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INCOME SUPPORT

Income Support (IS) is a benefit paid to certain groups of people who do not have enough money to live on and whose weekly income falls below a certain level. It is **means-tested**, which means that any money you have is taken into account. Capital of more than £6,000 will affect how much Income Support you get. **To get IS you must either not be working at all or work less than 16 hours a week.** If you have a partner who lives with you, your **partner must work under 24 hours a week.** You may also be able to get **help with your living costs**, such as your rent, Council Tax, prescription charges etc. as well as one-off expenses from the Social Fund, and help with health, education and legal costs.

You must be a UK resident to get IS if you have recently come from overseas you may not be entitled to it.

You also have to be a person who does not have to look for work in order to get benefits.

You don't have to be available for work if you are:

- A single parent under the age of 18
- A single parent bringing up a child under five on your own. In some cases, you don't have to be available for work and you can carry on getting income support for a certain period if your child is older than this
- Getting Carer's Allowance
- Looking after your partner, who is temporarily ill
- Looking after a child under 20 for whom you are responsible and who is temporarily ill
- Incapable of work because you're pregnant. Some pregnant women might be able to claim Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) instead

To be able to get IS does not depend on national insurance contributions. You can get IS even if you have never paid national insurance, but you **will need a national insurance number to make a claim.**

To claim IS you must be under state pension age, and you must usually be 18 or over. Most 16- and 17-year-olds cannot claim Income Support however if you are 16 or 17 years old, you may get Income Support if you:

- Have a child or are pregnant
- Are on certain kinds of training course.
- Being entitled to IS will also depend on whether you are still at school or live with your parents.

You may also be able to get some Income Support if you are off work sick and getting Statutory Sick Pay from your employer.

You can claim IS by phone (0800 055 6688), or by downloading a form from www.gov.uk.