

Your Legal Questions

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Q One of my neighbours mentioned Pension Credit, what is it and how do I know if I am entitled to it?

A Pension Credit is a benefit paid to top up the income of those people that are eligible. It has recently been reported that approximately 4 million people are entitled to Pension Credit but less than 3 million people have claimed it. This means that a large number of people are eligible to claim the benefit but have not yet applied for it.

There are two parts to Pension Credit. You may be eligible for one or both. Guarantee Credit tops up your weekly income to a guaranteed minimum level set up by the government. Savings Credit is extra money for those who have an income higher than the Basic state Pension or who have a small amount of savings.

The minimum age to be eligible is changing. The current age for Guaranteed Credit is gradually rising from 60 to 66. The current minimum age for Savings Credit is 65.

Pension Credit is means tested so the amount of your income and savings will be taken into account when you apply.

It is worth applying for Pension Credit even if the amount that you will receive is low because being entitled to Pension Credit itself will enable you to apply for other benefits such as Council Tax exemption, Housing Benefit and Carers Allowance.

To find out if you are eligible for Pension Credit you can contact the Pension Service on 0800 99 1234 and they will take your details and fill in the forms with you over the telephone or you can visit their website: www.gov.uk/pension-credit which has an on-line calculator.