

## Financial help/Benefits

Many families with disabled children or young people are entitled to claim benefits. It is important to get good advice about which benefits to claim, and to get support in filling out the application forms. Ask for a complete benefits check to make sure you are not missing out on anything. Information and advice is available from a qualified Benefits Advisor.

Website at: [www.dwp.gov.uk](http://www.dwp.gov.uk)

Benefit claim Line – Jobcentre Plus 0800 055 6688 Text phone 0800 023 4888

Calls are free from a landline. Charges may apply when calling from a mobile, but Jobcentre Plus will arrange to ring you back if you ask.

Families already in receipt of benefits but who want further help need to contact the Benefits Enquiry line on 0845 608 8637.

Sunderland City Council support services: Welfare Rights Service

The Welfare Rights Service can provide specialist help and advice about:

- benefits, including assisting with appeals and representation at tribunals, employment rights, including assisting with and representation at employment appeals, where an individual is unable to access support through Trade Union membership or membership of a Professional Association. Sunderland Welfare Rights Service will not be able to assist in employment matters regarding employees of Sunderland City Council
- debts
- referral/signposting to other advice providers who specialise in housing rights.

**For further information contact: Sunderland Welfare Rights Service. Telephone: 0191 5205551 or email [homeandmoney@sunderland.gov.uk](mailto:homeandmoney@sunderland.gov.uk) Further information is available on the website: [www.sunderland.gov.uk/advice](http://www.sunderland.gov.uk/advice)**

## Housing and Council Tax Benefit

Housing Benefit is help towards rent. Council Tax Benefit is help towards Council Tax. You can claim these benefits if you are responsible for paying rent or Council Tax and you have a low income. The amount of benefit you are entitled to will depend on your household income and circumstances. We can:

- give you an estimate
- fill in a form for you
- arrange a home visit in exceptional circumstances.

You can access our website at [www.sunderland.gov.uk/rentandcounciltaxhelp](http://www.sunderland.gov.uk/rentandcounciltaxhelp) where you can make a claim on-line or download a claim form. You can also find out what you are entitled to by using the on-line benefits calculator. Alternatively, you can visit a Customer Service Centre for help and advice. You do not need to fill in our form if you have already applied for Pension Credit, Income Support, Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance or Employment and Support Allowance (income-related) and have filled in a Housing and Council Tax Benefit form at the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

### Getting more information

There are a number of leaflets which provide more details about the way Housing and Council Tax Benefit is worked out and paid. These leaflets can be viewed on the website at [www.sunderland.gov.uk/benefitsleaflets](http://www.sunderland.gov.uk/benefitsleaflets) where they are also available to download. Leaflets are also available at any Customer Service Centre. Please contact the Customer Contact Centre on 0191 520 5502 if you require a copy in large print, Braille, audio and other languages.

Apply online at [sunderland.gov.uk](http://sunderland.gov.uk), for all other enquiries please telephone 0191 520 5502 Monday to Friday 8am to 6.30pm. E-mail: [benefits@sunderland.gov.uk](mailto:benefits@sunderland.gov.uk)

## National financial support-Family Fund

This organisation gives financial help to families with a severely disabled child or young person, related to the child's care needs, for instance:

- holidays or leisure activities so everyone can have a break
- a washing machine or tumble drier because of constant bedwetting or dirty clothes
- bedding and clothing to cover the expense of wear and tear because of the child's disability
- driving lessons for the child's main carer if there is a car available.

The Fund can help if the child's condition or disability is regarded as severe under its guidelines, and if a family's income is within certain limits. Families with a disabled child or young person can make one application a year. Families can contact the Fund direct for an application form. An application form can be downloaded from the website: [www.familyfund.org.uk](http://www.familyfund.org.uk) or requested in writing. The Family Fund, 4 Alpha Court, Monks Cross Drive, York YO32 9WN. Telephone: 01904 621115. Find us on Twitter or Facebook 'familyfund'

### Family Fund Extra

If you care for a disabled child or young person, Family Fund extra could make a difference to both you and your family. Become a member of Family Fund extra and you will benefit from receiving discounts on thousands of products and services from leading high street retailers and organisations. **For more information visit the website: [www.familyfund.org.uk/grants/extra-savings-for-families](http://www.familyfund.org.uk/grants/extra-savings-for-families)**

### Help with health costs

You may be entitled to help with health costs including prescriptions, dental treatment, sight tests, glasses and contact lenses, necessary travel costs to and from hospital for NHS treatment, wigs and fabric support. More details about this can be found in leaflet HC11 available from the Health Literature Line on: 0845 850 1166. You may be entitled to help with necessary travel costs to and from hospital for NHS treatment for your child if you are on a low income, or if you receive one of the following:

- Income Support
- Jobseeker's Allowance
- Working Families Tax Credit
- Disabled Person's Tax Credit.

Families on a low income should apply by completing form HC1, available from a Benefits Office or from the hospital. You may be entitled to full or limited help with travel costs for yourself and your child. If you are entitled to help, you will be issued with either a HC2 (full help) or HC3 (limited help) certificate. The cost of travel can then be claimed back, by showing this certificate at the hospital at the time of the appointment, and explaining that you would like to claim back the cost of the journey. Families in receipt of the benefits/credits listed above should show proof of their entitlement, such as benefit or tax credit award notice at the hospital at the time of their appointment, and explain that they would like to claim back the cost of the journey. N.B. Families in receipt of the Tax Credits mentioned above need to have a total family income of less than £15,276 in order to qualify for help with health costs.

**For more information contact: 0300 330 1343**