



Department
for Work &
Pensions

Ministerial
Correspondence
Caxton House
Tothill Street
LONDON
SW1H 9DA

0207 340 4000

www.gov.uk

ministers@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Lord Mckenzie

19th November 2018

Dear Bill,

I am writing to you on matters raised during the Statement that I made to the House on Universal Credit on 5th November.

You asked on what basis home visits would be available for help with a claim and whether they would be available as of right to anybody who seeks one.

We are committed to providing tailored support for all claimants, including those who have restricted access to technology. Each individual's circumstances are different and, therefore, their barriers to work and the support needed must be tailored to these needs.

Around 99% of claims are made online. Where our customers need assistance to access our services and information, we can make reasonable adjustments to meet individual needs. This means that, for example, the Department can communicate with claimants in a variety of different formats to help them make and manage their claim, including through face-to-face interviews or via the telephone. The Universal Credit telephone helpline is now a free phone number. We can also arrange a home visit to support a claimant to make a claim to Universal Credit.

We already have a number of ways that claimants can be supported through the claim process, such as:

- The Jobcentre – Claimants can use dedicated computers to access their accounts and work coaches can provide additional support to help claimants make and manage their claim. Jobcentres can also signpost

claimants to local organisations, such as local authorities or other partner organisations, if they need help with managing their money;

- Appointees – For claimants who are unable to manage their own affairs, they can have appointees on Universal Credit to act on their behalf;
- Home Visits – Home visits can be arranged for claimants who cannot leave their house or who are in hospital with a health condition. Once a home visit is identified, which may be from information obtained from claimants themselves or via their representative, a Universal Credit agent makes a referral to the Visiting Team, detailing the reason for and the requirements of the visit; and
- New Claims by Telephone – Claimants who are unable to use digital services, for whatever reason, may make a new claim to Universal Credit by telephone.

This help and alternative methods of claiming will continue to be available during managed migration.

I hope you find this letter helpful. I have copied it to all peers who spoke in the debate and will place a copy in the House Library.

*Best wishes,
Reva*

BARONESS BUSCOMBE

MINISTER FOR WORK AND PENSIONS (LORDS)