

**Mon 28th June 2021 - Issue.45 (Fortnightly)**

## New online mental health services for all across Aberdeenshire

Aberdeenshire Council's Education and Children's Services team has commissioned the launch of two new online mental health support services going online today (Monday 21 June), open to everyone aged 10 and over.

The move to secure services from Kooth (for those aged 10-18) and Togetherall (for those aged 16+) is part of joint working between Aberdeenshire Council, Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership, Police Scotland, NHS Grampian and third sector partners including Aberdeenshire Voluntary Action.

It is being funded by a Scottish Government grant to support the development of community mental health services for children and young people.

Read the full article [HERE](#)

## EU Settlement Scheme and the end of the Grace Period on the 30 June 2021

The EU Settlement Scheme has been fully open since 30 March 2019. EU, other EEA and Swiss citizens, and their family members have until 30 June 2021 to apply.

- The EU Settlement Scheme is a free scheme which enables EEA and Swiss citizens resident in the UK by the end of the transition period, and their family members, to obtain the status they will require in order to live and work in the UK.
- Applicants only need to complete three key steps – prove their identity, show that they live in the UK, and declare any criminal convictions.
- It is designed to be as simple and straightforward as possible.

The Home Office are hosting a number of sessions covering:

- Who needs to apply?
- What is Settled/Pre-Settled Status ?
- Late applications
- Right to Work Checks
- Support for EU Nationals
- Q&A

Please sign up to one of these session using the registration links below:

- 29 June 2021 - [\*\*EU Settlement Scheme and the end of the Grace Period on the 30 June 2021 Tickets, Tue 29 Jun 2021 at 09:30 | Eventbrite\*\*](#)
- 30 June 2021 - [\*\*EU Settlement Scheme and the end of the Grace Period on the 30 June 2021 Tickets, Wed 30 Jun 2021 at 13:00 | Eventbrite\*\*](#)

## The Care Hub

**Mondays and Thursdays  
6.30pm-8pm**

Free hot meal and food bag to take away.

The Care Hub now require registration but this can be done on presenting at the door.

Address: **Church of Christ, 393 George Street**



**The latest vacancies from the third sector in Aberdeen**

<https://acvo.org.uk/vacancies/>

**Free training course for new/inexperienced debt advisers. See Page 18**

## Universal Credit

### Question for Department for Work and Pensions

UIN 13247, tabled on 9  
June 2021



#### Question

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether she has made an assessment of the potential merits of reviewing the policy of joint universal credit claims for couples to help prevent financial coercion.

#### Answered on 14 June 2021 by Will Quince

If a couple are living together in a household, Universal Credit (UC) normally makes a single award to that household. It is for the couple in the household to determine where their single award is paid. This could be either a joint account or an individual account held by one member of the couple. In joint claims couples are encouraged to nominate the bank account of the main carer to receive the household's UC payment.

It is possible for a request to be made for a payment to be divided between two members of the household. This is known as a split payment. Whilst the Department is not intending to introduce split payments by default, we respond positively to such requests. The larger percentage of a split payment will be allocated to the person with primary caring responsibilities, such as childcare. This is to ensure the health and well-being of the majority of the household. It is important that we allow the individual who is experiencing abuse to decide whether they think split payments will help their individual circumstances.

We can take other actions to support those experiencing abuse, such as making a managed payment of rent direct to landlords. We also ensure that claimants who disclose abuse are signposted to specialist organisations for support.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-09/13247>

## Universal Credit: natural migration: Government Response to the Committee's Twenty Seventh Report of Session 2017–19



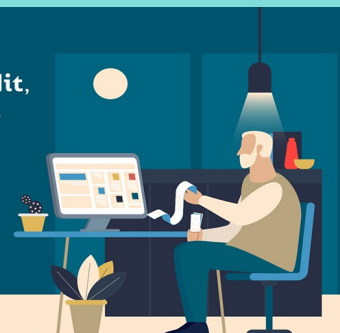
### First Special Report of Session 2021–22

Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed 26  
May 2021

On 23 July 2019, the Work and Pensions Committee published its Twenty Seventh Report of Session 2017–19, Universal Credit: natural migration (HC 1884).

On 17 May 2021 we received the Government Response to the Report, which is available [HERE](#)

If you get **Pension Credit**,  
you may get other help  
too, like with housing  
costs, council tax or  
heating bills.



 HM Government

## Pension Credit toolkit

Use this collection of materials to help older people understand how they could get Pension Credit.

### Last updated 16 June 2021

This toolkit is for anyone who works with pensioners. Use it to help older people understand how they may get extra money every week by:

- increasing understanding in your organisation
- helping your customers find out if they could get Pension Credit

#### The toolkit contains:

- guidance to help you understand Pension Credit
- information to help you support someone applying for Pension Credit
- common reasons why pensioners don't claim
- ideas for events and dealing with the media
- useful contacts

#### You can also:

- [download resources to help you promote Pension Credit](#)
- [order a leaflet about Pension Credit](#)

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/pension-credit-toolkit](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pension-credit-toolkit)

## Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) update

We are reintroducing Claimant Commitments (CCs) and Action Plans (APs) for all ESA claimants in a phased approach. Work coaches continue to work with claimants to ensure that CCs and APs are reasonable and tailored for their circumstances, allowing them to continue to adhere to COVID-19 public health advice, whilst also considering how they can engage with the labour market or move closer to work.

For all new claims to New Style ESA, processed from 26 April 2021, claimants will be required to have an appointment with a work coach and agree a CC before they can receive New Style ESA.

For New Style ESA claims processed prior to 26 April 2021, the requirement for an agreed CC and for ESA legacy claimants an AP, will be introduced gradually from 28 June 2021. We will contact claimants to arrange an appointment with a work coach and agree a Claimant Commitment or Action Plan.

## EU Settlement Scheme

From 1 July 2021, EU, EEA and Swiss citizens and their family members granted status under the EU Settlement Scheme will need to evidence their rights in the UK with their immigration status, for example to work. EU, EEA and Swiss citizens who have applied for a UK visa (including permission to stay) using the ID Check app or by visiting a Visa Application Centre are also granted an immigration status.

The Home Office has published a new [guide for EU, EEA and Swiss citizens on viewing and proving their immigration status](#) (eVisa). It explains how people can view and prove their immigration status, update their details, what they should expect when crossing the UK border and how to get help accessing their immigration status.

It is important that EU, EEA and Swiss citizens and their family members keep their personal details up to date and inform the Home Office if their travel document changes, using the [View and Prove service](#).

Home Office colleagues would be grateful if you share the guide with your networks and direct EU, EEA and Swiss citizens to it for more information.

## New claims for PIP are at their highest level since its introduction in April 2013

New DWP statistics also show highest number of reported changes of circumstance since PIP began

For more information, see [Personal Independence Payment: April 2013 to April 2021](#)

The Scottish Government has also published new quarterly statistics - [Personal Independence Payment in Scotland at April 2021](#).

Curtesy of <a href="https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/">https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/</a>			
	as of	Aberdeen City	Aberdeenshire
Households on Universal Credit	Feb 2021	15,821	12,135
PIP cases with entitlement	April 2021	7,311	6,833
Housing Benefit Claimants	Feb 2021	10,228	6,916
AA (in payment)	Nov 2020	3,317	3,324

## **New exercise to identify 'dual payments' of severe disability premium and carer's allowance likely to result in large overpayments**

**LA Welfare Direct lite 6/2021**  
**Updated 18 June 2021**

New Housing Benefit Matching Service rule

The rule will identify HB customers and/or partners who are in receipt of a Severe Disability Premium (SDP) and any individual who is also in receipt of Carers Allowance as their carer.

Do be aware, it is highly likely the findings from some initial referrals will result in large overpayments. This is due to the amount of award the disabled customer can receive from SDP and the fact that the dual payment may have been undetected for a long period of time. These overpayments will be recoverable.

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/la-welfare-direct-bulletins-2021/la-welfare-direct-lite-62021](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/la-welfare-direct-bulletins-2021/la-welfare-direct-lite-62021)

## **Court fine deduction rate – change of approach**

The DWP has updated its Benefit Overpayment Recovery Staff Guide, and the online Benefits and Tax Credits rates to reflect a change to the rate at which court fines are recovered. This is a change in policy rather than a change in regulations – the existing rules allow the DWP to deduct a minimum of 5% of the UC standard allowance, and a maximum of £108.35. It appears that the 5% will now become default – good news!

**Benefit and pension rates 2021 to 2022**  
**- GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))**

**Benefit overpayment recovery guide -**  
**GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))**

## **LG V Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (UC): [2021] UKUT 121 (AAC)**

**Published 16 June 2021**

Tribunal correct to take two lots of four-weekly paid wages into account in one universal credit assessment period

Read the full decision in [CSUC/280/2020](#).

### **Judicial Summary**

Universal Credit - claimant received two payments from her employers during the assessment period of one calendar month (her employers made her 13 payments covering 28 days each during a calendar year)- whether both payments made during same assessment period should be taken into account - regulation 54(1) of the Universal Credit Regulations 2013 considered.

## **Housing Systems: Combating poverty and sustaining tenancies.**

### **UC Bedroom Tax Glitch continues and may result in recoverable overpayments**

It appears that there is still a problem with the Universal Credit computer system; in certain situations, it is missing off the Bedroom Tax deduction, which is causing claimants to be overpaid.

Despite reports that this glitch had been fixed it seems that some UC claimants are still being affected.

#### **Who does this affect?**

Where a social housing UC claimant has three bedrooms and would normally only be eligible for one, but they have been granted a second bedroom on medical grounds, (where a couple or children are unable to share, or a non-household carer stays on a regular basis) then they should only have a 14% reduction ie in respect of one spare room, instead of a 25% reduction.

However, it appears that the UC computer system cannot allocate the claimant an extra bedroom in these circumstances and so the Case Manager sets the UC computer system to exclude them from the Bedroom Tax altogether ie the system fails to deduct the 14% it should. No Bedroom Tax deduction is made even though there is one spare bedroom.

The result is that the claimant receives more UC than they are entitled to.

One concern has always been whether or not the DWP would decide to recover this overpayment. We have heard of one case where they have done just that.

[www.housingsystems.co.uk/News/News/id/141](http://www.housingsystems.co.uk/News/News/id/141)





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The Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

## Summary statistics for Personal Independence Payment at April 2021

This publication provides information on recipients of Personal Independence Payment in Scotland at April 2021. Personal Independence Payment is replacing Disability Living Allowance for eligible working age people aged 16 to 64.

This summary covers both new claims to Personal Independence Payment and claims made by those with an existing claim for Disability Living Allowance (known as Disability Living Allowance reassessments). All tables and charts relating to this publication can be found [HERE](#)

[Summary statistics for Personal Independence Payment at April 2021](#)

## Support for students impacted by COVID-19

**£20 million of additional funding.**

Students experiencing hardship over summer as a result of coronavirus (COVID-19) can apply for financial support if they are struggling to meet accommodation and other costs.

Backed by £20 million of new funding, students in financial hardship can apply directly to their college or university's Coronavirus Discretionary Fund.

Read [more information on the support available for students](#).

## Proposals to extend Covid-19 eviction and bankruptcy protections to be debated in the Scottish Parliament

Subject to the agreement of Parliament, measures will be extended by 6 months to 31 March 2022

The measures - that are contained in the [Coronavirus \(Extension and Expiry\) \(Scotland\) Bill](#) that was formally introduced to the Scottish Parliament today and will be scrutinised and debated by MSPs over three days from 22 June 2021 - include the ability for hearings across courts and tribunals to be held remotely, and also for -

- an increased notice period of six months to protect private and social sector tenants from eviction, up from the pre-pandemic 28-day notice period; and
- an increase in the minimum debt level that an individual must owe before a creditor can make them bankrupt at £10,000, up from £3,000 pre-pandemic.

As well as removing a number of measures no longer considered necessary to support the ongoing public health response, the Bill extends others beyond the original expiry date of 30 September 2021, subject to the agreement of Parliament, to 31 March 2022.

For more information see [Coronavirus Bill introduced: Expiry and extension of measures to be scrutinised by Parliament](#).

## Scottish Government announces £10m grant fund for tenants in arrears due to COVID-19

The **Scottish Government** has announced a £10 million grant fund to support tenants who have fallen into rent arrears as a direct result of the coronavirus pandemic.

In the Stage 1 debate in Holyrood yesterday on the [Coronavirus \(Extension and Expiry\) \(Scotland\) Bill](#) - that will temporarily extend measures introduced under the [Scottish Coronavirus Acts](#) for a six month period beyond 30 September 2021 - Deputy First Minister John Swinney confirmed that, once enacted, the Bill will ensure that the increased notice period of six months to protect private and social sector tenants from eviction will continue along with other measures under the Coronavirus Acts.

NB - the Scottish Government currently operates a [Tenant Hardship Loan Fund](#) designed to help people who have had their finances or employment impacted by Covid-19 and who don't have other means of housing support.

The [Stage 1 debate on the Coronavirus \(Extension and Expiry\) \(Scotland\) Bill](#) is available from [parliament.scot](http://parliament.scot)



Social Security Scotland  
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## Devolution of welfare working well but good working relationship is crucial

23 June 2021



In a wide-ranging report considering welfare policy in Scotland, MPs called on the UK Government and Scottish Government to improve information sharing to implement policy and to work together to improve benefit take-up.

- [Read the conclusions and recommendations](#)
- [Read the full report: Welfare policy in Scotland \[PDF 857 KB\]](#)
- [Scottish Affairs Committee](#)

While the devolution of welfare powers to Scotland has worked well, the Committee heard that it remains complex and a good working relationship between the governments is crucial. Where the two governments had different approaches to social security/ welfare there was little evidence that this presented a problem in the administering of benefits on the ground.

The Committee urged the UK Government to find a solution to providing Social Security Scotland with data to enable Scottish Child Payments are distributed to families for 6 to 16-year olds. Without this data, the Scottish Government would be unable to deliver its commitment to extend the child benefit to this age group.

The Committee found that often claimants are unaware of what benefits they are entitled to from both the Scottish and UK Governments. The Committee therefore recommends that new communications materials should be distributed, that are updated annually, offering a 'one stop shop' of benefits that may be available.

The Committee also expressed its disappointment in the delay in the rollout of the devolved benefits until 2025. Although this delay can be blamed in part on covid-19, the Committee regrets that the Scottish Government and Social Security Scotland have been unable to become fully operational within the originally proposed timeline.

On Universal Credit, the Committee heard how the paying back mechanism for advance payments often make paying for essentials more difficult. To address this, the Committee has recommended that a starter payment be given to claimants two weeks after the initial claim – rather than waiting five weeks.

Finally, the Committee has urged the Government to review its move to end the £20 weekly uplift to Universal Credit payments.

<https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/136/scottish-affairs-committee/news/156049/devolution-of-welfare-working-well-but-good-working-relationship-is-crucial/>





<http://citizensrightsproject.org>



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## EU Settlement Scheme coronavirus policy relaxed



On 10 June 2021 the Home Office reissued its **guidance** on coronavirus and the EU Settlement Scheme. Originally **published** in December 2020, it was withdrawn last month following a **legal challenge**. The new version is considerably more generous than the old.

In a nutshell, the guidance now allows for people with EU pre-settled status to be out of the UK for up to 12 months for “any coronavirus related reason” without breaking their continuous residence. This includes where they remain abroad by choice. Previously, the guidance only really catered for situations where the person was *forced* to remain outside the UK due to travel restrictions, quarantine or COVID-19 related health complications.

That stricter rule does make an appearance in the new guidance as well, but **only where** the absence is longer than 12 months. People in this position will need evidence that they were “prevented from, or advised against, returning to the UK” by coronavirus. Whereas if the absence is less than 12 months, no evidence is needed beyond a letter simply saying “I chose to move back to Spain [or wherever] for a while because there were fewer lockdown restrictions there”.

We explain why absences are so important to people with pre-settled status in a couple of much more **detailed articles**, but those now need updating in light of the new guidance.

**SOURCE**

### Briefing: to Zambrano or not to Zambrano?

The important case of *Akinsanya*, which we discussed in **these articles**, has opened the door for many non-European primary carers of British citizens to now apply for residence rights under the EU Settlement Scheme. There are many advantages to doing so — but also some pitfalls and potential issues to consider, which **this post** aims at highlighting. It is likely to be of most use to readers already familiar with the Zambrano route for carers and with the Settlement Scheme, which we won't recap in any detail.

## Social Security Benefits: EEA Nationals



**Question for Department for Work and Pensions**  
**UIN HL271, tabled on 17 May 2021**

### Question by Lord Foulkes of Cumnock

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether EEA nationals over state pension age who have not applied to the EU Settlement Scheme by 30 June will continue to be eligible to receive (1) Pension Credit, (2) Housing Benefit, and (3) other benefits.

### Answered on 24 May 2021 by Baroness Stedman-Scott

From 1 July 2021, EEA and Swiss citizens will be required to have immigration status to carry on living and working in the UK and to access non-contributory benefits in the UK.

EEA and Swiss citizens who were living in the UK by 31 December 2020, and their family members, need to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme by 30 June 2021.

DWP are working closely with the Home Office and other government departments to ensure we are using all available resources to engage with groups who need to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS).

Support for applicants who need it remains available, including from the network of 72 organisations across the UK grant-funded by the Home Office to help vulnerable people apply to the EUSS.

Those who have made an application to the EU Settlement Scheme, but have yet to receive an immigration status before the deadline, will continue to receive benefits as long as they satisfy the entitlement conditions for that benefit.

Where an EEA or Swiss citizen, who was resident here before the end of the transition period, has reasonable grounds for missing the EU Settlement Scheme application deadline, they will be given a further opportunity to apply.

**<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-05-17/hl271>**





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## Brexit, the EU Settlement Scheme and women living with abuse

In case you were not able to attend and were still interested, you can watch a recording of the SWRC's webinar "**Brexit, the EU Settlement Scheme and women living with abuse**". It has lots of detailed information about who is eligible and what happens when a woman has experience of domestic abuse: <https://youtu.be/b37JTOXmRGQ>

This free webinar by the Scottish Women's Rights Centre and Citizens Advice Scotland is aimed at support organisations, services and professionals who work directly with women living with abuse.

As you may already know, new immigration rules were introduced after Brexit for EU citizens and their non-EU family members, and they will particularly impact women living with abuse.

This first webinar will have a particular focus on women who are eligible to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme before the end of June 2021. A further webinar will explore the situation for women who not eligible for this scheme.

### Further Information

We also have information on our website for women and support workers in different languages:

[www.womensrights.scot/immigration](http://www.womensrights.scot/immigration)

[www.scottishwomensrightscentre.org.uk](http://www.scottishwomensrightscentre.org.uk)

## Getting permission to remain in the UK as an adult dependent relative: not likely

Since the introduction of highly restrictive rules for **adult dependent relatives** there have been numerous stories, all desperately sad, of parents trying and failing to join or remain with their children in the UK. *Mobeen v Secretary of State for the Home Department* [2021] EWCA Civ 886 is yet another example.

Read FreeMovement's article [HERE](#)

## Latest on Zambrano carers and the EU Settlement Scheme

On 9 June, in the case of *Akinsanya*, the High Court **found** that the definition of Zambrano carers in the rules for the EU Settlement Scheme was wrong, insofar as it prevented those with permission to remain under another part of the Immigration Rules from applying.

With the deadline to apply under the EU Settlement Scheme around the corner, on 30 June 2021, potential Zambrano carers are in a difficult position. Ms Akinsanya did ask the High Court to order an extension to the deadline so that people affected by this ruling have more time to work out what to do. The result is a consent order, dated 17 June, in which the Home Office has agreed to accept Zambrano applications after the usual deadline. But in many cases it will still be best to submit an application before 30 June if possible.

Read FreeMovement's article [HERE](#)

## Social security arrangements between the UK and the EU: staff guide

Last updated 18 June 2021

This staff guidance explains the social security coordination arrangements between the UK and the EU under the EU Withdrawal Agreement.

This guidance is for staff in the Department for Work and Pensions, HM Revenue & Customs, and the Department of Health and Social Care. It is to be used by staff when considering an application for a social security benefit or pension from:

- a UK national living in the **European Economic Area (EEA)** or Switzerland
- an EEA or Swiss national living in the UK

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-security-arrangements-between-the-uk-and-the-eu-from-1-january-2021-staff-guide](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-security-arrangements-between-the-uk-and-the-eu-from-1-january-2021-staff-guide)





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## Wolverhampton Council Benefits Bulletin 4: EEA nationals and benefits.

Wolverhampton Council has produced **Benefits Bulletin 4: EEA nationals and benefits.**

It brings news on what they understand to be the current situation regarding the benefit rights of EEA Nationals (and their family members) in the wake of Brexit.

The Bulletin underlines the need for eligible EEA nationals (and their family members) to register under the European Union Settlement Scheme before **30th June 2021** deadline or otherwise run the risk of being considered to be unlawfully resident in the United Kingdom and not entitled to any benefits.

It also explains what they consider to be the rights of EEA nationals with Settled Status and Pre-settled Status to apply for both means-tested benefits (e.g. Universal Credit and Pension Credit) and non-means-tested benefits (e.g. Personal Independence Payment and Attendance Allowance) at the present time. Moreover, information is provided on the steps people should seek to take if they are refused social security benefit but it is felt that they have a legitimate entitlement.

## APPLY TO THE EU SETTLEMENT SCHEME

**30 JUNE 2021**

### EU citizens risk losing jobs and homes as July deadline looms

**THE BIG ISSUE**

Hundreds of thousands of EU citizens risk losing their jobs and homes if they do not apply for status by 30th June, experts warn.

EU nationals who have not applied for the EU Settlement Scheme by June 30 will find themselves living in the UK illegally, meaning those who cannot show they have been granted settled status or pre-settled status will not be able to rent, work or claim benefits in the UK.

The Home Office has said people with "reasonable grounds" for missing the deadline will be permitted to make a late application but fears have been raised that this could create a window in which people could lose their jobs or homes.

[www.bigissue.com/latest/eu-citizens-risk-losing-jobs-and-homes-as-july-deadline-looms/](http://www.bigissue.com/latest/eu-citizens-risk-losing-jobs-and-homes-as-july-deadline-looms/)

## Support for migrant victims (SMV) of domestic abuse with No Recourse to Public Funds

Shakti WA is a partner of Southall Black Sisters in Scotland to deliver a one year funding scheme, SMV. The scheme is now open for referrals

For more information check our website  
[www.Shaktiedinburgh.co.uk](http://www.Shaktiedinburgh.co.uk)



**Shakti Women's Aid** have been awarded funds to operate the Support for Migrant Victims Scheme (SMV), a one-year project to provide temporary support for migrant survivors of abuse and to build a better understanding of their needs. Shakti Women's Aid is working alongside Southall Black Sisters and other Women's Aid organisations across the UK to implement this project which will run until March 2022.

The scheme will provide support for victims of domestic and other forms of gender-related abuse (and their children) who are subject to No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) rule in Scotland.

# EU Citizens and Access to Benefits: Time is Running Out for EU Citizens to Apply to the EU Settlement Scheme Pre-Brexit



Prior to Brexit, EU citizens who were working in the UK had a “right to reside” here, which meant they could access welfare benefits, and homelessness assistance.

The right to reside rules were outlined in the Immigration (EEA) Regulations 2016, which also provided a right to reside to the dependent family members of EU citizens who were working

The broad position was that someone needed to be working or linked to work to establish a right to reside. Right to reside rules are complex, though, and advice should be sought from a benefits specialist if someone is unsure about whether their circumstances count.

## **EU citizens arriving on or after 1 January 2021**

The UK Government ended EU free movement rights on 31 December 2020, and revoked the above “right to reside regulations” for EU citizens arriving in the UK on or after 1 January 2021.

The default position is therefore that such people can’t establish a right to reside, and thereby access benefits and housing – their leave to remain in the UK is determined under the same Immigration Rules that apply to non-EU citizens, and they must normally apply to the Home Office for a visa if they intend to reside in the UK or to visit beyond an initial period of up to six months. They are likely to have a “no recourse to public funds” restriction placed upon their leave to remain in the UK.

## **The EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS)**

Important protections are, however, in place for EU citizens and their family members who had exercised their free movement rights prior to 31 December 2020, provided they apply to the EUSS before **30 June 2021**.

### **Settled status**

People granted settled status under the EUSS can freely access any benefits and housing that they meet the entitlement criteria for, in the same way that someone British can.

### **Pre-settled status**

Being granted pre-settled status under the EUSS does not of itself give access to benefits and housing.

However, crucially, Regulation 83 and Schedule 4 of the Immigration and Social Security Coordination (EU Withdrawal) Act 2020 (Consequential Saving, Transitional and Transitory Provisions (EU Exit) Regulations 2020 extend the above right to reside regulations for people with pre-settled status.

This means that people with pre-settled status who are working can still establish a right to reside in the UK, and thereby access benefits and housing.

People who hold pre-settled status can apply for this to be converted to settled status after five years of continuous residence in the UK.

### **Awaiting an EUSS decision**

The right to reside regulations have also been extended for people who are awaiting an EUSS decision, by Regulation 2 of the Citizens’ Rights (Application Deadline and Temporary Protection) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020.

Consequently, such people can also establish a right to reside in the UK, and thereby access benefits and housing, if they are working.

### **Applying to the EUSS**

For people who have not yet applied: applications must generally be made online, before **30 June 2021** at here at **[GOV.UK Apply to the EU Settlement Scheme](#)**.

For advice and support on applying to the EUSS for people living in Scotland: visit **[MyGov.Scot Help and Advice for EU Citizens in Scotland](#)**.

### **Dependent family members of EU citizens with a right to reside before 31 December 2020**

Dependent family members can still apply to the EUSS for pre-settled status up until **30 June 2021**, provided the EU citizen they are dependent upon was in the UK with a right to reside before 31 December 2020.

This is the case even if:

- the dependent is not an EU citizen themselves; and / or
- the dependent arrived in the UK on or after 1 January 2021, under an EUSS Family Permit.

Once they have applied, the dependent family member can establish they have a right to reside, and access benefits and housing, as long as the EU citizen they are dependent upon is working.

However, the DWP does not appear to be fully up to speed with the new rules – we are hearing from people who have been incorrectly refused benefits, despite the above protections being applicable to them. The DWP appears to be refusing benefit as soon as it is established that the claimant has pre-settled status, without going on to consider whether they have a right to reside under the extended right to reside regulations, as a worker, or the dependent family member of a worker.

Read the whole article **[HERE](#)** including information on trans applicants

# European Union Settlement Scheme Guidance



Department  
for Work &  
Pensions

I am writing to inform you of the changes that come into force regarding the European Union Settlement Scheme (EUSS) from 1 July 2021.

The changes will impact the way European Economic Area (EEA) citizens and their family members access the Department for Work and Pensions' (DWP's) benefits and public services, where settled status has not been applied for or granted by the Home Office.

As set out in the **Withdrawal Agreement**, EEA citizens and their family members, lawfully resident in the UK by the end of the Transition Period 31 December 2020, will have until 30 June 2021 to apply to the EUSS to protect their rights. This six-month period 1 January 2021 to 30 June 2021 is what is known as the Grace Period.

EEA citizens and their family members who have yet to attain EUSS could still access DWP benefits, including Housing Benefit (HB) (subject to eligibility), during the Grace Period.

The Home Office has an extensive range of activities underway to communicate the need to apply to the EUSS, particularly for vulnerable groups. This includes a social media campaign that started on 13 May 2021 and TV broadcasting that started from the beginning of June 2021.

DWP followed this campaign by issuing targeted letters from 14 May until 28 May 2021 to identified individuals to encourage eligible citizens to apply for EUSS.

Despite the range of communications taking place, there is still a risk that some eligible EEA citizens and their family members will not apply by the deadline. It is currently estimated that there are up to 11,000 'HB only' claimants that have not yet applied for EUSS.

The Home Office has published **guidance**, (pages 26-44) on its approach to late applications, including what constitutes reasonable grounds for failure to meet the deadline.

## What happens after 30 June 2021

Following the article in March's **LAWD3/2021** bulletin I can confirm that, at present, there are no immediate actions for local authorities (LAs) to take from 1 July 2021.

In July, the Home Office will write to those citizens who are in receipt of benefits who have still not applied after the deadline encouraging them to apply for EUSS before actions are taken that could result in the loss of benefit entitlement. This will give the citizen an additional 28 days to make a late application to EUSS. Those who fail to respond to the Home Office letter will be referred to DWP for further action.

DWP will issue a further letter to claimants in mid-September encouraging them to apply for EUSS before claim suspension action is taken. The aim of this engagement is to ensure that those in receipt of DWP benefits apply for EUSS and continue to be eligible for those benefits. Citizens that have still not applied for EUSS 28 days from the date on that letter will be subject to benefit suspension.

Following benefit suspension for failing to apply for EUSS, the citizen will be given a further 28 days to apply for EUSS. If, after this final 28-day period, the citizen has still not applied for EUSS then the claim will be terminated.

All EEA citizens and family members in scope of the Withdrawal Agreement who do not have EUSS status, are classified as Persons Subject to Immigration Control and therefore will have no entitlement to DWP benefits and public services.

## Payments from 1 July 2021

DWP has sought and received HM Treasury's permission to make extra-statutory payments for existing claimants from 1 July 2021 following the end of the Grace Period.

The extra-statutory payments will continue whilst the citizen is applying for EUSS or until either a decision is made to suspend due to not applying or the application has been refused.

Details regarding the extra statutory payments should not be publicised externally as this is for benefit administration purposes only.

I can confirm there is no requirement for LAs to capture any information in relation to the extra-statutory payments. This will just be included as a standard HB claim.

## Data sharing

DWP will not make any changes to the actual benefit entitlement, these will continue to appear as regular benefit payments whilst the claimant is receiving extra-statutory payments.

Where a citizen has not applied or been granted EUSS, and was previously entitled to a DWP legacy benefit, the claim termination will be shared with the LAs through Transfer Your File or Universal Credit data share (where applicable).

For HB only claimants, LA-PED will continue to work closely with DWP and LAs on the lower level process that will be triggered once the Home Office shares the final list of claimants who have not applied for EUSS in mid-September.

More information will be shared on this process when it is available.

LAs can check the current status of a claimants EUSS application by selecting the view Home Office data button in Searchlight. This can also be used to support claims for Local Council Tax Reduction.

We ask that LAs apply discretion when they come across EEA citizens who have yet to apply for EUSS by signposting (where appropriate) them to apply for EUSS before they lose access to HB.

If you have any queries please email [lawelfare.lalaisonteam@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:lawelfare.lalaisonteam@dwp.gov.uk)

Clare Elliott, Head of Local Authority Partnership, Engagement and Delivery (LA-PED) division





## Articles



Low Incomes Tax Reform Group  
A voice for the unrepresented

### Press release: Concern at potential confusion for claimants renewing their tax credit claims

Hundreds of thousands of tax credit claimants, who had their claims auto-renewed last year due to the covid pandemic, will have to complete and return renewal declaration forms this year by 31 July or lose their entitlement, the Low Incomes Tax Reform Group (LITRG) is warning.

LITRG has issued the warning as HMRC recently completed the sending out of 2.5 million renewal packs.

The Group is also reminding those renewing their claims to check all coronavirus-related payments they have received to see if they count as income for tax credits, and if so, how they need to declare the payments, amid concerns about confusion as to what does, and does not, count.

If you claim tax credits, you should have received your annual renewal pack for 2021. HMRC send them out by post between April and June each year. HMRC expected to send out all packs out by 4 June 2021.

HMRC auto-renewed most claims in 2020 because of the impacts of COVID-19 – but HMRC are not doing that this year. It means more people will be receiving 'reply required' renewals<sup>2</sup> this year which they must act on and declare their income for the 2020/21 tax year (or an estimate) by 31 July 2021.

Read the full article [HERE](#)

### Benefit to all? Financial experience of Universal Credit claimants during the pandemic

June 14, 2021

Bright Blue, the independent think tank for liberal conservatism, has today published new analysis, entitled [Benefit to all? Financial experience of Universal Credit claimants during the pandemic](#). It reveals the troubling extent of the financial difficulties faced by existing and new Universal Credit claimants relative to the rest of the public during the first year of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The original analysis compares both the actual and perceived financial situations of those who do not claim Universal Credit ('non-UC'), those who were claiming Universal Credit in February 2020 ('existing UC'), and those who began to claim Universal Credit in March 2020 or later ('new UC'), at five points: before the pandemic in 2018-19, May 2020, July 2020, November 2020 and March 2021.

[www.brightblue.org.uk/benefit-to-all/](http://www.brightblue.org.uk/benefit-to-all/)



### Long Covid must be urgently recognised as a disability and Covid-19 as an occupa- tional disease

rightsnet

The TUC has called for long Covid to be urgently recognised as a disability and Covid-19 as an occupational disease.

In [Workers' experiences of long Covid](#), the TUC analyses the results of a survey that questioned more than 3,500 workers about the impact of long Covid on their daily working life. Reporting that more than half of respondents had experienced some form of discrimination or disadvantage due to their condition, the TUC also finds that many faced disbelief and suspicion when they disclosed their symptoms which included brain fog, shortness of breath, difficulty concentrating and memory problems.

For more information, see [TUC calls for long Covid to be urgently recognised as a disability to prevent "massive" discrimination](#) from [tuc.org.uk](http://tuc.org.uk)



## Disabled student given permission to legally challenge new regulations preventing him claiming universal credit

**Leigh Day**

A disabled student has been granted permission to legally challenge a recent change in regulations that prevent him and thousands of other disabled students from claiming universal credit while in further education.

Flinn Kays, aged 18, claims that new regulations that bar the path to disabled students having a work capability assessment (WCA) and thus claiming universal credit, are unlawful.

When the benefit was originally created, it was intended, and Parliament agreed, that disabled students who could show that they had limited capability for work should be exempt from the rule that individuals can't claim universal credit whilst in full-time education.

However, in approximately 2018 it became evident that an internal policy existed which directed DWP staff to reject outright the universal credit claims of disabled students. Last year, following a judicial review challenge by two students, Sidra Kauser and 'JL', the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions Theresa Coffey conceded that the policy was unlawful and a judge approved and sealed an Order to that effect on 31 July 2020. Sidra and JL were both granted a WCA.

But within a matter of days of this concession, on 5 August 2020 the SSWP laid regulations which changed the law so that other disabled students who would in future make a claim for universal credit would not be invited to a WCA. Therefore their limited capability for work would not be established. Claims for universal credit are currently being refused on that basis.

Read the full article [HERE](#)

## Older Scots missing out on £332m in unclaimed financial support



The number of pensioners in poverty has now passed the two million mark across the UK, with 150,000 in Scotland living in relative poverty and thousands more on the cusp, warns Age Scotland as it urges any older person who feels financially hard-pressed to check their eligibility for Pension Credit.

The national charity for older people says that Pension Credit, a benefit that tops up low pensioner incomes, is one of the most underclaimed means of social security support for older people.

In many cases, claiming Pension Credit can also "passport" older people to other sources of financial support which can make an even bigger difference – such as Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction, Cold Weather Payments, a free TV licence for those over 75, and help with health costs.

Levels of pensioner poverty in Scotland have begun to rise again in recent years. For example, the proportion of pensioners in persistent poverty has risen from 8% to 12% since 2010.

Despite these rising figures, it is estimated that 40% of eligible pensioners on low incomes are still missing out on Pension Credit. That means £332m of financial support is going unclaimed by 123,000 older households in Scotland.

**[Age Scotland's information guides and their "Check in, Cash out" campaign are available online.](#)**

Source - **<https://tfn.scot/news/older-scots-missing-out-on-332m-in-unclaimed-financial-support>**

## Social Bite's current free food giveout

- ⇒ 8am - 9.30am for a breakfast roll
- ⇒ 2.30pm - 3.30pm for a free sandwich, snack and tea/coffee







## Moving home: ESA to Universal Credit

# WinVisible

Your benefit rights — if you have to move local authority area.

If you are in the Support Group of ESA and have to move out of your local authority area, your ESA is not protected **anymore**, you have to claim Universal Credit (UC).

**We wanted to share some info** you may not know — if you do have to move home, and go from ESA to UC as a “natural migrant”, you won’t start from basic level of UC and don’t have to do a new Work Capability Assessment.

If you are in the Support Group of ESA on the date you claim UC, **you will be treated as being in the equivalent of Support Group** (called Limited Capability for Work-Related Activity — LCWRA) ( Regulation 19 of *UC (TP) Regs 2014* ) and the LCWRA addition should be included within your UC award from start of UC claim — under Reg 28 (5) (b) of the *UC Regs 2013*.

If you start your UC claim whilst the ESA award is being paid or within one month of the ESA award ending and still satisfy the **severe disability premium** criteria (living alone as the only adult and getting PIP), then you will be entitled to the **transitional SDP element** added to your Universal Credit, under Schedule 2 para 1 of the *UC (TP) Regs 2014*.

However, the transitional SDP element of £120 per month is still **less than** the previous severe disability premiums.

If you are in the **Work-Related Activity** Group of ESA, you will go into the equivalent group if moving to UC — Limited Capability for Work (LCW). Your UC work coach should adapt your claimant commitment to suit your needs. If you want to challenge what you are being asked to do, get advice and support.

**Fleeing domestic violence.** In addition, women who have experienced domestic violence within the past 6 months from notification to the DWP should have no work-related requirements imposed upon them for 13 weeks from the date they notified the DWP of the DV or threat of DV (**Reg 98 UC Regs 2013**). *WinVisible adds: We always wanted more time for recovery for all women and children fleeing domestic violence, and around 2009, we lobbied for no set limit, together with Women Against Rape and others. Three months is the standard time, you can ask your work coach for more time.*

Also, when starting a UC claim, you would be subject to the five-week wait, going into rent arrears, or would need to claim an advance which is taken off UC instalments later, so you would have less money. Also the staff don’t necessarily know or pay attention to the rules above, so there may be problems initially to sort out. Disability Rights UK have pointed out various **problems**.

**Children.** If you have dependent children, we recommend to get advice before you start your Universal Credit claim. Depending on the situation, some additions for children are less money than for other benefits and there is a two-child limit applied to payments for children — see conditions **here**. However, Child Benefit is not part of UC and would just continue.

**<https://winvisibleblog.wordpress.com/2021/06/20/moving-home-esa-to-universal-credit/>**







## Articles

### Don't slash Covid benefit uplift, former Tory minister urges

Architect of universal credit says government must rethink plans to end £20 a week payment increase

The former minister who oversaw the introduction of universal credit has called on the government to maintain key benefit increases introduced during the pandemic, lamenting that it had taken a global health crisis for the welfare system to be provided with adequate funding.

In a rare interview, David Freud, regarded as the architect of the controversial benefit, told the *Observer* he battled against "massive cuts" demanded by the Treasury and had considered resigning.

[www.theguardian.com/society/2021/jun/20/dont-slash-covid-benefit-uplift-former-tory-minister-urges](http://www.theguardian.com/society/2021/jun/20/dont-slash-covid-benefit-uplift-former-tory-minister-urges)

### Discretionary council tax reduction – How to guide

In this How to guide we look at how you can help your client to make an application for discretionary council tax reduction under **s13A of the Local Government Finance Act (LGFA)**.

Section 13A is a really useful provision for clients who are struggling to pay their council tax bills. We are aware however that applications are not always straightforward and are often refused. This article provides you with a step by step guide to making an application under S13A including what to do if the council says no.

**In addition to having a council tax reduction scheme to cover certain groups of people, each local authority has the power to reduce an individual's council tax liability by as much as it 'thinks fit'.**

<https://medium.com/adviser/discretionary-council-tax-reduction-how-to-guide-38e68c298a4e>

**Welfare Rights Adviser**  
Full time, Permanent  
Flexible location - home based  
**£23,500-£28,000**



You'll work within our Money and Work Team, offering comprehensive benefits advice on our busy telephone helpline receiving up to 1000 calls per week to the service, alongside email and web chat. In addition to offering benefits advice, you will support customers to access debt, energy, housing, and employment rights services. You will identify and process Macmillan Grant applications, along with supporting people affected by cancer with more complex welfare rights cases.

### CAS calls for end to 20 metre rule in new disability payments

**Citizens Advice Scotland (CAS)** has welcomed encouraging changes from the Scottish Government around adult disability payments, **but is urging the government** to go further to improve the payment for more disabled people by scrapping the 20 metre rule.

### What are your clients experiences of the Child Maintenance Service (CMS)?



CPAG is trying to gain a better understanding of individuals' experiences with the Child Maintenance Service (CMS) and any issues that are impacting the payment of maintenance to parents with care.

If you have advised a client on any matter relating to the CMS, and they are happy for you to share anonymised details of their case, please send them to CPAG's Early Warning System through the **contact page** or by e-mail to **ews@cpag.org.uk**.

CPAG is interested in any experience of the CMS, whether this relates to payments, administration, or any other aspect of the process.



## LEAP review - psychological distress and following the route of a journey

A leading barrister has told Benefits and Work that the way the LEAP review has been carried out may be unlawful and that there is a significant public interest in bringing an action against the DWP to establish if that is the case.

In order to prevent many tens of thousands of claimants from losing out, we now **need to hear from claimants** who have received a LEAP review letter in the last three months.

### The MH case

Benefits and Work has obtained the opinion of a leading social security barrister, Tom Royston of Garden Court North Chambers, who successfully acted for the claimants in the original MH case. It was this case which led to the LEAP review, so Tom Royston has very detailed knowledge of the issues.

In the MH case, it was found that the DWP had been misapplying the law in relation to psychological distress and following the route of a journey.

Claimants should have been awarded the standard rate of PIP mobility if, because of overwhelming psychological distress, they needed someone with them to follow the route of an unfamiliar journey.

And they should have been awarded the enhanced rate if they could not follow the route of a familiar journey without having someone with them for the same reason.

Instead, the DWP had been awarding just 4 points, not enough for any award of the mobility component at all.

The LEAP review was intended, the DWP said, to identify all the claimants who had missed out on the correct rate of the PIP mobility component since November 2016 and make back-payments where applicable.

However, **increasing doubts have arisen** about whether the LEAP review, which began in June 2018, is a genuine and effective attempt to identify the many thousands of claimants who have been underpaid.

**<https://dpac.uk.net/2021/06/benefits-and-work-asking-for-help/>**



## DWP 'may have unlawfully deprived tens of thousands of PIP claimants of back-payments'

after taking legal advice from a leading social security barrister, the **Benefits and Work advice and information website** wants to hear from claimants who may have been affected to help with a potential legal action.

The call relates to **a high court ruling in December 2017** that found DWP had acted unlawfully by introducing new rules that were "blatantly discriminatory".

Those rules meant that people who were unable to plan or undertake a journey due to overwhelming psychological distress would receive fewer qualifying points when assessed for PIP, with many receiving a lower level of financial support as a result, or even no PIP at all.

**[www.disabilitynewsservice.com/dwp-may-have-unlawfully-deprived-tens-of-thousands-of-pip-claimants-of-back-payments/](https://www.disabilitynewsservice.com/dwp-may-have-unlawfully-deprived-tens-of-thousands-of-pip-claimants-of-back-payments/)**

## CPAG RESPONSE TO TACKLING CHILD POVERTY PROGRESS REPORT

Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2021



Child poverty progress report "stark and urgent reminder that far, far more action and investment is needed to meet Scotland's child poverty targets" say campaigners

**<https://cpag.org.uk/news-blogs/news-listings/cpag-response-tackling-child-poverty-progress-report>**





## Record numbers of UK families had benefits capped during lockdown this year

Campaigners call for cap to end after DWP figures show some families lost hundreds of pounds a month

Record numbers of UK families had their benefits capped during lockdown earlier this year, leaving them hundreds of pounds a month worse off overnight and plunging them into deeper poverty, official figures show.

Department for Work and Pensions **statistics published on Tuesday** reveal that 200,000 households were capped in February, up 24,000 on the previous quarter and 122,000 higher than the same period the previous year.

Campaigners called for the cap to be abolished, saying it unfairly impoverished households who had lost work during lockdown and undermined the government's own efforts to protect low-income families during the pandemic.

The average capped household lost £238 a month, though 31,000 families lost more than £400 a month and 1,900 families more than £1,000 a month. More than four-fifths of those capped in February were families with children, half of them with children under the age of five. Single parents headed 59% of capped households.

The main driver of increased capping over the last quarter was likely to be families who had started to claim universal credit at the beginning of the pandemic reaching the end of a nine-month **"grace period" of protection** from the cap from December onwards.

The latest rise in families having payments capped follows a doubling at the start of the pandemic when the £20-a-week universal credit uplift to help poorer households cope with the extra costs of Covid **pushed many families over the cap threshold**, leaving them even worse off than they were before the crisis.

Alison Garnham, the chief executive of Child **Poverty** Action Group, said: "Especially in areas with high rents, capped families are losing large amounts of social security support and that is disastrous for the children concerned. The government must abolish the benefit cap to prevent more children from being damaged by impoverishment."

The cap – a limit on the total amount of benefit people can claim – was introduced in 2013 to provide an "incentive" for jobless claimants to find work. Ministers have since **made it even less generous**, despite evidence – including from the **DWP's own research** – that capped claimants were less likely to find work.

The cap restricts jobless universal credit or housing benefit couple claimants to household benefit payments totalling £20,000 a year (£385 a week) outside London and £23,000 (£442 a week) in the capital. These limits have remained unchanged since 2016.

**[www.theguardian.com/society/2021/jun/22/record-numbers-of-uk-families-had-benefits-capped-during-lockdown-this-year](https://www.theguardian.com/society/2021/jun/22/record-numbers-of-uk-families-had-benefits-capped-during-lockdown-this-year)**





## Accountant in Bankruptcy **IT Strategy 2021 - 2025**

AIB has published its IT Strategy from 2021 to 2025.

The Strategy details the principles that underpin the work that will be carried out and the key drivers that inform what that work entails.

The key areas to consider are:

- the transformation to Cloud services and the resultant workload and training needs;
- the assurance that AIB is cyber resilient and able to keep its information secure;
- the methods we use to communicate and engage with our stakeholders; and
- the development of the Efficiencies & Technology team to ensure it has the skills and resource to make this next transformation a successful one.

Read the Strategy in full [here](#).

[www.aib.gov.uk/news/releases/21212121/0606/aib-it-strategy-2021-2025](http://www.aib.gov.uk/news/releases/21212121/0606/aib-it-strategy-2021-2025)

## **First-ever financial education textbook arrives in Scottish schools, funded by Martin Lewis**

The first-ever curriculum mapped financial education textbook – funded jointly by MoneySavingExpert founder Martin Lewis and the Money and Pensions Service – has now landed in secondary schools in Scotland, following the successful roll-out of versions in England and Northern Ireland.

*Nearly 27,000 hard copies of the Scottish version of the **Your Money Matters** book have been delivered for free to over 350 schools in Scotland. It follows the launch of a digital version of the textbook in Scotland in March 2021, as well as an accompanying online teacher's guide and a PowerPoint version for use in lessons, which were all made available for free to support home learning.*

### **You can download a copy for free**

Digital copies of the guide, and in some cases teachers' guides too, are available for anyone to download for free: Download [Your Money Matters - Scotland](#).

In Scotland, the government-funded Money and Pensions Service (MAPS) and Martin Lewis have split the cost of the £98,000 project to deliver the book to Scottish schools. The books are being delivered by education charity Young Money, which is part of charity Young Enterprise.

[www.moneysavingexpert.com/news/2021/06/financial-education-textbook-scotland/](http://www.moneysavingexpert.com/news/2021/06/financial-education-textbook-scotland/)

## **Free training course for new/inexperienced debt advisers**



I just wanted to let you know about the training course that AMI are offering, designed specifically for debt/money advisers that are new to the role.

It is free of charge and comprises 3 modules delivered via Microsoft Teams – a 2-hour session each week for 3 weeks running - and is very practically-focussed, covering:

- 1) Information-gathering, checking debts, using the common financial tool
- 2) Overview of debt solutions, using case studies to look at which solutions may work well in different scenarios
- 3) The bankruptcy process in practice

We have delivered this course a couple of times now to recently recruited advisers for a few different CABx and the feedback has been very positive indeed. So much so we are now planning to run the course again and wish to invite any other new/inexperienced debt advisers out there to join.

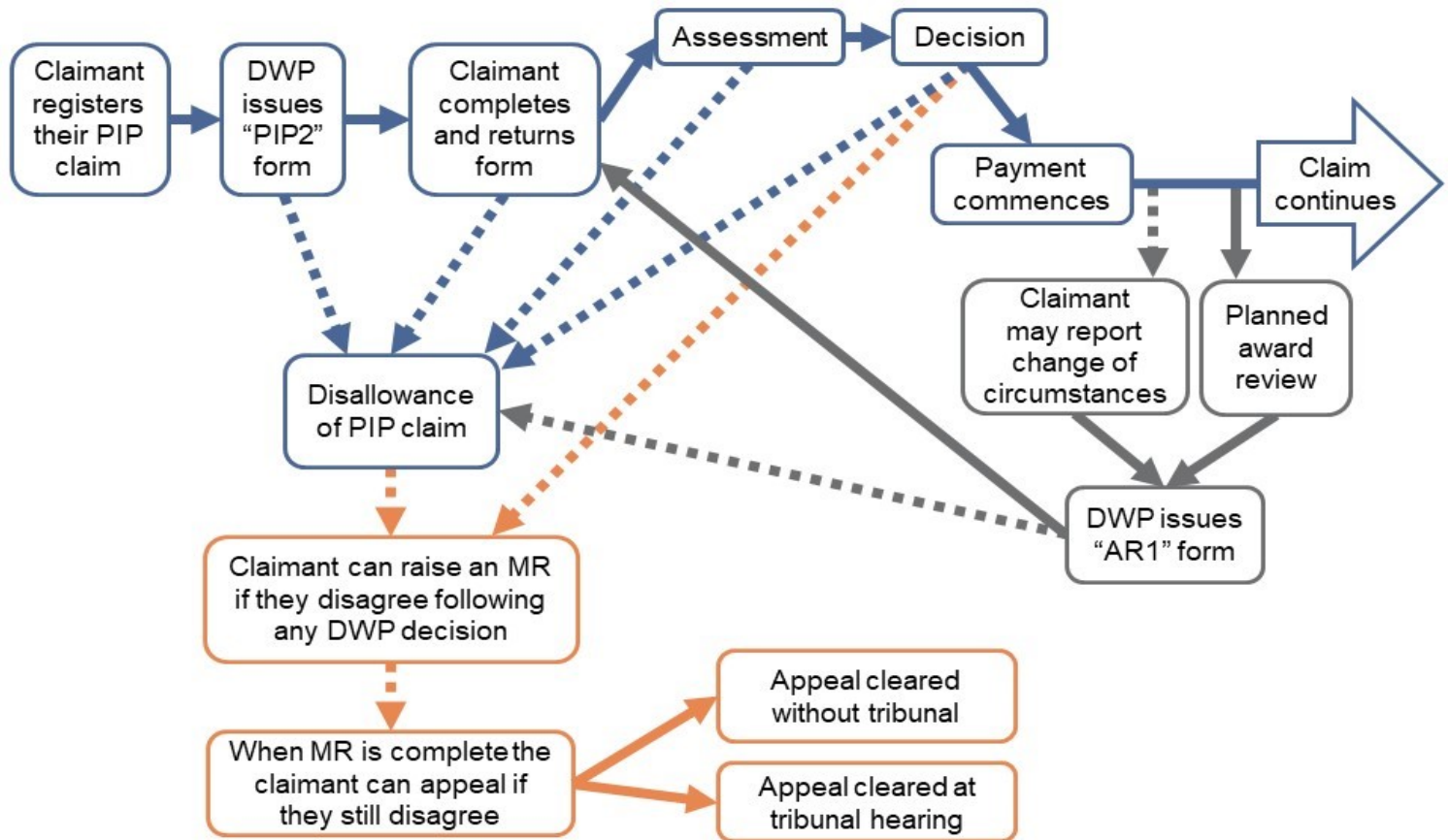
If you fall into this category and are interested in taking part then please reply to let me know. Or maybe you have colleagues that may benefit from this training - if so please forward this email to them, or to your manager, and I'd be delighted to hear from them. We will then try and sort out dates that are suitable to most people over the next couple of months.

If you have any queries about this then of course do not hesitate to get in touch with me.

**Kevin Mapstone, Insolvency Practitioner, AMI Financial Solutions Ltd**

[kevin.mapstone@amifinancialsolutions.com](mailto:kevin.mapstone@amifinancialsolutions.com)

# Summary of a PIP Customer Journey



During the current COVID-19 pandemic, some of the steps that a PIP claimant would follow have been changed. A typical customer journey is as follows, with COVID-19 changes highlighted:

1. Claimant registers their claim to PIP
2. DWP issues the "How your disability affects you" (PIP2) form, for completion by the claimant
3. Claimant completes and returns PIP2 form – this can lead to: a) automatic referral to the Assessment Provider (AP); b) disallowance of the claim based on the information in the PIP2 form; or c) disallowance of the claim if the claimant fails to return the PIP2 form without being identified as having additional support needs
4. Under normal circumstances, the claimant may have their claim assessed based on the paper evidence already submitted, or may be called for a face-to-face assessment conducted by the AP. However, under Covid-19 provisions, telephone assessments have replaced the face-to-face channel. **The claimant may: a) attend and participate in their assessment; or b) fail to attend or participate in the assessment, which can lead to disallowance**
5. DWP makes a decision based on the AP advice and any additional evidence received. The outcome may be: a) an award (including a monetary amount of the award for both Daily Living and Mobility components, the award type and, if appropriate, the period of time that should be allowed before a review of the award takes place); or b) a disallowance due to failing the assessment
6. Payment commences
7. When the claim is in payment, a claimant must report any changes of circumstance relating to the claim, and this may lead to a review of the award
8. Claims may undergo a planned award review when they reach the end of their review period (unless they received an ongoing award, where they'll receive a light touch review after 10 years)
9. In the case of a reported change of circumstance or a planned award review, an "AR1" form is issued
10. If the claimant disagrees with a decision on their claim, including where an award has been given, they can ask for a Mandatory Reconsideration (MR)
11. After the MR has been completed, if the claimant still disagrees with the decision they are able to lodge an appeal with Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Service (HMCTS)
12. Some appeals are cleared without a tribunal hearing, where the following outcomes are possible: **a) withdrawn by the customer, or struck out by the tribunal; or b) lapsed – where DWP change the decision in the customer's favour**
13. Some appeals are cleared at a tribunal hearing, where the following outcomes are possible: a) DWP decision upheld by the tribunal; or b) DWP decision overturned by the tribunal. Under COVID-19 provisions, face to face hearings were replaced by telephone or video hearings, alongside paper-based hearings