

BenefitsBulletin



North East Scotland Advice Forum is a local network for people working in advice services to share information and experiences. The Forum meets quarterly throughout the year.

December 2023 Newsletter

If you would like an article included in the next bulletin, please contact admin@nesaf.co.uk



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NB v Social Security Scotland

2023 UT 35

7 November 2023

This is an appeal about Adult Disability Payment

This appeal raises issues about procedure before the FTS when determining appeals about ADP, and in particular its inquisitorial function and powers to request further evidence.

The appeal also raises issues about:

- the conditions which must be met to qualify for ADP
- the connection required between the condition suffered and limitations on claimants performing activities in schedule 1 to the 2022 Regulations
- and the proper approach to scoring activities.

www.scotcourts.gov.uk/docs/default-source/cos-general-docs/upper-tribunal-pdfs-for-web/2023ut35.pdf?



Benefit calculator

Our benefits calculator will help you find out what benefits you can claim.

The calculator is free to use, and the details you provide are anonymous.

Before you start, make sure you have information about your savings, income, pensions and existing benefits (for you and your partner).

If you run out of time, you can save your calculation and come back to it later, and pick up right where you left off.

⇒ Should take 10 minutes to complete

⇒ Please complete all fields with an asterisk(*)

[START >>>](#)

Permanent Residence for EU Citizens after the IMA case

citizens advice

In this long form article, [John Donkersley](#) looks at how the Home Office has had to re-introduce automatic rights to permanent residence in the UK for EU citizens, and what this means for advisers and their clients.

<https://medium.com/adviser/its-back-permanent-residence-for-eu-citizens-after-the-ima-case-d0ffe65a070e>

Published in [Adviser online](#)

QR Post code



View last months
Benefit Bulletin

If your Universal Credit is reviewed

Your Universal Credit claim might be reviewed to make sure you're getting the right payment and support.

If your claim is going to be reviewed, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) will contact you and let you know through your online account.

You'll need to send DWP some documents to confirm your details and have a phone interview.

What documents you'll need to send

You'll get a message in your online account asking to see your ID and bank statements.

You might also need to share documents about your circumstances and the amount of Universal Credit you're getting. For example you might need to provide documents about your:

- housing costs
- earnings or other income
- self-employment
- savings
- childcare costs
- children
- health condition
- student finance
- caring responsibilities

Your interview

You'll be invited to a phone interview to discuss your claim. If you do not attend the interview, your payment could be stopped.

If you're not getting the right amount of Universal Credit

The review might find that you're getting too much or too little in your Universal Credit payment. If your Universal Credit needs to change, you'll get a message in your online account. Your future payments will be changed and you may get:

- an extra payment to make up what you've missed out on
- money taken off your payments

If you disagree with a decision made during your review you can **challenge the decision**.



Challenge a decision made by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)

If you think a decision is wrong, you can use this form to ask DWP to look at it again. This is called '**mandatory reconsideration**'.

CRMR1 11/23

Department for Work and Pensions

If you disagree with a decision made by the Department for Work and Pensions

We have many ways we can communicate with you

You can find our contact details by searching for the relevant benefit on www.gov.uk

Treating people fairly

We are committed to the Equality Act 2010 and treating people fairly. To find out more about this law, search 'Equality' on www.gov.uk

It is easier to call

You can use this form to ask for a Mandatory Reconsideration if you do not agree with a decision. This means a decision maker will look at your claim again and see if the decision was right or wrong.

It is important we make the right decision. To help us do that, this form will ask you to:

- tell us the reasons why you think the decision is wrong, and
- give us any new information that we have not seen already.

If you want to ask for a Mandatory Reconsideration in writing

You can use this form to ask for a Mandatory Reconsideration. There is a booklet to help you fill in this form called CRMR1A. It explains what information you need to include and has examples of the types of information we can consider. You can read it online at www.gov.uk/mandatory-reconsideration

When you complete the form:

- You can type your information instead of writing if it is easier for you
- Everyone must complete the section: **About you, Why you disagree with the decision and the declaration**
- Only complete this section **If a representative is completing the form** if you are filling in the form for someone else, such as a child or a person you represent.

After you fill out the form

- Please print the form and sign it
- Post the form back to the address at the top of your decision letter
- Send any other relevant evidence at the same time
- We will send you a text message or letter to tell you we have received your form
- A different decision maker will look at your claim and any new information you provide. If they can change the decision, they will. It is important you understand that the amount you are awarded could go up, down or stay the same. Your benefits could also be stopped
- When we have made our decision, we will send you a letter called a Mandatory Reconsideration Notice.

If you disagree with a decision for:

- Housing Benefit, please contact your local authority
- Child Benefit, Guardian's Allowance or Tax Credits please contact HMRC

Autumn Statement

Local Housing Allowance rate to rise

- Hunt says rent can constitute more than half the living costs of private renters on the lowest incomes.
- He says he will therefore increase the Local Housing Allowance rate to the 30th percentile of local market rents. This will give 1.6 million households an average of £800 of support next year, he says.
- Local housing allowance helps people on benefits pay their rent to a private landlord. It has been frozen since 2020 despite rents rising sharply. That freeze has now been lifted.



Benefits to rise by September inflation rate

- Benefits will increase next year by 6.7%, the inflation rate for September.
- There had been speculation that Hunt would instead use the lower inflation figure for October, when it slowed to 4.6%.
- This applies to working-age benefits such as means-tested benefits such as Universal Credit, and disability benefits.
- Using October's figures would have cut spending by around £3bn next year, according to the Institute for Fiscal Studies.
- State pensions are covered by a different regime, the triple lock, which guarantees they go up with wages, inflation or 2.5% - whichever is highest.

National Insurance rate cut from 12% to 10%

- Hunt says the main employee National Insurance rate will be cut by 2 percentage points from 12% to 10% from 6 January.

Benefits to stop for those refusing to seek work

- Hunt follows through with a clampdown on benefits.
- He says that if, after seeking a job for 18 months, a claimant has still not found employment they will have to take part in a mandatory work placement "to increase their skills and improve their employability".
- And if they "choose not to engage with the work search process for six months, we will close their case and stop their benefits", he says.

Work and welfare reform

- We're expanding four programmes which support mental and physical health – **NHS Talking Therapies, Individual Placement and Support, Restart** and **Universal Support** and on top of this we're launching our **WorkWell** service, which will be delivered with the Department for Health and Social Care to support almost 60,000 people who are at risk of entering long-term unemployment, to enter or return to the workplace.
- The Government is reforming the **Work Capability Assessment** (WCA) to ensure that people who can work are supported to do so via the welfare system. Changes to the activities and descriptors will better reflect the greater flexibility and reasonable adjustments now available in the world of work, preventing some individuals from being deemed not fit for work and ensuring they will be better supported into employment. These changes will only apply to new claimants.
- We're also looking at reforming **fit notes**. We'll be trialling reforms which will provide individuals whose health affects their ability to work with easy and rapid access to specialised work and health support.
- Alongside this additional support we're also **making the system fairer**, by introducing mandatory work placements will boost skills and employability for those who have not found a job after 18 months of intensive support. Those who choose not to engage with the work search process for six months will have their claims closed and benefits stopped.

Autumn Statement continued.....

Supporting families

- **To ensure families are supported** with the cost of living, we are **maintaining the triple lock for pensioners**, uprating the State Pension by 8.5% in line with earnings. This means that the new State Pension will be worth up to £900 a year more.
- The Government is increasing **working age benefits** (including Universal Credit) in line with inflation, measured by September CPI which is 6.7% this year. **Disability benefits** such as PIP and Attendance Allowance will also increase by 6.7%.
- To support families that need most help to pay their rent, the Government will increase the **Local Housing Allowance rate to cover the cheapest 30th percentile of local properties in the private rented sector**.
- Both the **National Living Wage and National Minimum Wage will increase**. From 1 April 2024, the National Living Wage will increase by 9.8% to £11.44 an hour for 2.7 million eligible workers, which will include 21- and 22-year-olds for the first time. The National Minimum Wage rates will increase for young people and apprentices: for people aged 18-20 by 14.8% to £8.60 an hour, for 16-17 year olds and apprentices by 21.2% to £6.40 an hour.
- The Government remains determined that every pound of welfare spend goes to those who need it most so is continuing to crack down on fraud and error with new primary powers to access data held by third parties such as banks. This will enable DWP to identify fraud in the welfare system where fraudsters are currently unknown to us and reduce error, minimising debt.

Work Capability Assessment – more detail

- We have published our response to the consultation on changes to the **Work Capability Assessment** criteria having carefully considered feedback from disabled people and people with health conditions, as well as the organisations that represent and support them. Our reforms reflect concerns raised as part of the process.
- We will be making changes to how we assess the **Mobilising and Getting About activities as well as the Substantial Risk rules** to reflect the modern world of work and greater employment opportunities for disabled people since the WCA criteria were last reviewed in 2011.
- We will continue to protect those with the most severe conditions while ensuring those that can work are supported in doing so. Our expanded employment and health offer will provide integrated and tailored support to disabled people to support them and help move claimants closer to work.
- Alongside these changes, we will also be bringing forward a new **‘Chance to Work Guarantee’** that will remove the fear of re-assessments and give people the confidence to try work, while providing continuity of service for vulnerable claimants.

Pension Credit toolkit

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

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

The Universal Credit (Transitional Provisions) (Amendment) Regulations 2023

New legislation has been issued in relation to the rates of the transitional severe disability element (tSDPe) in universal credit.

The purpose of the instrument is to provide additional amounts of transitional protection to eligible claimants who move from a legacy benefit¹ to Universal Credit (UC) and are entitled to the transitional severe disability premium (SDP) element (tSDPe).

In response to a High Court judgment that was handed down in January 2022, the Judge decided that there is differential treatment between SDP recipients who have naturally migrated to UC and those who remain on legacy benefits. This was either because their change of circumstances did not trigger a new claim for benefit, or because they experienced their change of circumstances when the SDP Gateway was in place (between 16th January 2019 and 27th January 2021), preventing them claiming UC. The Judge found that this difference was not justified.

The monthly additional amount added to the transitional severe disability premium (SDP) element (tSDPe) will broadly reflect the value of the EDP and DP premiums that a claimant was entitled to prior to them naturally migrating to UC.

The additional monthly rates will be (for 2023/24):

- Enhanced Disability Premium – single rate £84; couple rate £120
- Disability Premium – single rate £172; couple rate £246
- Disabled Child Addition (lower rate) - £177 for each eligible child or qualifying young person.

Explanatory memorandum

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2023/1238/made

Consultation outcome

Work Capability Assessment: activities and descriptors

The government published its response to this consultation on 22 November 2023.

www.gov.uk/government/consultations/work-capability-assessment-activities-and-descriptors

Autumn Statement 2023

This is the Autumn Statement 2023 in full. You can find supporting and related documents below.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/autumn-statement-2023

Claim Pension Credit by 10 December and score extra £300

Those who apply before the deadline could qualify for an extra £300 Cost of Living boost thanks to Pension Credit backdating rules.

The average Pension Credit award is worth over £3,900 per year and it opens doors to other support, including help with housing costs, council tax and heating bills

Countdown to
Pension Credit
deadline day
on 10 December

Harry Redknapp recommends signing up for Pension Credit - YouTube

Speaking from his car window in an exclusive link up with the Department, Redknapp hails Pension Credit as a “brilliant signing” and calls on pensioners and their loved ones to check out the online [Pension Credit calculator](#) to see what they could get.

www.gov.uk/government/news/countdown-to-deadline-day-claim-pension-credit-by-10-december-and-score-extra-300



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The Disability Assistance for Older People (Scotland) Regulations 2024: scrutiny report

Summary of recommendations and observations

- **Recommendation 1:** We accept that during case transfer there is a rationale for aligning the aims of Pension Age Disability Payment with Attendance Allowance, but in the longer term the Scottish Government should review Pension Age Disability Payment's aims for consistency with the social security principles.
- **Recommendation 2:** The Scottish Government should consider bringing forward the 2026 take-up strategy to integrate the most recent benefits into the strategy as a whole.
- **Recommendation 3:** The Scottish Government should ensure that information on Short-term Assistance while challenging a decision includes the possibility of not regaining passported benefits in full at the end of the process so that people can make an informed decision about whether to apply.
- **Recommendation 4:** Given concerns about the mobility component and other passported support not being payable to individuals who claim disability assistance over state pension age, the Scottish Government should work with stakeholder organisations to consider other forms of transport assistance which could be available to older disabled people with mobility needs, within or outside the Scottish social security system.
- **Observation 1:** Older people needing help with renal dialysis day and night have access to a lower automatic rate of benefit than young people. The introduction of Pension Age Disability Payment is an opportunity for the Scottish Government to consider whether this is the best policy.
- **Observation 2:** When updated, the draft Pension Age Disability Payment Equality Impact Assessment could address data gaps and engage stakeholders to explore further justifications and mitigations related to a mobility component.
- **Recommendation 5:** The Scottish Government should revise the definition of 'supervision' in line with established case law principles.
- **Recommendation 6:** Provisions relating to the 'required period' and 'required period condition' should be revised to ensure they meet the policy intention.

Summary of recommendations and observations – Scottish Commission on Social Security (socialsecuritycommission.scot)

£641 million in social security support paid last year

97% of people said they received payments on time.

Social Security Scotland has published its Annual Report and Accounts, which show that it made £641 million in direct payments to people across Scotland from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

The payments were made across 13 Scottish benefits, seven of which are completely new forms of support not available anywhere else in the UK.

This includes the Scottish Child Payment which has been extended to eligible children under the age of 16. More than 300,000 young people are now receiving this payment.

The payments also include the new Winter Heating Payment, which has helped almost 400,000 people on low incomes with their heating costs.

£641 million in social security support paid last year - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)



Social Security (Amendment) (Scotland) Bill

The Bill amends the Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018 to make changes to the Scottish social security system.

The Bill was introduced on 31 October 2023

The Bill makes changes to the Scottish social security system, including:

- allowing the Scottish Government to provide care experience assistance and changing the way rules are made for the Scottish Child Payment
- changing the processes for making decisions about social security assistance in Scotland
- changing the processes where people must pay back assistance received by mistake, and providing that in certain situations a person's representative may need to pay back assistance received by the person by mistake
- allowing information to be gathered for auditing purposes
- creating a process for some, or all, of a compensation payment to be paid to the Scottish Government to cover the amount of assistance a person has received for the same accident, injury or illness
- changing the legal form of the Scottish Commission on Social Security and giving it more duties

[Read more about what this Bill does in the explanatory notes \(210KB, pdf\)](#)

[Introduced | Scottish Parliament Website](#)

[Explanatory Notes Accessible](#)

[Explanatory Notes](#)

[Policy Memorandum Accessible](#)

The Carer's Assistance (Carer Support Payment) (Scotland) Regulations 2023

Carer Support Payment will replace Carer's Allowance in Scotland. It will be piloted from November 2023 and extended to more areas from spring 2024, to be available nationally by autumn 2024.

The aim of the benefit is to:

- Provide income for unpaid carers in recognition of their role and its impact on their lives.
- Provide stability and support to access opportunities outside of caring and to support carers at key points in life.
- Ensure carers can have a positive experience of social security and maximise carers' take-up of all support available to them.

[The Carer's Assistance \(Carer Support Payment\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2023 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

Improving social security

New bill will make system more efficient and effective.

Improving the way the Scottish system of social security delivers for people in need of support is at the heart of new legislation.

The Social Security (Amendment) (Scotland) Bill enhances the rights of Social Security Scotland clients in a number of ways:

- A right to late re-determinations and appeals in exceptional circumstances
- The right to withdraw a request for redetermination
- The right to challenge a decision that someone is liable in a situation where an overpayment has been made

The Bill will also continue to enhance the design of the system, maximising choice for those who use it while delivering good value for money.

It will also enable the Scottish Government to recover the cost of devolved social security benefits from compensation awards in situations where someone has had to claim payments as a result of a third party's fault.

[Improving social security - gov.scot](#)



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New benefit for unpaid carers launches

The pilot phase of a new benefit that will be paid to over 80,000 carers has begun.

Carer Support Payment launched in Perth and Kinross, Dundee City and Na h-Eileanan Siar (Western Isles) on 20th November. The benefit is replacing Carer's Allowance, currently delivered by the Department for Work and Pensions, in Scotland.

Carers in more local authority areas will be able to apply from Spring next year as part of the phased roll-out. The benefit will be available nationally by Autumn 2024.

Carer Support Payment, the 14th benefit to be administered by Social Security Scotland, was designed with carers to offer them a better experience than Carer's Allowance.

This includes providing information to carers to help them access wider support and extending the eligibility criteria to let full-time students apply. Around 1,500 more people across Scotland are expected to be eligible for Carer Support Payment as a result.

The pilot phase will allow Social Security Scotland to put the new approach into practice. Learnings will be used to shape the roll-out of the benefit across Scotland.

Carers in Scotland who get Carer's Allowance will have their awards transferred to Carer Support Payment, starting from February 2024.

www.socialsecurity.gov.scot/news-events/news/new-benefit-for-unpaid-carers-launches

Care Leaver Payment: consultation

We are gathering views on the proposed Care Leaver Payment.

The consultation contains questions on a range of issues including the purpose of the payment, the eligibility criteria of the payment, and the support required to apply for and manage the payment.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/care-leaver-payment-consultation/>

Autumn Statement benefit changes 'deeply concerning'

Changes to work capability assessments announced in the Autumn Statement are 'deeply concerning' and could mean people receive less support based on a change of criteria rather than a change in their health, Social Justice Secretary Shirley-Anne Somerville has said.

Writing to DWP Secretary Mel Stride, Ms Somerville highlighted how the Scottish Government has taken a different approach with its social security system being based on treating people with fairness, dignity and respect.

Ms Somerville said:

"I remain deeply concerned about the changes to the activities and descriptors for 'getting about' for Limited Capability for Work, and the mobilising and substantial risk criteria for limited capability for work-related activity.

"The changes you are proposing, including the extension of the sanctions regime, will have very significant additional impact on some of the most vulnerable people in our communities who need our support most".

[UK Autumn Statement Back to Work Plan: Letter to UK Government](http://www.gov.scot/news/autumn-statement-back-to-work-plan-letter-to-uk-government)

www.gov.scot/news/autumn-statement-benefit-changes-deeply-concerning/



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Views of individuals and organisations sought on the Social Security (Amendment) (Scotland) Bill

Have Your Say



The **Scotland Act 2016** set in process a change to how social security is delivered in Scotland: it devolved 11 existing social security benefits from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) to Scotland;

- it gave new powers to the Scottish Government to make top-up payments to benefits reserved to the UK Government.
- In 2018, **The Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018** (the 2018 Act) established a legal framework for a new **Scottish social security system**. It created the Scottish Commission on Social Security (SCoSS), an independent scrutiny body.

The Social Security (Amendment) (Scotland) Bill aims to enhance the Scottish system of social security in line with the social security principles. There is a particular focus on enhancements related to continuous improvement and value for money.

Social Security (Amendment) (Scotland) Bill – your views – Scottish Parliament – Citizen Space

Carer Support Payment Case Transfer – Stakeholder Events (online)

- **Case Transfer Event, Tuesday 16 January 2024, 10:00 – 11:15**
- **Case Transfer Event, Wednesday 24 January 2024, 13:00 – 14:15**
- **Case Transfer Event, Thursday 1 February 2024, 10:00 – 11:15**
- **Case Transfer Event, Tuesday 6 February 2024, 13:00 – 14:15**

From Spring 2024 some clients currently in receipt of Carer's Allowance from the Department for Work and Pensions will have their award transferred to Carer Support Payment which is administered by Social Security Scotland.

We are hosting a series of free online events to provide external stakeholders and partners with information about this process specifically designed for clients in receipt of Carer's Allowance. These sessions will include details of:

- how clients currently on Carer's Allowance will be selected for case transfer
- the policies and processes which will underpin the transfer process
- the end to end client journey
- how we will communicate with clients throughout this process

If you have any questions about our series of events or difficulty booking a place, then please contact the National Engagement and Partnership Team at:

nationalengagementandpartnershipteam@socialsecurity.gov.scot or call Social Security Scotland on **0800 182 2222**.



Articles



SUPPORT • INSPIRE • DEVELOP • IMPACT

Get Ready for Winter

As the winter chill sets in, Scarf is here to help you prepare for the season while making a positive impact on your energy bills and the environment.

Small changes can help you save energy. If you are able to, turning down your thermostat by one degree, and keeping temperatures low in rooms you don't use can save you up to £100 a year*.

For more tailored energy advice to help you prepare for winter, get in touch. Our advisors can discuss energy saving measures best suited for you, and provide assistance if you are struggling with your energy bills.

You can reach us by calling **0808 129 0888** or by sending an email to heat@scarf.org.uk.

When reaching out to us, remember to provide your name, address, phone number, and what you require help with, so we can best assist you.



Autumn Statement - Benefit Changes

The Autumn Statement included some expected changes and some surprises. Click below to see a list of the changes most relevant to people working with benefit claimants.

www.housingsystems.co.uk/News/News-Articles/id/170

Universal Credit, Pre-Settled Status and Destitution



Since 2022, a court case has been rumbling along concerning an EEA national who had been granted Pre-Settled Status. The claimant, AT, a single mother, had fled domestic violence and other than Child Benefit had no income whatsoever. She claimed Universal Credit, which was refused as she had no qualifying right to reside.

On appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (with CPAG already involved at this point), the Judge ruled that UC should be paid, relying on the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, as there was an actual and current risk that AT and her child were not able to live in dignified conditions – a risk of being without food, clothing, accommodation, and heating.

Naturally, the SSWP appealed to the Upper Tribunal against this judgement (albeit with UC in payment for AT while the court process went on), where again, AT was successful. The SSWP then appealed again, to the Court of Appeal, which is the judgement which has just been handed down. AT was once again successful.

This is a significant judgement for those in similar positions. It is not a loophole for all claimants with Pre-Settled Status but no qualifying right to reside – there must be a real risk of destitution involved and each case must be assessed on an individual basis. It should be noted that the SSWP may try their luck and appeal again – we will keep you updated.

CPAG have produced notes for advisers helping people in this situation, which can be found here:-

cpag.org.uk/welfare-rights/resources/test-case/destitute-eu-nationals-pss-can-rely-eu-charter-fundamental-rights



Managed Migration: The Limits Of 'Test And Learn'

14th Nov 2023

CPAG's Hannah Aldridge and Z2K's Jamie Thunder dig into the latest data about managed migration to Universal Credit.

Today the DWP published the [latest data](#) on the outcomes of tax credit claimants who have been sent their 'migration notice'.

This is a letter informing people that they have three months to make a claim for universal credit (UC), at which point their tax credit payments will be terminated.

The data reveals that 16,000 people sent a migration notice did not make the transition to UC and had their legacy benefits terminated. This equates to 27 per cent of those who have been sent a migration notice and reached their deadline (based on those sent a migration notice in the first half of 2023).

z2k.org/managed-migration-the-limits-of-test-and-learn/?utm_source=feedly&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=managed-migration-the-limits-of-test-and-learn



Destitute EU Nationals with 'pre-settled status' can rely on EU Rights to obtain Universal Credit

UA-2022-001067-USTA

SSWP v AT (Aire Centre and IMA Intervening) [2022] UKUT 330 (AAC)

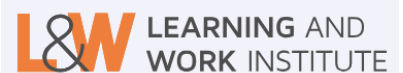
CPAG information note for welfare rights advisers – [SSWP v AT \(AIRE Centre and IMA Intervening\) \[2022\] UKUT 330 \(AAC\)](#).

The above note is aimed at welfare rights advisers assisting claimants with pre settled status who do not have any qualifying right to reside for the purposes of universal credit ("UC") and who are applying for or have applied for UC.

cpag.org.uk/sites/default/files/files/2022-12-12-SSWP-v-AT-decision-final1.pdf

cpag.org.uk/welfare-rights/resources/test-case/destitute-eu-nationals-pss-can-rely-eu-charter-fundamental-rights

More support, not tougher sanctions, is needed to help the growing number of people out of work due to sickness and disability to find work



New research by Learning and Work Institute throws into question the effectiveness of toughening up sanctions in the benefits system in order to grow the workforce.

Ahead of details to be announced in the Chancellor's Autumn Statement this Wednesday, and following the Government's *Back to Work* plan published last week, the analysis paper, [Understanding benefits](#), shows that most working-age people receiving out-of-work benefits have been assessed as too ill to work or have caring responsibilities.

Only one in ten out-of-work disabled people get help to find work each year, despite the use of benefit sanctions having doubled in the last decade, so a step change in approach is needed.

learningandwork.org.uk/news-and-policy/more-support-not-tougher-sanctions-is-needed-to-help-the-growing-number-of-people-out-of-work-due-to-sickness-and-disability-to-find-work/



Articles

Autumn Statement: State pension confirmed to rise by 8.5% from April 2024 – while some benefits will go up by 6.7%



www.moneysavingexpert.com/news/2023/11/state-pension-triple-lock-autumn-statement/

Autumn Statement: Workers to pay less in national insurance – but rate cuts don't offset the freezing of personal tax thresholds



www.moneysavingexpert.com/news/2023/11/national-insurance-cut-workers-autumn-statement/

Briefing: The Scottish Budget 2024-2025

November 27, 2023

Too many people across Scotland, including 250,000 children, are having their life chances restricted by the injustice of preventable poverty. This is completely unjust in a wealthy country like Scotland.

The risk of poverty continues to be particularly high for disabled people; single parents, the majority of whom are women; and Black and minority ethnic people.

In [a letter to the First Minister in August 2023](#), some 150 charities, trade unions, campaign groups, and community organisations came together to ask the First Minister to put action to tackle poverty at the heart of the Programme for Government. In recognition of the fact people living in the grip of poverty cannot afford to wait, these diverse organisations showed their support for a range of critical actions including increasing the Scottish Child Payment; fair funding for the third sector; housing; transport; and the implementation of the Minimum Income Guarantee.

Our briefing in advance of the Scottish Government Budget 2024-25 builds on that joint call for action, and shows how we can invest in the future for a stronger Scotland, free from the injustice of poverty.

You can [download the briefing here](#).



WORKING TOGETHER TO COMBAT POVERTY



Ministers don't have the right to say who is fit for work

Anti-poverty campaigners have accused the UK Government of using the threat of hunger and destitution to push people into unsuitable work.

The Poverty Alliance – Scotland's national anti-poverty network – says proposed changes to give the Department of Work & Pensions the power to strip people of their social security are 'immoral' and unworkable.

www.povertyalliance.org/ministers-dont-have-the-right-to-say-who-is-fit-for-work/

Thousands on disability benefits to lose extra £5,000 a year in autumn statement

The Guardian

An estimated 370,000 people will be ineligible for incapacity benefits and forced to look for work, Jeremy Hunt announces

www.theguardian.com/society/2023/nov/22/thousands-on-disability-benefits-to-lose-extra-5000-a-year-in-autumn-statement