

DISABILITY RIGHTS HANDBOOK UPDATER

February 2017

- Disability Rights Handbook updates
 - Significant recent case law
 - Timetable of future benefit changes
-

Disability Rights UK bi-monthly updater

Keeping you up to date with disability and welfare rights

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Benefits or tax credits questions?

Members Organisations' Welfare Rights Helpline

Our member organisations' benefits and tax credits advice service is hosted by Ken Butler. Call 020 7250 8184 or email ken.butler@disabilityrightsuk.org. Unfortunately, we don't have the resources to answer queries from individuals who instead should ring the Disability Information and Advice Line (DIAL) on Freephone 0808 800 3333.

Helpline hours:
Monday to Friday:
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- We will also be undertaking our own research on people's aspirations for welfare and support
- We will encourage members to be involved

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Disability Rights UK works to create a society where everyone with a lived experience of disability or health conditions can participate equally as full citizens.

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5/5

Free to members

Disability Rights Handbook updates

Page-by-page updates to the 41st edition (April 2016-April 2017)

Compiled by its editor Ian Greaves, the following is based on information available up to 22 February 2017. No new amendments are needed to the Handbook since our December edition. That edition's updates are reproduced below.

Please note these are the final updates to the 41st edition. The brand new 42nd edition of our Disability Rights Handbook will be published in April 2017.

CARE AND MOBILITY

SECTION B

Disability living allowance

Hospital

From 29 June 2016, payment of both the care component and the mobility component is unaffected by any stay in hospital for a child or a young person under the age of 18 (Statutory Instrument 2016/556).

UPDATES Chapter 4(7) & (8)

Page 18

Personal independence payment

Hospital

From 29 June 2016, payment of both the daily living component and the mobility component is unaffected by any stay in hospital for a young person under the age of 18 (Statutory Instrument 2016/556).

UPDATES Chapter 5(7) & (8)

Pages 35 & 36

Help with mobility

The Blue Badge scheme

The website for online applications in Scotland is now: www.mygov.scot/apply-blue-badge

UPDATES Chapter 7(1) under 'applications'

Page 57

Congestion charging exemption

The telephone number for application forms is now 0343 222 2222.

UPDATES Chapter 7(1) under 'Congestion charging exemption'

Page 57

UNIVERSAL CREDIT

SECTION E

Your responsibilities

From 4 August 2016, you are not treated as having student income (and are not therefore exempt from the universal credit work-related requirements) if you have income from a postgraduate master's degree loan but your course is not full time (Statutory Instrument 2016/743).

UPDATES Chapter 15 Box E.3

Page 112

The benefit cap

From 7 November 2016, the monthly amount of the benefit cap will be:

For Greater London residents:

For a single claimant who is not responsible for a child or qualifying young person	£1,284.17
For joint claimants or a single claimant who is responsible for a child/young person	£1,916.67

For claimants not resident in Greater London:

For a single claimant who is not responsible for a child/young person	£1,116.67
For joint claimants or a single claimant who is responsible for a child/young person	£1,666.67

Carer's allowance and guardian's allowance will be benefits providing exemption from that date (Statutory Instrument 2016/909).

UPDATES SECTION E Chapter 16 (10)&(12)

Pages 124 & 125

MEANS-TESTED BENEFITS (PRE-UNIVERSAL CREDIT)**SECTION F****Tax credits****Changes in circumstances**

You can now report any changes to your circumstances online at: www.gov.uk/manage-your-tax-credits

UPDATES Chapter 23(17)

Page 164

HELP WITH HOUSING COSTS**SECTION G****Housing benefit****The benefit cap**

From 7 November 2016, the weekly amount of the benefit cap will be:

For single claimants resident in Greater London	£296.35
For all other claimants resident in Greater London	£442.31
For single claimants not resident in Greater London	£257.69
For all other claimants not resident in Greater London	£384.62

Carer's allowance and guardian's allowance will be benefits providing exemption from that date (Statutory Instrument 2016/909).

UPDATES SECTION G Chapter 25 Box G.6

Page 178

GRANTS AND LOANS**SECTION H****Scottish Welfare Fund****Reviews**

From 1 April 2016, if you are unhappy with the review decision on a Scottish Welfare Fund application, you can apply for a further review to the Independent Review scheme (IRS). This is run by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. Such reviews can be made in writing, online or by phone. You have one month from the date of the local authority decision to apply for the review. If the earlier decision has resulted in some grant or loan being awarded, this cannot be removed or reduced by the IRS.

UPDATES Chapter 30(5) under 'How to apply'

Page 209

EDUCATION AND WORK**SECTION I****Financing studies****Students and means-tested benefits**

From 4 August 2016, in calculating entitlement to income support, income-related employment and support allowance, income-based jobseeker's allowance, housing benefit and universal credit, 30% of any postgraduate master's degree loan is to be taken into account as income (Statutory Instrument 2016/743). Any special support loan is to be disregarded.

UPDATES Chapter 31 Boxes I.1 and I.2

Pages 213 and 214

RETIREMENT**SECTION L****Pension credit****Qualifying age**

The pension credit qualifying age calculator can now be found at: www.gov.uk/state-pension-age

UPDATES Chapter 43(2)

Page 263

State pension**State pension age**

The state pension age calculator can now be found at: www.gov.uk/state-pension-age

UPDATES Chapter 44(2)

Page 267

OTHER MATTERS**SECTION N****Health benefits****The benefit cap**

From 1 December, you qualify automatically for help with NHS charges, vouchers for glasses or contact lenses, and hospital travel fares if you are awarded universal credit (either as a single claimant or as a joint claimant) and:

- the award does not include a child element, you (or your partner) do not have any limited capability for work, and your total earned income is £435 or less;
- the award includes the child element, and your total earned income is £935 or less; or
- you (or your partner) have a limited capability for work and your total earned income is £935 or less (Statutory Instrument 2016/1045).

UPDATES SECTION N Chapter 51(1)

Page 291

Healthy start vouchers and vitamins

From 1 November 2016 (Statutory Instrument 2016/985), you are eligible for Healthy Start vouchers and vitamins if you are:

- pregnant, over 18 and entitled to universal credit*;
- pregnant, over 18 and you are the responsibility of a person who is entitled to universal credit*;
- a mother who has had a child in the last year and you are entitled to universal credit*;
- a mother who has had a child in the last year and you are the responsibility of a person who is entitled to universal credit*;
- a child under 4 and are the responsibility of a person who is entitled to universal credit*; or
- a child under 4 and are the responsibility of a child who is in turn the responsibility of a member of the same household who gets income support, income-based jobseeker's allowance, child tax credit (with an award of £16,190 or less and not entitled to working tax credit) or universal credit*.

* with a monthly earned income of £408 or less.

UPDATES SECTION N Chapter 51(6)

Page 293

COMMON RULES TO BENEFITS

SECTION O

Leaving the UK**Pension credit**

After a delay, regulations have been made limiting payment of pension credit during a temporary absence from GB to four weeks. This is already in the Disability Rights Handbook 41st edition, but the start date of the change is now 28 July 2016 (Statutory Instrument 2016/624).

UPDATES Chapter 53(6)

Page 299

Housing benefit

After a delay, regulations have been made limiting payment of housing benefit during a temporary absence from GB to four weeks. This is already in the Disability Rights Handbook 41st edition, but the start date of the change is now 28 July 2016 (Statutory Instrument 2016/624).

UPDATES Chapter 53(15)

Page 301

Benefits in hospital**Disability Living Allowance: children**

From 29 June 2016, payment of disability living allowance for a dependent child is no longer withdrawn after the child has been in hospital for 12 weeks (Statutory Instrument 2016/556).

UPDATES Box O.2 and Chapter 54(4) under 'After 12 weeks'

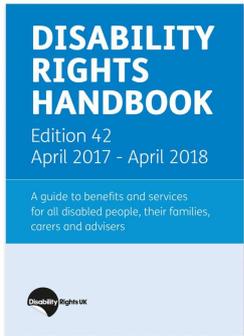
Pages 303 & 304

Claims and payments**Fraud**

From 24 May 2016, in all but exceptional cases, local authorities no longer have the power to prosecute housing benefit fraud; such prosecutions are now undertaken by the DWP (Statutory Instrument 2016/519).

UPDATES Chapter 55(8) under 'Fraud interviews'

Page 310



DISABILITY RIGHTS HANDBOOK

Edition 42
April 2017 - April 2018

A guide to benefits and services for all disabled people, their families, carers and advisers




DISABILITY RIGHTS HANDBOOK UPDATER

2017-2018

- Disability Rights Handbook updates
- Significant recent case law
- Timetable of future benefit changes



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Updates by Handbook page number

Topic		Section	Box	Chapter	Handbook page	Update edition
Disability living allowance	Hospital	B		4(7)&(8)	18	June 2016
Personal independence payment	Hospital	B		5(7)&(8)	35&36	June 2016
Help with mobility	The Blue Badge scheme	B		7(1)	57	June 2016
Help with mobility	Congestion charging exemption	B		7(1)	57	June 2016
Universal credit	Your responsibilities	E	E.3	15	112	Aug 2016
Universal credit	The benefit cap	E		16	124&5	Oct 2016
Tax credits	Changes in circumstances	F		23(17)	164	June 2016
Housing benefit	The benefit cap	G	G.6	25	178	Oct 2016
Scottish Welfare Fund	Reviews	H		30(5)	209	June 2016
Financing studies	Students and means-tested benefits	I	I.1 & I.2	31	213 & 214	Aug 2016
Pension credit	Qualifying age	L		43(2)	263	June 2016
Health benefits	The benefit cap	N		51(1)	291	Dec 2016
Health benefits	Healthy start vouchers and vitamins	N		51(6)	293	Oct 2016
Leaving the UK	Pension credit	O		53(6)	299	Aug 2016
Leaving the UK	Housing benefit	O		53(15)	301	Aug 2016
Benefits in hospital	Disability Living Allowance: children	O	O.2	54(4)	303&304	June 2016
Claims and payments	Fraud	O		55(8)	310	June 2016

Case law digest

Highlighting key welfare benefit decisions and judgments

Disability Right's UK's Welfare Rights Adviser Ken Butler provides you with a selected summary of recent welfare benefit case law decisions issued since our last Updater.

[Detailed summaries hundreds of other significant decisions and Court judgments](#) are also available @ www.disabilityrightsuk.org

A disabled person's welfare benefit entitlement is governed by rules set down in Acts and regulations agreed by Parliament.

However, these are then subject to interpretation as to their exact meaning from the date they are passed.

While most benefit appeals are decided by First Tier Appeal Tribunals their decisions do not establish legal precedents.

Instead, precedent is set by judgments issued by appeals to the Upper Tribunal and other higher courts.

While the individual facts in every appeal are different, often legal issues are involved that have arisen before and the facts can be considered in light of legal precedent.

For example, what needs to be established in deciding if finding someone fit for work would lead to a substantial risk to their health ([CE/2291/2014](#)) or whether someone's inability to use an oven to cook can be considered in relation to their eligibility for PIP ([CSPIP/40/2015](#)).

So, the citing of relevant case law may sometimes be useful in support of a disabled person's welfare benefit appeal.

Need for DWP to provide to a tribunal documents relating to previous DLA award

Benefit:

Upper Tribunal Judge:

File number:

DLA

Hemingway

[CDLA/3501/2015](#)

The principle issue raised by this appeal concerns the approach to be taken by the First-tier Tribunal when it is dealing with an appeal against a decision concerning the renewal of an award of DLA.

In particular, where the Secretary of State has failed to provide it with all relevant documents because he has not produced the documentation relied upon in making the previous award. (rule 24(4)(b) of the Tribunal Procedure (First-tier Tribunal) (Social Entitlement Chamber) Rules 2008).

The appeal concerned a renewal claim made by a 15-year-old child. Her mother was her appointee. The child had Type 1 diabetes which required supervision relating to the injection of insulin and the monitoring of blood sugar levels. She had a DLA award at the lower rate of the mobility component and the middle rate of the care component running until the 24 January 2015.

However, on 27 January 2015 a decision was made not to award her DLA.

With a tribunal having dismissed her appeal the claimant appealed to the Upper Tribunal.

In considering the appeal, Upper Tribunal Judge Hemingway says that the tribunal had quite limited medical evidence before it.

Also that, unusually, it was not provided with documentation relating to the previous awarding decision. As to that, in a written response to the appeal, the Secretary of State, having drawn the tribunal's attention to the existence and terms of the previous award simply said this:

Rule 24 of the Rules of Procedure requires a decision maker, upon receipt of a copy of a notice of appeal sent by the tribunal, to deliver a response to the appeal to the tribunal.

According to rule 24(4) the decision maker must provide with the response:
“(b) copies of all documents relevant to the case in the decision maker’s possession, unless a practice direction or direction states otherwise”

In evidence to the Upper Tribunal, the Secretary of State said that it was normal procedure to supply documents relating to a previous DLA award was made and that in this appeal he was obliged to provide them.

However, without formally deciding the point (because he does not have to), Judge Hemingway says that:

“... it does seem to me that it is very likely indeed that such documentation will have at least a degree of relevance and, therefore, ought properly to be disclosed by the Secretary of State for the purposes of an appeal regarding a renewal decision.

It is not, in my judgment, acceptable where such documentation is of relevance or potential relevance for the Secretary of State to simply say, as here, that the documentation is available and can be produced if the tribunal requires it. That is because to take such an approach would be to ignore the mandatory nature of the duty. It is mandatory because of the inclusion of the word “must” within rule 24(4).

Further, such an approach is unhelpful because a tribunal which has convened to decide such an appeal may well feel a natural impetus to get on with the job and a claimant might well have an understandable desire to get matters over with. That combination might lead, in some cases, to tribunals understandably proceeding without evidence that might have made a material difference to the outcome rather than adjourning to obtain it.”

He then goes on to consider the approach of a tribunal in circumstances where the rule 24 duty has not been complied with.

Judge Hemingway does not agree that a tribunal will always be under a duty to adjourn in order to obtain the missing evidence:

“To lay down such a requirement would be to adopt an unduly inflexible approach and might lead to unnecessary adjournments.

It may be, for example, that a tribunal understands the basis for a previous award, perhaps because that is explained in the appeal response or in some other document before it and already has some medical evidence pertaining to matters as they stood when the previous awarding decision was made.

It may be, even absent that, the tribunal could safely proceed if the evidence in totality was so full and cogent that it felt, notwithstanding what had gone before and any evidence as to that, that the outcome on the appeal before it is inevitable.

In particular, if the current evidence was such as to persuade it that an award of the maximum amount of disability living allowance available was appropriate there would seem to be no value at all in calling for the earlier evidence.

Putting all of that together I conclude that it cannot be said, as a matter of law, that a tribunal will always be obliged to adjourn in order to obtain documentation relating to the earlier awarding decision when it is considering, by way of appeal, a renewal decision.”

However, he then recommends that in general terms, tribunals should be very cautious in deciding to “bat on” in circumstances where such material has not been produced but should have been:

“First of all, it will often be of some significance to know what had been said by a claimant as to her disabilities at the time leading up to a previous award. That will be apparent from completed application forms. There may well be medical evidence touching upon the same medical conditions which are relied upon in the context of the renewal claim. Further, such evidence may have enhanced relevance in circumstances (and it seems to me this is often the case) where a claimant asserts on renewal that he or she has the same or a greater level of disability as when a previous award had been made but that the Secretary of State has either not renewed or has renewed at a lower level.

Medical evidence might also be thought to be of particular assistance where there is a degenerative condition such that overall improvement might be unlikely. Further still ... there is the requirement stemming from what was stated in [R\(M\) 1/96](#) for tribunals to explain, in particular for the benefit of the losing party unless

it is obvious, why a different outcome is being reached to that which had been reached previously. R(M) 1/96 is something of an “old standard” if I can put it like that but the duty imposed therein, whilst not a demanding one is an important one as recently recognised in [SF v SSWP \(PIP\) \[2016\] UKUT 0481 \(AAC\)](#).

In my judgment it might, in many cases, be quite difficult for a tribunal to adequately fulfil this duty without evidence concerning not only the level of

the previous award but the basis upon which that level was considered to be appropriate.”

Judge Hemingway concludes by finding that in the present case the tribunal did err in failing to, as a minimum, acknowledge the existence and availability of the evidence and to consider whether to call for it. On this basis, he decides that its decision falls to be set aside.

Not necessary to have difficulties with dressing and undressing to score points/ slip-on shoes do constitute a reasonable and practical alternative

Benefit:
Upper Tribunal Judge:
File number:

PIP
Rowley
[CPIP/772/2016](#)

The primary issue in this appeal relates to activity 6 of the daily living component of PIP (Dressing and Undressing).

The claimant had a number of physical health problems including dizziness and loss of balance particularly in the morning. She also had a long history of depression.

Her case was that she should score 2 points under descriptor 6b that provides: “Needs to use an aid or appliance to be able to dress or undress.”

Regulation 2 of the Social Security (Personal Independence Payment) Regulations 2013 provides that an “aid or appliance” means any device which improves, provides or replaces C’s impaired physical or mental function ...”

Under Schedule 1 to the Regulations, “dress and undress” includes put on and take off socks and shoes.’

It was implicit from the tribunal’s statement of reasons that it believed that if a claimant needs to use an aid or appliance to dress, but not to undress, that would not be sufficient to satisfy descriptor 6b.

However, Judge Rowley accepts the Secretary of State’s submission that it is not necessary for a claimant to demonstrate that they have difficulties

with both dressing and undressing themselves in order to be awarded points under descriptor 6b.

The need to use an aid or appliance for one or the other will be enough. Such a conclusion follows from the natural and ordinary meaning of the words of the descriptor says Judge Rowley:

It was the claimant’s case that, due to dizziness when bending low, she is unable to put on socks (even when sitting on a bed), so she avoids wearing socks at all, even in cold weather. As she would reasonably benefit from the use of an aid, Judge Rowley finds that she satisfies descriptor 6b.

Bearing in mind the definition of “dress and undress” ... I asked the parties to make submissions on this question: ‘if a claimant needs to use an aid or appliance to be able to put on socks (but not shoes) is that sufficient to score points under descriptor 6b?’

The claimant also had dizziness when she bent low, and so she could not fasten shoes (even when sitting on a bed). As a result, she wore slip-on shoes, putting her feet into them whilst upright.

Judge Rowley rejects the claimant’s contention that if slip-on shoes were considered to be a reasonable and practical alternative form of footwear, this would create limitations on the clothing which a person with functional restrictions could wear:

“In my judgment slip-on shoes do constitute the kind of reasonable and practical alternative clothing envisaged by the Upper Tribunal Judge in PE. In so finding, I am of the view that the balance is struck in the appropriate place. It is right to disregard the limitation of function that would be caused by putting on shoes that required to be fastened due to the claimant’s dizziness. By using the slip-on shoes, the claimant bypasses the impaired function.

... Slip-on shoes perform a similar clothing role to other shoes, in that they cover and protect the feet; and they are a commonly available, non-specialist item of clothing. I accept the Secretary of State’s submission that they are available in a range of styles for whatever need or occasion.

Furthermore, I do not consider the lack of specific reference to types of shoes in the definition of “dress and undress” to be a significant omission, and it certainly does not lead the conclusion that a claimant who is able, unaided and without assistance, to put on slip-on shoes but not other types will score points under daily living activity 6.”

Judge Rowley then turns to the issue of whether a bed can be an aid for the purposes of descriptor 6b. The claimant submitted that the fact that a healthy person may choose to sit on a

bed whilst dressing or undressing did not mean that the bed did not “improve, provide or replace” the function of dressing for a disabled person.

However, in rejecting this Judge Rowley cites the decision in CW v Secretary of State for Work and Pensions [2016] UKUT 197 (AAC) in which it was held that sitting down was an acceptable way to perform the activity of dressing and undressing, and so a bed was not an aid to undertake that activity.

He reasons that a disabled person may have no choice in performing the activity in a certain way. But he concludes that if the manner in which the disabled person must perform the activity is a normal way of performing that activity for a non-disabled person, then there is no functional loss.

Finally, the claimant had contended that she satisfied descriptor 10b, as due to her depression she was unable to manage her money effectively, and she had extensive debts.

Judge Rowley concludes by accepting the Secretary of State’s, submission that someone who has no intellectual impairment but whose depression leads to them avoiding the task of making budgeting decisions altogether, or perhaps to make irrational budgeting decisions, can satisfy descriptor 10b.

Can a slower than normal pace of walking which is still “within a reasonable time period” be considered as one of the factors in determining whether walking is “to an acceptable standard”

Benefit:
Upper Tribunal Judge:
File number:

PIP
 Hemingway
[CPIP/2292/2016](#)

This appeal concerns the question as to whether a relatively slow pace of walking which nevertheless amounts to walking “within a reasonable time period” (as defined in Regulation 4(4)(c) of the Social Security (Personal Independence Payment) Regulations 2013) can be taken into account as one of a range of factors in considering whether a claimant is able to stand and then move “to an acceptable standard” (Regulation 4(2A)(b)).

Regulation 4 of the Social Security (Personal Independence Payment) Regulations 2013 concerns the assessment of an ability to carry out activities which for the purposes of this appeal, are as follows:

“4. ... (2A) where C’s ability to carry out an activity is assessed, C is to be assessed as satisfying a descriptor only if C can do so –

- safely;
- to an acceptable standard;
- repeatedly;
- within a reasonable time period;...

- 4) in this regulation –
- a) “safely” means in a manner unlikely to cause harm to C or to another person, either during or after completion of the activity;
 - b) “repeatedly” means as often as the activity being assessed is reasonably required to be completed;
 - c) “reasonable time period” means no more than twice as long as the maximum period that a person without a physical or mental condition which limits that person’s ability to carry out the activity in question would normally take to complete that activity.”

The Secretary of State argued that any walking which is slow but nevertheless within a “reasonable time period” is to be ignored when considering the ability to walk to an acceptable standard. He submitted that matters such as pain, fatigue and breathlessness would be considered but suggests that slowness is catered for solely within regulation 4(4)(c).

Judge Hemingway finds that this is correct:

“It seems to me that the intention is only to take slowness of walking into account in the event of that slowness fulfilling the relevant 4(4)(c) definition. It would, accordingly, result in inconsistency if a lesser degree of slowness was then to be taken into account elsewhere.

So, if a tribunal finds a claimant does walk at a slower than normal pace but is nevertheless able to cover relevant distances within the “reasonable time period” criteria, it will not be able to take that slowness into account when considering the “acceptable standard” criteria.

I should stress, though, I have only received argument as to this concerning mobility activity 2 and would not dismiss the possibility that, for whatever reason, a different approach might be appropriate with respect to other activities and descriptors.”

Other welfare case law summaries online

There are hundreds of other [welfare benefits case law summaries](http://www.disabilityrightsuk.org) online @ www.disabilityrightsuk.org
Organised to help you readily find relevant decisions and judgments our case law section includes:

- Latest decision summaries
- Higher Court judgement summaries
- Case law summaries in year order from 2003 to 2017
- Decision-making and appeals case law summaries
- Disability living allowance and attendance allowance case law summaries
- Employment and support allowance case law summaries
- Incapacity benefit case law summaries

Future changes

A timetable of future benefit and tax credit changes

Compiled by Disability Right's UK's webmaster Martin Inch

Note	This timetable may be subject to change. You should regularly check for updates online at www.disabilityrightsuk.org
Early 2017	New Tax-free Childcare Scheme The Tax-free Childcare scheme aims to provide up to 1.8 million families across the UK with up to £2,000 of childcare support per year, per child, via a new simple online system.
Early 2017	Tuition loans extension for STEM subjects Tuition loans will be extended to students wishing to do a second degree in STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) from 2017-18.
April 2017	Discrimination by taxi drivers unlawful From 6 April 2017 it will be illegal for taxi drivers to discriminate against wheelchair users.
April 2017	New bereavement support payment Bereavement support payment replaces current bereavement benefit system.
April 2017	Apprenticeship levy New apprenticeship levy, at a rate of 0.5% of an employer's pay bill. A £15,000 allowance for employers will mean that the levy will only be paid on employers' pay bills over £3 million.
April 2017	Work-Related Activity Group rule changes New ESA claimants who are placed in the Work-Related Activity Group will receive the same rate of benefit as those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance, alongside additional support to help them take steps back to work.
April 2017	Rule changes for 18 to 21 year olds on Universal Credit Those aged 18 to 21 who are on Universal Credit will have to apply for an apprenticeship or traineeship, gain work-based skills, or go on a work placement 6 months after the start of their claim. Apart from certain exceptions (those considered vulnerable) they will not be allowed to claim Housing Benefit.
April 2017	Tax Credits family element changes Those starting a family after this date will no longer be eligible for the Family Element in Tax Credits.
April 2017	Tax Credits digital claiming Tax Credits Digital claiming services begin.
April 2017	Universal Credit earnings taper Universal Credit earnings taper will be reduced from 65% to 63%.
April 2017	Universal Credit first child premium changes Universal Credit first child premium will not be available for new claims from this date.
April 2017	Tax Credits households with two or more children In households with two or more children any subsequent children born after this date will not be eligible for further support. Equivalent changes will be made to the Universal Credit and Housing Benefit rules.

April 2017	<p>Parents with a youngest child aged 3</p> <p>Parents with a youngest child aged 3 or older (including lone parents) who are able to work will be expected to look for work if they are claiming Universal Credit.</p>
April 2017	<p>Charges for residential care</p> <p>Those in residential care in Wales will be allowed to keep £30,000 savings.</p>
April 2017	<p>National Minimum Wage rise</p> <p>This will rise to the following:</p> <p>21 to 24 year olds - £7.05 per hour</p> <p>18 to 20 year olds - £5.60 per hour</p> <p>16 to 17 year olds - £4.05 per hour</p> <p>apprentices - £3.50 per hour</p>
April 2017	<p>National Living Wage rise</p> <p>This will rise from to £7.50 per hour.</p>
September 2017	<p>Universal Credit comes to Northern Ireland</p> <p>Northern Ireland will launch a phased start up new claimants from 25th September 2017.</p>
April 2018	<p>Support for Mortgage Interest becomes a loan</p> <p>New Support for Mortgage Interest (SMI) will be paid as a loan, to be repaid upon sale of your house, or when you return to work.</p>
April 2018	<p>Part-time maintenance loans introduced</p> <p>New part-time maintenance loans from 2018-19 to support the cost of living while studying.</p>
April 2018	<p>Abolition of class 2 National Insurance Contributions</p> <p>Class 2 National Insurance Contributions (NICs) will be abolished and the Government will reform Class 4 NICs as a route to self-employed individuals building entitlement to the State Pension and other contributory benefits..</p>
April 2019	<p>Social Sector Housing Benefit Cap to Local Housing Allowance levels</p> <p>There will be a cap on the amount of rent that Housing Benefit will cover in the social sector to the relevant Local Housing Allowance, which is the rate paid to private renters on Housing Benefit. This includes a Shared Accommodation Rate for single claimants under 35 who do not have dependent children.</p> <p>The cap will also be applied to all supported housing tenancies from April 2019, though Local Authorities will receive funding to meet the additional costs of supported housing in their area.</p> <p>For general needs housing, the cap will apply from April 2019 for all tenants on Universal Credit, and to Housing Benefit tenants whose tenancies began or were renewed since April 2016.</p>
April 2020	<p>Care costs cap</p> <p>Cap on the amount the elderly will pay for social care in England will be £72,000.</p>
October 2020	<p>State pension age increases</p> <p>State pension age for both men and women increases to 66.</p>
November 2021	<p>Post office card account</p> <p>Post Office card account (POCA) to be reviewed.</p>
April 2026 to April 2028	<p>State pension age increases again</p> <p>State Pension rises in stages to 67.</p>

Contact Disability Rights UK (DR UK)

Disability Rights UK

Ground Floor, CAN Mezzanine,
49-51 East Road, London N1 6AH.

How to find us

[Our location](#) on a map.

Nearest underground station:

Old Street (Northern Line).

We are a two minute walk from the station.

Contact us

General enquiries

Office number: 020 7250 8181

Open Monday to Friday

9am-12.30pm and 1.30-4.00pm

Please note this line is not an advice line.

Email: enquiries@disabilityrightsuk.org

Membership enquiries

Phone: 020 7250 8180

Email: members@disabilityrightsuk.org

Sales enquiries

Phone: 020 7250 8191

Media enquiries (for journalists only)

Phone: 07590 929441

Website enquiries

Email: webmaster@disabilityrightsuk.org

Helplines for individuals

Equality Advisory & Support Service (EASS)

Phone: 0808 800 0082

Textphone: 0808 800 0084

Open Monday-Friday 9am-8pm and Saturday
10am-2pm (closed Sundays and Bank Holidays)

There is a webcam portal for BSL users via the
Royal Association for Deaf people.

Website: www.equalityadvisoryservice.com

Disabled Students Helpline

Phone: 0800 328 5050

Open Tuesday and Thursday 11am-1pm

Email: students@disabilityrightsuk.org

Personal Budgets Advice Service

Phone: 0300 555 1525

Open: Monday and Thursday 9am-1pm

Email: independentliving@disabilityrightsuk.org

Helplines for advisers

Member Organisations

Welfare Rights Advice Service

Phone: 020 7250 8184

Open Monday to Friday

10am-12noon and 2pm-4pm

Email: ken.butler@disabilityrightsuk.org

