

Child Trust Funds - Early access to an account where a child is terminally ill

When is it possible to access money in a Child Trust Fund account?

The general rule is that it is not possible to access money in a Child Trust Fund account until a child turns 18. However an exception can be made where your child is terminally ill. In such cases the Child Trust Fund Office can agree to allow early access to the funds held in an account so that your child can benefit from this money.

Are all children with life limiting conditions able to access their account early?

No. In order to get early access to a Child Trust Fund it has to be shown that a child is suffering from a progressive disease and that his or her death can reasonably be expected within a 6 month period. If your child has already been awarded the care component of DLA under 'the special rules' for the terminally ill - they should automatically be treated as meeting this test. You should contact the Child Trust Fund Office with details of your child's award under the special rules. You can write to them at Child Trust Fund Office, Waterview Park, Mandarin Way, Washington, NE38 8QG or telephone the Child Trust Fund Helpline on Tel: 0845 302 1470. They will contact the Department of Work and Pensions to confirm that an award was made under the special rules.

If your child does not get DLA under the 'special rules' then you will be asked to get medical evidence that your child's condition falls into the definition of a terminal illness as outlined above. Contact the Child Trust Fund Helpline for further details of this process. You will normally be sent a form known as a CTF1500 to give to your child's medical practitioner. They should complete this form and return it to the Child Trust Fund Office.

Who should apply for early access to a Child Trust Fund account?

If a child is aged 16 or above they can apply for early access themselves, otherwise an application should be made by a person who has parental responsibility for that child.

What happens once it is accepted that my child has a terminal illness?

Once an application has been made the Child Trust Fund Office will assess whether your child has a terminal illness as defined above. As soon as it has been established that your child gets DLA under the special rules, or that appropriate medical evidence has been provided by your medical practitioner, you will receive written notification that early access to the Fund has been granted. The Child Trust Fund Office will also contact the company which provides your child's trust fund account to advise them that permission for early access has been granted.

If early access to an account is allowed, there is no restriction on the number of withdrawals that may be made from the account - but the account must not be closed.