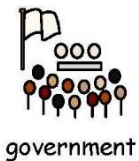


Coronavirus and your benefits



The situation is changing quickly and benefits agencies are still working out how this will affect benefits, so the guidance is likely to change. This is a summary of some key information to answer your questions, but please check official guidance for more details.



Guidance so far

- www.gov.uk/coronavirus > Employment and financial support
- www.moneyadvice.service.org.uk/en/articles/coronavirus-and-your-money
- CPAG benefits update: <https://askcpag.org.uk/?id=-216847>



General guidance

- Do whatever you need to do to stay healthy and safe at this time – do not put yourself or others at risk over money worries. Follow government guidance on Coronavirus and get advice if you are worried about the impact on your money or benefits.

- Update your appointee (or the benefits agencies directly) if your circumstances change and tell them if it is a **temporary** change due to Coronavirus (through your Journal for Universal Credit (UC) or by phone to DWP).
- Do not attend any assessments or go into the job centre.
- Avoid calling the DWP for general queries about changes to benefits rules as they are probably still working out the details and will not be able to give clear guidance yet.



benefits

Entitlement to benefits

- Generally, this should not change if you already claim benefits for disability (DLA/PIP) or 'limited capability for work' (ESA/UC).
- If you move in with other people at this time and are no longer living alone, you may not be entitled to the severe disability premium on ESA; however, if this is only temporary, it may not have an effect.
- If you need to make a new claim due to losing income, you will need to apply for Universal Credit online:
www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit



work

Universal Credit – if you already have a claim

- If your work earnings change, or you lose your job at this time, your Universal Credit payments will be automatically updated to account for your change in earnings.

- Put an update in your journal for any changes affecting your work or where you live at this time and tell them it is a **temporary** change due to Coronavirus.
- The government has announced an extra £20 per week from April for current claimants of UC and Working Tax Credits. We will await the detail from DWP on this.



If you have to stay into hospital

- Report this to your appointee with the date you went in.
- If you are in hospital as an inpatient for 28 days over a 12-month period, it may affect your payments of DLA/PIP temporarily. This may also affect the severe disability premium on ESA for that period.



General support available

- The government and key companies have announced support in many areas, including help if you cannot pay your mortgage, rent or essential bills at this time. If you think you will need this help, speak to the companies as soon as you can.
- Many banks are also offering support at this time, so speak to your bank if you think you will need help, will have a drop in income or struggle to make payments.



care

Care and support changes – fairer charging (contribution to care)

- If you get more care and support, your contribution should stay the same – it will only go as high as the maximum amount you've been calculated to pay.
- If you get fewer hours care and support, your contribution may change what you pay, or it may not if it is only a temporary change. This may take some time to work out as we don't know the details yet. Tell your appointee if your support changes and they can keep a watch on it.