

Move to Universal Credit (managed migration): Claimant queries and support: Guidance

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Best time to claim Universal Credit

DWP cannot give advice on when is the best time for someone to claim Universal Credit.

To continue receiving financial support, a Universal Credit claim must be made by the deadline on the Migration Notice. This is 3 months and one day from the date the letter was sent out. For some Income Support claimants, this may be earlier, see: Income Support claimants with a child turning 5

This gives claimants time to gather any information and evidence, such as identity documents that they need to make their claim.

It may take the claimant time to gather all their documents and evidence to make their claim online, so they need to act as soon as possible.

If they cannot claim Universal Credit by the deadline given on their letter, they should telephone the Migration Notice helpline as soon as possible on 0800 169 0328.

We can only give a claimant more time to make a claim if they have good reason. They must request this before the deadline on the letter.

Cancelling a Migration Notice

Migration Notice cancellation requests from claimants can be considered and may be granted based on a claimant's individual circumstances.

Where a claimant expresses an interest in requesting a cancellation, first they must be made aware of all the support available to help them make a Universal Credit claim. Including, assisted digital, help to claim and claims by phone.

A cancellation does not mean that the claimant will never be required to claim Universal Credit.

Even when a Migration Notice is cancelled, the claimant may be sent a Migration Notice again in the future directing them to claim Universal Credit.

If a claimant wants to request a Migration Notice cancellation, they must contact the Migration Notice helpline.

Claimants who have not received a Migration Notice

Claimants do not have to do anything until they receive a letter from DWP directing them to claim Universal Credit.

Migration Notice letters are being sent out to claimants over time rather than all at once.

Eventually, all claimants on Jobseeker's Allowance, Employment and Support Allowance, Income Support, Housing Benefit and Tax Credits will be required to make a Universal Credit claim.

However, if they want to learn more about Universal Credit, they can find further information at [Understanding Universal Credit.gov.uk](https://www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk)(link is external)(link is external).

Claimant is worried about whether a letter or text is genuine

If a claimant is worried that a Migration Notice or reminder they have received might not be genuine, they must contact the Migration Notice helpline.

The agents on the helpline can then confirm whether or not the letter or text has been sent by DWP.

Claim made to Universal Credit

Claimants are expected to use their journal and report changes using their online account in the same way as any other Universal Credit claimant.

They can still contact the Migration Notice helpline if they have a query specifically relating to Move to Universal Credit (managed migration), such as transitional protection.

If a claimant wants to change their contact details including address or telephone number, they must report this using their online account.

Change of circumstances

Where a claimant has received a Migration Notice but has not made a Universal Credit claim yet and they need to report a change of circumstances, they must call the Migration Notice helpline. This includes changes to address and phone numbers.

The agents on the helpline will ensure that the change is recorded for any future Move to Universal Credit interactions.

The claimant will also need to inform their current benefit providers of the change.

Once they have made a Universal Credit claim, the claimant must report changes through their online account as normal.

Contributions-based benefits

Contributions-based benefits are not part of managed migration.

Claimants in receipt of Contributions-based ESA and JSA will continue to receive payments from these benefits after the deadline on their Migration Notice has passed.

Couples and joint claims

For more information about the Move to Universal Credit claimant journey for couples, see: Couples and joint claims.

Providing information to a claimant's partner

We cannot provide any specific information about a claimant's move to Universal Credit to their partner. We can only discuss information about their own move to Universal Credit.

For further guidance, see: Consent and disclosure including when to share with third parties.

Do both members of a couple need to make a claim?

If both members of a couple live together and have both received a Migration Notice, they both need to make a Universal Credit account and make a joint claim to Universal Credit.

They must both do this before the deadline on the Migration Notice letter.

If one partner is a member of the armed forces and is posted overseas, they must both still make Universal Credit account to make your joint claim.

If the claimant does not live with their partner, the partner does not need to make a claim unless they have also been sent a Migration Notice or need to claim for a different reason.

Couple has separated

The claimant must report this to their current benefit providers.

The contact details for each legacy benefit provider are:

- JSA/ESA/IS claimants call 0800 169 0310
- Tax Credits claimants can report a change online through GOV.UK or by calling 0345 3003900
- Housing Benefit claimants must report their change to the Local Authority

In some cases, this may lead to the claimant's current benefits ending straight away (before the deadline on the Migration Notice).

They will be informed by their current provider if their current benefits stop due to the relationship change.

If their current benefits do end due to this change, they can still make a claim to Universal Credit to see if they are eligible to receive financial support.

Their eligibility for Universal Credit would be assessed based on their new personal circumstances. Either as a single claimant, or as a couple if they are now living with a new partner.

We cannot guarantee that they will be eligible for Universal Credit, and if they are eligible, we cannot guarantee that they will receive the same amount as they received on their current benefits.

Partner will not claim

In order to be able to continue receiving the correct financial support and be considered for transitional protection, both members of a couple must make a claim.

Universal Credit is calculated based on the circumstances of the entire household, so their partner's details will be required to make sure they are paid correctly.

Debt and deductions

If a claimant currently has an outstanding debt on their current benefits, this is transferred over to Universal Credit. We will continue to deduct money from their Universal Credit each month until the full debt amount is repaid.

If a claimant has deductions from their legacy benefits for gas and electricity, these deductions will not be transferred over to Universal Credit. The claimant will need to make contact, with their utility provider(s).

Giving a claimant more time to claim

Claimant is close to their deadline

Their deadline cannot be extended after the deadline has passed. So if they need more time to claim, the claimant must contact the helpline before their deadline.

If there is an immediate need for the claimant to request a deadline extension, signpost them to the Migration Notice helpline where a specialist agent will discuss their options with them.

Claimant is not close to their deadline

If the claimant's deadline is still a number of weeks away, the claimant should explore all support available to help them make a claim.

The service used to make a claim to Universal Credit is available 24 hours a day.

There are options available to help them claim Universal Credit such as:

- making a claim with the support of friends and family

- Assisted Digital support or Help to Claim where the claimant would be able to make and maintain an online claim as long as they receive some support
- making a Claim by phone where the claimant would not be able to make or manage an online claim even with support

If they still feel they cannot make a claim by their deadline, they need to contact the Migration Notice helpline who will discuss their options with them.

Their deadline cannot be extended after the deadline has passed. So if they need more time to claim, the claimant must contact the helpline before their deadline.

Housing Benefit claimants

Housing Benefit paid directly to landlord

Most Universal Credit claimants who are eligible for support with their housing costs are responsible for paying their own housing costs to their landlord in the same way as all other Universal Credit claimants.

It is their responsibility to let their landlord know that they have made a claim to Universal Credit.

Alternative Payment Arrangements such as a Managed Payment to Landlord can be considered as normal where needed.

If a claimant is worried about managing their payments, there are lots of organisations that can help them with this, such as Citizens Advice.

Temporary and supported accommodation

Claimants who receive Housing Benefit and are living in temporary, sheltered or supported accommodation, will continue to be paid Housing Benefit by the Local Authority.

However, they must still make a claim to Universal Credit if they are in receipt of any of the following:

- Jobseeker's Allowance (Income-based)
- Employment and Support Allowance (Income-related)
- Income Support
- Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit

Income Support claimants with a child turning 5

If a claimant is receiving Income Support and their child reaches age 5, they will receive a letter from Income Support to tell them that their entitlement will end. If they wish to continue to receive financial support, they must claim Universal Credit by the date detailed in the letter.

If they have also received a Migration Notice and wish to continue receiving financial support, they must claim Universal Credit by the earliest date in the two letters they have received.

Jobseeker's Agreements and Claimant Commitments

Claimants must never be mandated to claim Universal Credit as part of a Jobseeker's Agreement or Claimant Commitment.

This also cannot be added as a voluntary activity.

It is up to the claimant to decide when and if they are going to claim based on the information given in their Migration Notice.

Legacy benefits have stopped

Claimant loses entitlement to migrating legacy benefits before claiming Universal Credit

See: Claimant loses entitlement to their legacy benefits before claiming Universal Credit.

Deadline on Migration Notice has passed

Where the claimant's deadline has passed and they have not made a Universal Credit claim, they will receive a termination letter notifying them that their entitlement to their migrating benefits has ended.

They will also receive letters from each benefit provider informing them of the end of their entitlement and payments.

If the claimant wishes to continue receiving financial support, they must make a claim to Universal Credit as soon as possible.

The claimant can still be considered for transitional protection if they make a Universal Credit claim within a month of their deadline date.

Mandatory reconsiderations and appeals

Claimants do not have the right to an appeal or Mandatory Reconsideration of the requirement to claim Universal Credit as part of managed migration.

Migration Notices

Information on what a Migration Notice is and its purpose can be found in: [Move to Universal Credit \(managed migration\)](#)

Why are claimants receiving Migration Notice letters?

Migration Notices are currently being sent to claimants because they are claiming one or more of the following benefits:

- Housing Benefit
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Working Tax Credit
- Child Tax Credit

Universal Credit has now replaced these benefits.

Their current benefits are going to stop, so it is important that they make a claim to Universal Credit by the deadline on their letter in order to continue receiving financial support.

Other benefits, such as Personal Independent Payments (PIP), will not be affected by these changes and will continue as normal.

What happens after the deadline on the Migration Notice?

Once the deadline on the Migration Notice has passed, the following benefits will continue to be paid for 2 weeks, after which these payments will stop:

- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Income Support
- Housing Benefit

Any Tax Credit payments will stop immediately after the deadline on the Migration Notice has passed.

If a Universal Credit claim is made before the deadline, the 2-week run on of JSA, ESA, Income Support and Housing Benefit is still applied from the date the Universal Credit claim is made.

These payments will not be deducted from the Universal Credit award.

Additional information and support

Additional information and support are available at the move to Universal Credit website www.gov.uk/dwp/move-to-uc([link is external](#))

There is also a dedicated Move to Universal Credit telephone line. See: Migration Notice helpline details.

Migration Notice helpline details

Universal Credit Migration Notice helpline

Telephone: 0800 169 0328

[Relay UK](#)([link is external](#)) (if you cannot hear or speak on the phone): 18001 then 0800 169 0328

[Video relay service](#)([link is external](#)) for British Sign Language (BSL) users - [check you can use this service](#)([link is external](#))

Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm

0800 telephone numbers are free to call from mobiles and landlines.

Telling other benefits about a Universal Credit claim

Claimants do not need to contact their other benefit providers to inform them that they have made a claim to Universal Credit. This will be done by DWP.

Transitional Protection

Agents must familiarise themselves with Universal Learning transitional protection guidance to help answer any queries relating to transitional protection.

Will claimants get less or more money on Universal Credit than legacy benefits?

On Universal Credit, most people will be entitled to the same amount or more than they received from their previous benefits.

For people who have received a Migration Notice and make a claim to Universal Credit before their deadline, if the amount of Universal Credit the claimant is entitled to is less than the amount they were entitled to on their legacy benefit(s), a transitional protection additional amount will be applied.

Where the transitional protection additional amount is applied, we will still apply any relevant deductions when calculating the Universal Credit payment each month.

If a claimant's circumstances change before they make a claim, this may affect the amount they get.

How much transitional protection will claimants get?

Whether or not a claimant will receive transitional protection, and how much they will get, will be calculated before they receive their first Universal Credit payment. This cannot be calculated before entitlement to Universal Credit is established.

Claimants must have had their identity verified and be eligible for Universal Credit to be considered for transitional protection.

Transitional protection cannot be calculated until all the required evidence has been verified.

Those who require the transitional protection additional amount will receive this automatically, as part of their monthly Universal Credit Payment.

Claimants will be able to see how much their transitional protection additional amount is on their Universal Credit statement.

Does the transitional protection amount change over time?

Transitional protection payments are not permanent. They can decrease or end if a claimant's Universal Credit entitlement increases.

Transitional protection payments will continue until:

- a claimant's Universal Credit entitlement is the same or more than their previous tax credits or benefits
- a claimant has a significant change of circumstances

Transitional protection payments can decrease over time following a change in circumstances. Changes can include:

- having a child
- starting to care for a child or disabled person
- an increase in housing costs
- a worsening health condition
- changes to government benefit rates

This is because these changes are likely to increase the claimant's Universal Credit amount.

Unable to claim

There are many options available to support claimants in the process of making a Universal Credit claim, even where they are unable to claim online on their own.

For guidance, see: [Help to Claim and Assisted Digital overview](#).

A claim by phone may also be appropriate if all support measures to help the claimant make an online claim have been exhausted.