

Part 4

Lisa: DLA was awarded for life – how long does PIP last for?

Simon: Yes, DLA was a longstanding award. PIP is very different – it's not a lifetime award. There are varying time periods – so it could be awarded for 1 year, 3 years or 5 years. The maximum award time is 10 years at which point it will be reviewed again. The review takes place one year before the expiry of the award. At that point they will get in touch and request you attend an assessment again. The entire process starts from scratch again.

Lisa: Okay.

Simon: DLA awards are for life but PIP is not like that at all. The regulations for DLA and PIP are different. DLA is an older style of benefit which is now redundant. PIP is a new benefit stream. However, children up to the age of 16 can still receive DLA. On their 16th birthday they transition over from DLA to PIP. Older people who were born before the 9th of April 1948 will continue to be in receipt of DLA until they die at which point their DLA will cease. If you were born 10th April 1948 then unfortunately you will to get PIP. Alas, that's life!

Lisa: PIP has rejected my application, what shall I do next? Appeal or go to a tribunal?

Simon: Ah good question! When you receive written confirmation of your decision i.e. that you cannot be awarded PIP you may feel dejected. But don't worry, the first thing you need to do is ask for advice – that's crucial. You have only have one month to respond to DWP. If you get a rejection letter it doesn't go straight to tribunal stage. There's a process to follow. You can ask for a copy of the assessment completed from the appointment you attended. You can take a look at the answers and see if they correlate your end. If you have any objections to the answers then you can highlight them to indicate which ones are wrong and what it should be. Once you have done that you need to compose an MR letter which stands for 'Mandatory Reconsideration'. Write the letter and post it off – remember to make sure it is sent recorded delivery. Don't forget, if ever you need to send something to DWP it must be sent recorded delivery!

Your information will be sent to a different advisor to have a second pair of eyes on it. The will look at the rejection information and the current information you sent. If a reconsideration is granted you will be awarded PIP, however, if it is rejected again then the next stage is to go to a tribunal. The tribunal stage is a lengthy process. If you are issued a rejection at that stage then your DLA will be stopped and you will not receive PIP either. Alternatively, if you're successful at tribunal stage then your payments will be backdated to the start of the appeal.

Lisa: So I'll get some money back.

Simon: If the outcome of the tribunal is unsuccessful then you are entitled to submit a new claim. There is nothing to prevent you submitting a new claim.

Lisa: Oh right

Simon: Once the first claim has been rejected you can fill out a new form and send it off again. However, it won't be backdated to the first claim start date.

Lisa: Oh ok I understand.

Simon: It will be a fresh new claim. You always have the option of submitting a new claim.

Lisa: Earlier you mentioned the option to seek advice if my claim is rejected. Who would that be from?

Simon: It's the same parties I referred to previously. You can go to your local CAB, a local deaf organisation or an expert advisor. Those options don't change. It's a bit of a complicated one though because it's subjective to how the form has been completed and who looks at it. Having a fresh pair of eyes on it could allow for a different outcome.

Lisa: Ah ok interesting.

I would like to say a big thank you for giving us the A – Z on all things PIP! One last question how long will the changeover to PIP going to take?

Simon: Well it started to be rolled out a few years ago and it will continue for the next 2 – 4 years. People can expect to receive a letter at some point soon.

Lisa: Thanks again

Simon: You're very welcome