

FORM DS1500

This is a form, completed by a GP, Consultant, hospital doctor or specialist nurse, which enables someone who is terminally ill to claim Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Attendance Allowance (AA) under what the DWP calls "Special Rules."

It is appropriate to complete the form if the patient's death can "reasonably be expected" within the next 6 months. This does not mean it must be more likely than not, simply that death within 6 months would not be unexpected.

This is not a claim form and an appropriate claim form needs to be submitted **with the special rules box ticked**. If a DS1500 is sent directly to the Disability Benefits Centre without a claim form it will not be processed and benefit will not be awarded.

If a patient passes the "terminal illness" test they will automatically receive the higher rate of AA (if 65 or over when claiming) or the high rate care component of DLA (if under 65) from the date of the claim. The benefit is usually backdated, though it sometimes starts from the date of the DS1500 if that pre-dates the claim. The mobility component of DLA still has to be claimed if appropriate. (AA does not have a mobility component)

The person who is terminally ill (claimant) does not have to sign the form. Another person (e.g. carer, adviser or GP) can claim benefit on their behalf but **a proper form must always be completed and the Special Rules box ticked**.

If the patient is already receiving benefit at a lower rate, a new form does not have to be completed. The DS1500 should then be sent to the DLA/AA office with a letter asking for the award to be "superseded under the special rules".

Sometimes the DWP does not accept that the special rules apply, even when a DS1500 has been completed. They will consider the claim under the ordinary rules and will probably ask the claimant for more information about how their illness affects them. They might send one of their own doctors to visit and examine the claimant. If the decision is negative the claimant can appeal. If an award is made under the Special rules it is made for 3 years, after which time it will be reviewed if the claimant is still alive.