

BenefitsBulletin

Aberdeen City & Shire Advice Forum is a local network for people working in advice services to share information and experiences. The Forum meets quarterly throughout the year.



Expenditure on crisis grants in Scotland up by 145 per cent in April 2020 compared to April 2019



Scottish Government publishes management information ahead of scheduled quarterly statistics due to 'heightened interest' in impact of COVID-19 on Scottish Welfare Fund.

Home Office softens no recourse to public funds policy following High Court defeat



The change follows a recent High Court decision explained [HERE](#) in some detail, along with the wider context of no recourse to public funds (NRPF).

View the 'Family life (as a partner or parent), private life and exceptional circumstances' updated policy [HERE](#).

EU Settlement Scheme update

We are pleased to confirm that Home Office support services and application routes have now all fully reopened in line with public health guidance.

Notification from Home Office [HERE](#).

The National Association of Welfare Rights Advisers aims to challenge, influence and improve welfare rights policy and legislation; and to be a national voice for welfare rights advisers.



NAWRA Online COVID Special Part 1 of 3

In part one of NAWRA's online COVID-19 Special introduced by our Chair, Alan Markey you will be able to follow Tom Messere's (Big Book of Benefits) workshop on the various updates to social security announced by government so far. This includes a Q&A session, facilitated by our Vice-Chair, Daphne Hall ([rightsnet](#)).

NAWRA Online COVID Special Part 2 of 3

In part two of NAWRA's online COVID-19 Special, Gareth Morgan (Ferret Information Systems) goes 'back to the future' and examines how new benefit rules impact on claimants. This session also includes a Q&A session, facilitated by our Vice-Chair, Daphne Hall ([rightsnet](#)).

NAWRA Online COVID Special Part 3 of 3

In the final part of [#nawraonline](#), we have an information exchange. Daphne Hall outlines resources available for advisers on the [rightsnet](#) website, Julie Kirkby (Durham Council) discusses the experience of telephone and online tribunals. Alan Markey (NAWRA Chair) wraps up with a feedback session.

Government outlines plan to bring Coronavirus Job Retention and Self-Employment Income Support schemes to an end



The government has outlined its plan to bring the Coronavirus Job Retention and Self-Employment Income Support schemes to an end.

In relation to the [Job Retention Scheme](#) -

- between **June and August 2020**, the government will continue to pay **80 per cent** of the wages of furloughed workers up to a monthly cap of **£2,500**, but from August employers will need to take on responsibility for the payment of employer national insurance and pension contributions;
- during **September 2020**, the government will only pay **70 per cent** of wages, up to a cap of **£2,187.50**;
- during **October 2020**, the government will pay **60 per cent** of wages up to a cap of **£1,875**.

However, to ease the transition to the scheme then being brought to an end, from **1 July 2020**, employers will be given the flexibility to bring furloughed employees back part-time.

NB - to enable the introduction of part-time furloughing, and support those already furloughed back to work, claims from July onwards will be restricted to employers currently using the scheme and previously furloughed employees. In the case of part-time working, the furlough payment will be made in respect of hours not worked, and the monthly cap will be proportional to hours not worked.

Those eligible for the [Self-Employment Income Support Scheme](#) will be able to claim a final grant in **August 2020**, worth **70 per cent** of their average monthly trading profits, paid out in a single instalment covering three months' worth of profits and capped at **£6,570** in total.

For more information see [Chancellor extends Self-Employment Support Scheme and confirms furlough next steps](#) from gov.uk

DWP Confirm that Universal Credit claims stopped by higher earnings will not have to reclaim in following period, but auto-reclaim will happen.

"As part of this strategy, we have just written to the Committee explaining that we have laid the [Universal Credit \(Coronavirus\) \(Self-employed Claimants and Reclaims\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2020](#). These regulations have been brought in using the urgency provisions because HMRC has been able to introduce the [Self Employment Income Support Scheme](#) (SEISS) earlier than had originally been announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The regulations clarify that the payment from the SEISS will be treated as self-employment income in the usual way, and that payments from the Coronavirus [Job Retention Scheme](#) to a self-employed person, to fund the pay of their employees' will be ignored in the calculation of the Universal Credit award.

Where a payment from the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme is used to fund earnings, the earnings of the employee will be taken into account in the calculation of entitlement to Universal Credit in the usual way. The intention being that payments to self-employed people and employees should mirror the way equivalent income is treated in Universal Credit.

These regulations also introduce an important easement which means that we will not automatically be closing claims where earnings exceed the claimant's entitlement, thereby making it easier for awards of Universal Credit to be re-instated without the need for claimants to make a new claim. This also applies to people who are affected by the surplus earnings rules."

Read full statement [HERE](#)

AskCPAG now have 5 briefings about changes to benefits in Scotland due to the coronavirus outbreak. Available [HERE](#).

Guardian Money helps you put your finances in order while adapting to a new way of living

Guardian Money has put together a guide [HERE](#) to getting everything in order as we all adapt to new ways of going about our daily lives.

NEW BRIEFINGS ON THE CHANGES IN BENEFITS IN SCOTLAND DUE TO THE CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK

- Scottish benefits and coronavirus
- Coronavirus and carers benefits in Scotland
- Coronavirus and universal credit for students in Scotland
- Families, coronavirus and benefits in Scotland
- Coronavirus and benefits for kinship carers in Scotland

ASK.CPAG.ORG.UK

CHILD
POVERTY
ACTION
GROUP
IN SCOTLAND

Crisis Support

Aberdeen City Council Crisis Support Line

Tel: 0800 0304 713.

Lines are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

To make an online application at any time for a crisis grant, please go [HERE](#).

The **Aberdeen Health & Social Care Partnership** has created a one-stop shop for up-to-date information for frontline service providers- click [HERE](#) to access.

AHSCP have also compiled a guide on looking after and accessing support for mental health during the coronavirus crisis- click [HERE](#) to access.

CFINE

Tel 01224 596156 or email info@cfine.org

Those who are running low on food and struggling to access it can contact us and we will do our best to organise contact-free help.

Somebody Cares

Tel 01224 460700 or

email info@somebodycaresuk.org

Our key focus now is giving food out.

If you are an individual who needs a food bag then please contact us and we will do what we can to help – but please only use this service if you need to. If you are from an establishment that is distributing food amongst your local community then we would also like to help you where we can.

penumbra
your way to a brighter future

The 1st Response Service provides a first response and information service for people aged 16 years and above with mental health problems. The service is for people who require immediate, short term support and those who may be in distress or in crisis.

Aberdeen 1st Response

Tel: 0800 234 3695 (Freephone)

Email: aberdeen1stresponse@penumbra.org.uk

Aberdeenshire 1st Response

Tel: 0800 1357950 (Freephone)

Text: 07818 457223

Email: aberdeenshire1stresponse@penumbra.org.uk

Factsheets for Keeping Well:

- [Homeworking Wellbeing Tips](#)
- [Responding to Change Guide](#)
- [Anxiety Factsheet](#)
- [Depression Factsheet](#)
- [Eating Disorders Factsheet](#)
- [Self-Harm Factsheet](#)

The Care Hub Aberdeen

Take away service. Mon, Tues, Thurs and Sat 6.30pm to 8:00pm at [Aberdeen Church of Christ 393 George street](#)

THE CARE
hub
Aberdeen

Grampian Coronavirus Assistance Hub

This website is a focal point for information and assistance for anyone affected by coronavirus anywhere in Grampian.

Telephone: 0808 196 3384

Free phone with lines open 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday, 10am to 2pm weekends
Make a request for assistance [HERE](#)

Aberdeenshire Council's most recent guidance & information on COVID-19. [Click here](#) to access

Aberdeen Cyrenians

Aberdeen Cyrenians have launched a new service called AC2U whereby essential items such as food parcels, hot meals, toiletries, clothing and baby items can be delivered to peoples' home addresses, whilst adhering to social distancing measures.

Individuals can self-refer, or professionals can refer by completing the short form on [THIS](#) page.

Social Bite

516 Union St, Aberdeen

We are changing our free food provision times to being Mon-Fri 2-4pm only. The free food we are offering now is a lunch bag (sandwich, fruit, crisps, water) and takeaway only during those times.

Aberdeen Citadel Salvation Army

Food parcels and toiletries can be obtained from the Citadel front door on a 'collect only' basis with social distancing rules followed.

Collection only 10am-12 noon, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. We are closed on Wednesday.

On Friday lunchtimes from 12 noon -1pm we are offering a free hot soup and savoury takeaway service from our front door for people who are struggling to self-cater.

Mrs Murray's Cat & Dog Home

If you know of anyone who is struggling to feed their cat or dog then contact Mrs Murray's Cat & Dog Home on 01224 483624, they may be able to deliver a pet food parcel.

Aberdeen City Mutual Aid

Twitter - [@aidAberdeen](#)

Facebook – [Aberdeen City Mutual Aid](#)

Email: aberdeenmutualaid@outlook.com

Aberdeen Mutual Aid is a group of community volunteers. If you are self-isolating due to COVID-19 we can deliver your mail, get urgent supplies, pick up shopping etc

For both emotional support and physical shopping/errands, needs etc Tel 01224 515513

Instant Neighbour

5 St Machar Drive, Aberdeen AB24 3YJ

Tel 01224 489955 or email reception@instantneighbour.co.uk

Food parcels from 10-1 and 2-4 Mon-Fri following strict Social Distancing measures at our St Machar offices with some deliveries to people's homes available if there is absolutely no other way of them getting food.