

Cold Weather Payments

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Introduction

Cold Weather Payments (CWP) provide help with the extra costs of heating a home during periods of severe weather for those susceptible to the cold.

For example, someone who is:

- elderly
- disabled
- very young

As Universal Credit does not exactly replicate legacy benefit rules, there may be some claimants who were previously eligible for CWP who won't be eligible following migration to Universal Credit.

For example:

- disabled adults who received a disability premium because Disability Living Allowance was in payment
- claimants who have earnings unless they have a child or qualifying young person who is disabled.

Cold Weather Payment triggers

The CWP period runs from 1 November to 31 March.

The Meteorological Office notifies DWP when a CWP is triggered in one or more postcode areas. This happens when the temperature is recorded as being (or is forecast to be) an average of zero degrees Celsius or below over 7 consecutive days.

When the Meteorological office notify DWP that they expect an average temperature of zero degrees Celsius or below over the next 7 consecutive days, this is called a forecast trigger.

When the meteorological office notify DWP that it has been an average temperature of zero degrees Celsius or below over the previous 7 consecutive days, this is called a recorded trigger.

A CWP is issued promptly following notification of a CWP trigger. CWPs are issued separate to the claimant's normal monthly Universal Credit but are paid into the same account as regular Universal Credit payments.

Eligibility

To be eligible for a CWP, one member of the benefit unit must:

- have an award of Universal Credit for at least 1 day of the 7 day trigger period
- not be employed or self-employed (with the exception of those in receipt of the Disabled Child Addition)
- not live in a care home, independent hospital, Abbeyfield Home (with the exception of those with a child under 5 in the benefit unit)
- not be a person without an address (for example, homeless)

They must also fall into one of the following eligible criteria:

- in receipt of, or have underlying entitlement to Limited Capability for Work (LCW)
- in receipt of the Limited Capability for Work and Work-Related Activity (LCWRA)
- in receipt of the Disabled Child Addition or have a child who is disabled
- be responsible for a child under the age of 5 and also not be employed or self-employed

For a forecasted period, claimants must have met the above criteria on the date the trigger period was received by DWP from the Met Office.

For a recorded period, claimants must meet all the above criteria (except employment) on one day during the recorded period and they must all be met on the same one day.

For a recorded period where employment is a factor (for example, no disabled child), claimants must not be or have been in employment/self-employed on any one day during that recorded period.

Cold Weather Payments – when more than one person is eligible

Where there is more than one reason for a benefit unit to be eligible only one CWP will be made.

An example of this is where a disabled person may also have a disabled child but only one CWP would be paid. However, two brothers both disabled living in same household would receive one each as they are not part of the same benefit unit.

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