New Forest Disability Information Service

Information
01425 628750
info@NewForestDIS.org.uk
www.NewForestDIS.org.uk

Information Sheet 4

Universal Credit (UC)

Universal Credit is a benefit paid once a month to people with low income or no income. If you have a partner you are assessed as a couple.

Universal Credit has replaced the following "legacy benefits"

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

If you make a claim for UC whilst receiving any of the above, the original benefit will stop and you cannot normally reapply.
If you are already receiving a legacy benefit you can currently go on receiving it unless your personal circumstances change. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is gradually moving people who receive legacy benefits over to UC in a programme of "managed migration".

You may be able to get Universal Credit if

- you are on a low income
- you are 18 or over (there are some exceptions if you are aged 16-17)
- you are under State Pension age (or your partner is)
- you and your partner have £16,000 or less in savings between you
- you live in the UK

How Universal Credit works

It will take five weeks to receive your first payment. You can apply for an advance to help with living expenses during this time.
There is a standard allowance, based on your age and whether you are single or part of a couple. Further amounts may be added if you have:

- children
- childcare costs
- housing costs
- caring responsibilities
- a severe disability which affects your ability to work.

Your income, from work or other benefits, will be deducted f
Earnings from work will be deducted at a rate of 55p for every £1 earned.

You may be given a "work allowance" which you can earn before deductions if you:
• are responsible for a child
• have a disability that affects your ability to work

You will need to sign up to a "**Claimant Commitment**" based on your personal circumstances, which may involve agreeing to prepare for or look for work. You will have an online journal which you will need to check and update regularly. Failure to do so can mean your claim is stopped or reduced.

How to apply
• Claims must be made online at **www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit**. There is no paper form.

Applicants who cannot access the online application or use an online journal, eg because of a learning disability or a sight impairment, can request a phone claim. With this type of claim there is no online journal and all contact with the DWP needs to be via phone. To make this type of claim you will need to phone one of the phone lines below.

Useful numbers
• Universal Credit Helpline: **0800 328 5644**; textphone: **0800 328 1344**
• Citizens 'Advice Bureau "Help to Claim" service: **0800 144 8444**

For further help and advice from New Forest Disability Information Service on any disability-related subject please telephone **01425 628750**.

New Forest Disability Information Service takes every precaution to ensure these details are correct but cannot be held responsible for changes between verification dates.

New Forest Disability Information Service is a registered charity, and we rely on your kind donations to provide our services. If you would like to make a donation, please visit www.NewForestDIS.org.uk/donate. Thank you.