

## Document Control Form

<b>Document Title:</b>	<b>A Better Life Allowance Policy</b>
<b>Version Number:</b>	<b>Version 1.2</b>
<b>Date published to website:</b>	<b>-</b>
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<b>Authorised Date:</b>	<b>Agreed at SWDC on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2017</b>
<b>Authorising Information:</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Document Review Date:</b>	<b>November 2016</b>
<b>Review Completed on:</b>	<b>December 2016</b>



**St Helena  
Government**

## **POLICY FOR 'A BETTER LIFE' ALLOWANCE**

### **Definition of Disability;**

The following definition<sup>1</sup> of disabilities is used to inform this policy:

*"A disabled person is someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities." for longer than 6 months (as referenced by the Equality Act 2010)*

### **Purpose**

The 'Better Life Allowance' fund is available for reimbursement of additional costs arising from a disability, to ensure that every individual has a reasonable standard of living hence the term 'a better life'. The policy replaces Disability Allowance. A Better Life Allowance is for those who have a disability or impairment:

1. which is likely to continue for not less than six months; and
2. has resulted in a reduction of the person's independent function to the extent that the person requires ongoing:
  - support to undertake daily living activities, or
  - Supervision or treatment by a registered health professional.

This means that

1. the person must have an impairment that is physical or mental; the substantial effects must be long-term (longer than 6 months).
2. the long-term substantial adverse effects must affect normal day-to-day activities.

## **Entitlement conditions**

Entitlement is based on:

1. the level or severity of the disability or long-term health condition and difficulties with activities related to daily living or mobility;
2. Individual and specific additional needs.
3. 'Capability to work' and consequentially earn.

Different disabilities or health conditions influence individual needs. As stated, disabilities can arise from single or multiple impairments, which will affect the person's ability to carry out daily living activities. The 'Better Life' Allowance will be paid whether the person is working or earning (up to a defined limit) or not. Most significantly, the award will be calculated according to different levels of individual needs. Thus, it is imperative that robust assessment is conducted by suitably trained member of staff and approved by line management.

## **Assessment**

The assessment will establish how the person's everyday living activities are affected by the disability and the extra financial reimbursement required enabling a reasonable standard of everyday life. It will be conducted using an especially adapted standardised assessment tool. Where necessary the officer completing the assessment will consult with professionals such as;

- Social Worker
- GP
- Occupational Therapist/Rehab Therapist
- Community Psychiatric Nurse
- Community Nurses
- Disability Officer

## **Approvals**

A bespoke Assessment will be completed by the officer and approved by a Senior Social Worker/Team Manager.

## **Eligibility**

Recipients will be:

- adults of working age from 16-64; children and young people up to 18 years who have additional needs note: if a person is assessed as eligible before they have turned 65 receipt will continue;
- living in St Helena ;
- people living in residential care whose disabilities accrue additional needs that cannot be met by the home in which they live.

### **Exclusion**

If recipients opt to holiday abroad, 'A Better Life' Allowance will be paid for the first 12 weeks only. Unless the individual was due for a review on or before the date of return, the allowance will resume in the next week.

### **Those living in residential care**

Those living in residential care and who are eligible for 'A Better Life' Allowance will be paid a flat amount of £15 pounds per week. If the individual has needs superseding this amount the service user/advocate or Residential Unit Manager can apply to the Director of Safeguarding for special dispensation.

### **Payments**

The assessment scoring (See below) will be used as a guideline for placing individuals in the appropriate Needs Band. However, qualitative professional judgements may also be required where cases appears borderline. Payment will be based on:

- severe           £60.00
- high             £35.00
- moderate     £15.00
- low              £11.53

Payment will be made each week directly into the recipient's Bank of St Helena account or from the Customer Services Centre at the Post Office.

### Score for Better Life Allowance Assessment

Daily Living Descriptors	Low	Moderate	High	Severe
Preparing food	2	2	4	8
Taking nutrition	2	4	6	6
Managing therapy or health condition	1	4	6	8
Managing emotions	2	4	6	8
Washing and bathing	2	3	4	8
Managing toilet needs or incontinence	2	4	6	8
Dressing and undressing	2	2	4	8
Communicating	0	2	6	10
Reading and understanding signs, symbols and words	2	2	4	8
Making budgeting decisions	2	4	6	6
Planning and following journeys	4	8	10	12
Moving around	2	8	10	12
	<b>10+</b>	<b>36+</b>	<b>63+</b>	<b>95+</b>

### Review and monitoring

Recipients with permanent disabilities and terminal health conditions will be granted life-time awards. If necessary e.g. if conditions may fluctuate or improve then regular reviews may be scheduled, either six monthly or annually.

### Appeals

Anyone who is aggrieved by the decision made on:

- a) the Needs Band in which they have been placed;
- b) the withdrawal of the allowance;

may within 14 days of being informed of the decision, request that the decision is reviewed by writing to the Team Manager of Safeguarding Adults within the Safeguarding Directorate. A person who remains aggrieved by this reviewed decision, may within 14 days of being informed of that decision, appeal to the Director of the Safeguarding Directorate.

### **Changes to legislation**

This Allowance will not be included in the means testing poverty line for families who apply for Income Related Benefits. Since this is currently the case, the Social Security Ordinance (2010) Regulation 8 Household income level will require amendment. This will exclude 'A Better Life' Allowance as part of the household income. The declaration of receipt of Disabilities Allowance will need to be removed from the application form as well.

**Date Policy formulated: August 2015**

**Date Policy reviewed: December 2016**



