

Housing Costs and 18 to 21 year-olds

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Housing costs payable from 31 December 2018

18-21-year-olds may be eligible for housing costs if entitlement conditions for Universal Credit are met.

Housing costs can be paid in the first full assessment period on or after 31 December 2018.

Housing costs from April 2017 to 30 December 2018

Housing costs which applied from April 2017 to 30 December 2018 will be determined using the following guidance.

Housing costs not payable

Housing costs will not be payable to claimants who are aged between 18 and under 22 years old and all the following apply:

- are subject to all work-related requirements
- are single, or a member of a couple claiming as a single person
- do not fall into a relevant exemption category

Exemption categories include:

- the claimant is responsible for a child or qualifying young person
- Housing Benefit claimants who move into a Universal Credit Full Service area or are transferred into Universal Credit Full Service by DWP in roll-out, entitled to Housing Benefit at the point when they move or are moved
- Universal Credit claimants in Live Service areas
- Universal Credit claimants who move into a Full Service area or are transferred from Live Service to Full Service after 31 March who are in receipt of the Housing Costs element at the point when they move or are moved

- Universal Credit claimants in Full service whose award began before 1 April and includes housing costs for an assessment period including 01 April 2017 (this exemption does not apply on reclaims where there is a break in entitlement to housing costs after 01 April 2017)
- Universal Credit claimants in receipt of Armed Forces Independence Payment

See the [Exempt table](#) for a full list of exemptions and exemption periods.

Claimants not subject to all work-related requirements

These claimants are exempt - therefore, the 18-21 housing costs restriction does not apply.

Claimants temporarily exempted from all work-related requirements

Claimants temporarily exempted from all work-related requirements are exempt from this policy for as long as the temporary exemption applies.

Claimants with barriers to full Labour Market participation

Certain other claimants who fall within the all work-related requirements group who have barriers to full-time work are also exempt. This includes claimants exempted from the shared accommodation rate of local housing allowance.

Exemptions where it is inappropriate for the claimant to return to the family home

There are exemptions for:

- claimants who have no parents, or parents who have no home in Great Britain
- any case where the Secretary of State determines a claimant would suffer significant harm or that there would be a serious risk to the claimant's physical or mental health if they lived with either of their parents

See the [Exempt table](#) for a full list of exemptions and exemption periods.

Earnings exemption

There is a 6 month time-limited exemption for some claimants who were previously in work and earning more than a threshold amount.

New claimants qualify for this exemption if:

- they were in work for a period of 6 months immediately prior to the month in which they claim Universal Credit, and
- during this period, they were earning at least:
 - the monthly equivalent of 16 x National Minimum Wage for an 18-20-year-old per week each month, or

- the monthly equivalent of 16 x National Minimum Wage for an apprentice (if employed under an apprenticeship) ('the threshold').

See the [Exempt table](#) for a full list of exemptions and exemption periods

Existing claimants qualify for this exemption if they were in work and earning more than the threshold amount in each of the 6 previous assessment periods.

Existing claimant has been receiving Universal Credit for less than 6 months

In addition to looking at their earnings in previous assessment periods, consideration must be given to circumstances where the claimant was working, and met this earnings threshold in any additional calendar months ending before the month in which the claim for Universal Credit was made. When these are required to make up the 6-month period.

There are also a number of other exemption groups and a full list is included in the table below.

Exempt groups and applicable time periods

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| Any claimant who was a care leaver before the age of 18 (which can include a person who left care on their 18 th birthday) | Permanent |
| <p>Claimants for whom it is inappropriate to live with a parent or parents. This may include (but is not limited to) cases where there would be a serious risk to the claimant's physical or mental health or the claimant would suffer significant harm if they lived with them.</p> <p>A parent includes any person acting in place of a parent.</p> <p>Circumstances where it may be inappropriate for a claimant to live with their parents include where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the parents have been or are in the process of being evicted • the parents are in prison or are prevented from entering the country • the remoteness of the parents' home presents a serious barrier to finding work • the parental home would be overcrowded as a result of them living there | While it is considered inappropriate for the claimant to live with their parents. |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the claimant has entered the UK as an asylum seeker, refugee or as part of a Government resettlement scheme and is not housed with their parents upon being granted this status • there has been an irretrievable breakdown in the relationship with the parents • the claimant is estranged from their parents as a result of their religion, beliefs, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, race or ethnicity • the parents have moved and have made it clear that the claimant is not welcome to move with them • the claimant has been asked to leave the family home • the claimant is a pregnant mother unable to stay in the family home the claimant is a former gang member or is attempting to reduce their involvement in a gang or is at risk of gang threats or violence in the area where the family live • a claimant is homeless, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • those owed the statutory homelessness duty • those helped under local authority housing operations services, the new prevention and relief duties of the Homelessness Reduction Bill (in England) or the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 • those moving on from temporary or supported accommodation • those being supported by a third party • rough sleepers or those 'sofa surfing' • the parent the person is resident with dies and their surviving parent lives in a different city and has little or no continuing relationship with the claimant • where the need to live independently is part of an agreed plan with relevant support agencies • ex offenders where it is determined, based on advice from a responsible authority, that a return to the parental home would put them at risk of re-offending • other circumstances at an agent's discretion, as this list is illustrative and not exhaustive • Further details about what may constitute a serious risk to physical or mental health or a risk of significant harm, as well as information on the evidence which should be accepted in relation to the 'inappropriate to live at home' exemption are set out below. | |
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| Claimants whose parents do not live in this country or whose parents are deceased | As long as the parents continue to live outside this country |
| Claimants in receipt of the care component of Disability Living Allowance at the middle or highest rate, or those in receipt of the daily living component of Personal Independence Payment | While in receipt of listed components |
| Claimants in receipt of Armed Forces Independence Payment | While the claimant remains entitled to a Guaranteed Income Payment (GIP) of 50% or higher through the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS) |
| Claimants who have been subject to or threatened with domestic violence and abuse by a partner, former partner or family member. | Permanent |
| Claimants in late pregnancy (this means 11 weeks from the Sunday of the week in which the baby is due) or if a claimant miscarries or the baby is stillborn after the 24 th week of pregnancy. | A claimant will be exempt during the 11 week period and for 15 weeks after miscarriage or stillborn birth |
| Claimants earning the monthly equivalent of 16 x National Minimum Wage for an 18-20-year-old per week in their current assessment period (or the monthly equivalent of 16 x National Minimum Wage for an apprentice (if employed under an apprenticeship)) | Month by month |
| New claimants who have earned the monthly equivalent of 16 x National Minimum Wage for an 18-20-year-old for six months prior to the month in which they claimed Universal Credit. If the claimant was employed as an apprentice during the 6 months in question, then the earnings threshold which applies | Six months |

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| is the monthly equivalent of 16 x the National Minimum Wage for apprentices. | |
| Existing claimants who have earned the monthly equivalent of 16 x National Minimum Wage for an 18-20 in each of the 6 previous assessment periods. If an existing claimant has been receiving Universal Credit for less than 6 months, as well as looking at their earnings in previous assessment periods, consider whether they were working and met this earnings threshold in any additional calendar months ending before the month in which the claim for Universal was made that are required to make up the 6 month period | Six months |
| The claimant is, and has been for no more than six months, receiving and participating in a formal recovery-based course of alcohol or drug dependency treatment | Six months from the start of the programme. |
| Those temporarily abroad for less than six months because they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> receiving treatment for an illness or physical or mental impairment, or medically approved convalescence or care, or are accompanying a partner or a child or qualifying young person for whom they are responsible who is receiving such treatment, convalescence or care | Up to six months |
| Claimants who have recently suffered a bereavement in the past six months, including where: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the claimant was a member of a couple and the other member died a child or qualifying young person for whom the claimant was responsible died a child, where the claimant was the child's parent, died | Six months from the date of bereavement. |
| Claimants with a physical or mental impairment and, as determined by an agent, their expected number of hours is less than 35 per week | While the agent determines their expected hours are less than 35 per week |
| Lead carers, relevant carers and foster parents where, as determined by an agent, their expected number of hours is less than 35 per week | While the claimant is receiving Carer's Allowance, is subject to no work-related |

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| | requirements or during the period when an agent determines their expected hours is less than 35 per week |
| Claimants who are unfit for work | Up to 14 days (and this exemption can be relied on by a claimant no more than twice in any 12-month period). |
| The claimant is attending a court or tribunal as a party to proceedings or as a witness | While this applies to the claimant |
| The claimant is, and has been for no more than three months, a person for whom arrangements have been made by a protection provider under section 82 of the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 | Up to three months from the start of those arrangements. |
| The claimant is the subject of Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements These arrangements cover violent and some types of sexual offenders, and offenders who pose a serious risk of harm to the public | While the claimant is managed under MAPPA |
| Claimants in late pregnancy (this means 11 weeks from the Sunday of the week in which the baby is due) or if a claimant miscarries or the baby is stillborn after the 24 th week of pregnancy. | A claimant will be exempt during the 11 week period and for 15 weeks after miscarriage or stillborn birth |
| Prisoners (where the claimant was entitled to Universal Credit housing costs before going in to prison) | While a prisoner, where the period in custody is likely to be less than 6 months |
| Lead carers for children or qualifying young persons | While lead carer for a child or qualifying young |

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| | person |
| Couples living together – where both members are eligible for Universal Credit | While claimant is part of the couple |

Serious risk to physical or mental health

Whether there is a serious risk to a person's physical or mental health and as a consequence they have to live away from parents is a question of fact in each case.

The danger need not be from the parents, and includes any form of danger to their physical or mental health which causes the young person to live away from their parents.

Circumstances which may be deemed to pose a serious risk to the claimant's physical or mental health, or may mean that they would suffer significant harm if they lived with a parent, include where a return home would present a risk to their physical or mental wellbeing, or the physical or mental wellbeing of other family members in terms of:

- mental or physical health (depression/anxiety/other)
- behavioural problems (autism/ADHD/other)
- sexual abuse or exploitation
- domestic abuse (physical or emotional)
- addiction or substance misuse
- ASB or offending

This list is illustrative and not exhaustive.

Evidence from the person or their representative should be accepted unless there is stronger evidence to the contrary or the evidence is self-contradictory. Supporting evidence may also come from the local housing authority or an appropriate third party organisation working in the local area. This includes but is not limited to:

- Shelter
- Crisis
- The Rock Trust
- St Mungo's
- St Basil's
- Centrepoint
- DePaul UK
- YMCA
- Citizens Advice

- Salvation Army
- Women's Aid
- Rape Crisis
- Youth Offending Teams
- Probation Services

Exemptions not applicable

Claimants awaiting a work capability assessment are not exempt.