

## Support for Unpaid Carers

Carer's Rights Day was on 21 November 2019. In celebration of the vital role carers play in the lives of those that they care for, we are going to explain the support they may be entitled to and how they can access it.

### Key figures:

- In the 2011 census, there were over 6.5 million carers in the UK
- Of them, over 2 million carers were between the ages of 50-64
- According to the Office of National Statistics, 1.4 million people provide over 50 hours of unpaid care per week
- Carers providing 24 hour care are more than twice as likely to be in bad health, than non-carers
- There are over 3 million carers in the UK who are also in paid employment

### What is a carer?

A carer is someone who looks after another person who, because of their own illness, frailty or other disability, cannot cope without their support. A carer could be either an adult or a child. The word "care" could mean something different to every person in receipt of it, but essentially without it that person's health and/or wellbeing would be compromised.

### What support is available for carers?

Carers may be entitled to the following:

- Financial Support from the Department for Work and Pensions
- Support from their employer
- Assistance from Social Services

### Financial Support

The main benefit for carers over the age of 16 is [Carer's Allowance](#). The current rate is £66.15 per week and is available to those who care for someone else for more than 35 hours a week, the person receives a certain disability related benefit and the carer is not in full-time education or earning more than £123.00 per week after tax, national insurances and certain expenses. Carer's allowance gives carers National Insurance credits.

Carers who do not qualify for Carer's Allowance may be entitled to [Carer's Credit](#). This fills in the gap in National Insurance contributions so that your State Pension is not affected.

The [Council Tax Support schemes](#) operated by local authorities may allow carers in receipt of a low income entitlement to a reduction in their Council Tax payments. Carers who are no longer able to work may be able to also apply for mainstream benefits such as Universal Credit, Income Support, Employment and Support Allowance or Pension Credit.

**We suggest seeking advice from an accredited benefits advisor before making any claim.**

*This article was kindly provided by Charlene Hughes, Associate Solicitor, [Boyes Turner](#), for the Snap Care Newsletter [www.snapcare.co.uk](http://www.snapcare.co.uk)*

# Boyes Turner Newsletter Article

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## Employment Rights

It can be very difficult to balance a job with a caring role as well as allowing some time for yourself. It is good to know your rights in respect of your employment so that you can make time for yourself and don't risk becoming burnt out.

Statutory rights are things that you are entitled to from your carer by law. These include:

- The right to request flexible working
- The right to time off in emergencies
- Protection from discrimination
- The right to parental leave
- Annual leave and pay

It is also worth checking your contract of employment, staff handbook, HR policies or letter of appointment as you may have extra rights and benefits on top of the statutory rights listed above.

## Support from Social Services

Carers may be entitled to support from their local authority to make it easier for them to continue their caring role. The first stage is to request a free carer's assessment from the local authority.

The assessor will ask a carer questions regarding the following:

- Their caring role and how it affects their life and wellbeing
- Any health issues
- How they feel about their caring role
- How their role affects their work, study, training and leisure
- Whether there are any relationship or social issues due to their caring role
- Housing issues
- Planning for emergencies

The local authority will then consider whether the carer's responses to these queries meet the eligibility for criteria for support. They will then consider whether the support needs are the result of providing care, what effect they are having on the carer and whether there is, or is likely to be, a significant impact on their wellbeing.

The support that could be provided could include help with caring, respite care to give the carer a break, equipment or adaptations to the home, help with transport costs, technology to support you and advice regarding local support groups.

## How can we help?

For further information and advice about support for carers please contact our specialist team by email on [cop@boyesturner.com](mailto:cop@boyesturner.com)

***This article was kindly provided by Charlene Hughes, Associate Solicitor, [Boyes Turner](http://www.snapcare.co.uk), for the Snap Care Newsletter [www.snapcare.co.uk](http://www.snapcare.co.uk)***