26 weeks.

## **What if I change my bank account?**

If you want your benefit paid into a different account you will need to write into us with the new details.

We cannot make any bank changes without your signature.

## **What other changes do I need to declare?**

If you are getting family allowance you should tell us straight away if, your child;

- A. leaves full-time education;
- B. leaves the Island to attend full-time education somewhere else;
- C. leaves the Island for longer than 26 weeks;
- D. leaves the Island permanently;
- E. no longer lives with you; or
- F. is no longer being financially supported by you, or your contribution is less than the amount of the weekly family allowance.

## **What if I don't have enough money to live on?**

If you are having difficulty managing on your income, you may be able to get help from income support. Income support is a means-tested benefit. To find out more please call the income support helpline on **222508**.

## **For further information**

If you are unsure of the meaning of any particular point in this leaflet, please contact Social Security, or the Alderney States Office, where staff will be pleased to help you, and from where copies of other leaflets may be obtained.

More information is also available on the States website here:

**[www.gov.gg/familyallowance](http://www.gov.gg/familyallowance)**.

If you are a parent or carer of a child with a disability or a disabled adult and would like information about support, services and activities in Guernsey you may find this website useful: [www.signpost.gg](http://www.signpost.gg)

If you are writing to Social Security, please quote your social insurance number, if known.

## What to do if you have a complaint

If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of our services please let a member of staff know at the time so that we can try to resolve the issue immediately. If you wish to make a formal complaint to Social Security, please contact us for a complaints leaflet and return the completed complaints form to **Social Security, Edward T. Wheadon House, Le Truchot, St Peter Port, GY1 3WH.**

You can also request more information by email and return your complaint form to [socialsecuritycomplaints@gov.gg](mailto:socialsecuritycomplaints@gov.gg) or send your complaint or a compliment to us online at the States website, by visiting [www.gov.gg/ccc](http://www.gov.gg/ccc) and completing the electronic form.