

State Death Benefit Factsheet

This factsheet summarises the state benefits payable to your spouse or civil partner in the event of your death.

Your spouse or civil partner may be entitled to a bereavement payment immediately on your death but if not they should still benefit come their State Pension Age. This page outlines the bereavement benefits payable immediately and overleaf states what will happen come their State Pension Age.

There are 3 bereavement benefits available: Bereavement Payment, Bereavement Allowance and Widowed Parent's Allowance. All of these are based on your National Insurance (NI) record. Your age is irrelevant.

The Bereavement Allowance

The Bereavement Allowance is a series of taxable weekly payments, lasting no more than 52 weeks. The current maximum rate is £84.25 a week (2006/07). To qualify, your spouse or civil partner must be between 45 and State Pension Age at the date of your death and not bringing up children. You must also have to have paid at least one qualifying year's NI contributions (either Class 1, 2 or 3). For the maximum rate of benefit to be paid, you need to have paid qualifying NI contributions for 90% of your working life, i.e. from age 16 to the tax year before your death, and your spouse or partner must be aged 55 or over at the date of your death.

The Bereavement Payment

The Bereavement Payment is a one off, tax-free, lump sum. To qualify you must have paid, before 6 April 1975, at least 25 Class 1 (paid by employees and their employer), Class 2 (paid by the self-employed), or Class 3 (voluntary) NI contributions, or, after 6 April 1975, in any one tax year 25 weeks of Class 1, Class 2 or Class 3 NI contributions. The amount of the Bereavement Payment is £2000.

The Widowed Parent's Allowance

This is a taxable benefit for widows or widowers who are under State Pension Age and who have at least one qualifying child for whom they are entitled, or treated as entitled, to Child Benefit. It can also be paid to a widow who is expecting your child at the time of your death. The current maximum amount of WPA is £84.25 a week (2006/07). To qualify, you need to have paid at least one qualifying year's NI contributions. For the maximum rate of benefit to be paid, you need to have paid NI contributions for a minimum of 90% of your working life, i.e. from age 16 to the tax year before your death.

Please turn over for more information.....

Jobcentre Plus is the organisation that administers these benefits and any claim should be made to your spouse or civil partner's local office.

State Death Benefit Factsheet

In the event of your death, the state benefits your spouse or civil partner may receive when they reach their State Pension Age are summarised opposite.

**Any Questions?
Call 0845 6012923**

The Pensions Advisory Service

11 Belgrave Road
London SW1V 1RB
enquiries@pensionsadvisoryservice.org.uk
www.pensionsadvisoryservice.org.uk

Please note the purpose of this factsheet is to give guidance. The information does not constitute a definitive statement of the rules.

Your spouse or civil partner is below State Pension Age

On reaching their State Pension Age, your spouse or civil partner would qualify for a Basic State Pension based on their own NI record. This could however be topped up to no more than the maximum payable to an individual person (£84.25 per week in the tax year 2006/2007) by substituting your NI record for theirs for either your period of marriage or from the start of their working life up to the date they become widowed. Your spouse or civil partner could only have their Basic State Pension calculated in this way if they are not in receipt of a bereavement benefit on reaching State Pension Age and have not remarried.

If your spouse or civil partner became entitled to a Widowed Parent's Allowance in the event of your death and was receiving this on reaching State Pension Age, they could courtesy of your NI contributions claim a Basic State Pension at the same rate. This when aggregated with any pension due in his or her own right however, cannot exceed the maximum pension payable to an individual.

Your spouse or civil partner may also be able to claim a share of any Additional State Pension you have built up as long as they receive a Bereavement Allowance or Widowed Parent's Allowance when over 45. The amount that can be inherited cannot be below 50% of your Additional State Pension and will depend on your date of birth.

Your spouse or civil partner is above State Pension Age

Your spouse or civil partner could qualify for a Bereavement Payment if you are not entitled to a Basic State Pension when you die.

In the case of a widow who is either receiving or not receiving a Basic State Pension in their own right, they can in the event of your death, claim the pension you were entitled to at the time of your death. The entitlement would be based on your NI record. The total pension payable however cannot exceed the maximum Basic State Pension payable to an individual person (i.e. £84.25 a week).

In the case of a widower/civil partner, they can claim a pension equal to your entitlement if you are over State Pension Age at the time of your death. If you are under State Pension Age on death, your widower or civil partner would not be able to claim a pension in respect of you if you die before the 6 April 2010. They may however be able to substitute periods from your NI record for theirs if this would increase any pension being received due to their own NI contributions. Again, any entitlement cannot exceed the maximum pension payable to an individual person.

Your widow/widower or civil partner may also be able to claim a share of any Additional State Pension you have built up. The amount that can be inherited cannot be below 50% of your Additional State Pension and will depend on your date of birth.