

Benefit Bulletin: Big benefit changes and news

Produced by the Active Inclusion Service, Newcastle City Council

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Tax Credit claimants in Newcastle will be receiving the Universal Credit invite letter from 8 January 2024

As you know, Universal Credit is replacing these 6 working age means tested benefits called 'legacy benefits':

Income Support

Income related Employment and Support Allowance

Income based Jobseeker's Allowance

Housing Benefit

Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit

From 8 January 2024, the DWP/HMRC will begin to send letters to those receiving Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit – and not any other legacy benefit who live in Northumberland and Tyne and Wear. This includes Newcastle.

The letter is called a 'migration notice' and will tell them that their Tax Credits will stop after 3 months of the date of the letter. The appendix below has a copy of what the migration notice looks like.

This means they really **should claim Universal Credit to protect their income.**

These migration notices started being sent to Tax Credit claimants in other areas from April this year. A worrying 27% did not claim UC and their Tax Credits were stopped. They lost an average of £300 a month Tax Credits!

So it is imperative we explain they really should claim UC. Not only to protect their income but also to protect access to other help such as health benefits, prescriptions, Free School Meals, Cost of Living Payments etc.

Attend a briefing in December and January

To help you be aware of who this affects, what the implications are, what people must do, how to avoid problems and who can help, we have set up short briefings on Teams for professionals lasting about 45 minutes.

They are open only to those who support Newcastle residents, sorry.

They will help you give **basic information** to the people you support and signpost them to the most appropriate service if they need further help and advice.

Tue 19 Dec 11am

Wed 20 Dec 2pm

Thu 21 Dec 11am

Thu 4 Jan 2pm

Tue 9 Jan 2pm

Wed 17 Jan 2pm

Please complete this [online form](#) to let us know what date you want to attend. Only choose one date.

Please note: these are not full training sessions about Universal Credit and are designed for non-benefit specialists.

See our webpage: [I get Tax Credits \(Working Tax Credit or Child Tax Credit\) and live in Newcastle. Do I have to claim Universal Credit?](#)

Other reasons you may have to claim Universal Credit

1. You may have to claim UC if you have a change in circumstances that triggers the UC rules.

This only happens if you have to claim a **new** legacy benefit.

Examples:

Example 1

Single person lives at home with parents, on income-based Jobseekers Allowance only, moves out to a rent a tenancy, claims Housing Benefit (HB) to help with rent. This is a new claim for HB & triggers the UC rule, which means you cannot claim HB, any other legacy benefits will be stopped and no choice but to claim UC.

Example 2

On HB and moves to a new tenancy in same area, then it's just a change of address - it doesn't mean a new claim for HB. But a move to a new local authority area is a new HB claim, so then UC has to be claimed.

Example 3

On Working Tax Credit and have a first child. You can claim Child Tax Credits and do not have to claim UC. It's just a change of Tax Credits.

2. You can claim UC at any time you find out you would be better off on UC and you can manage to claim it.

Then you should consider claiming UC.

Our UC webpages give more details:

[I get Tax Credits \(Working Tax Credit or Child Tax Credit\) and live in Newcastle. Do I have to claim Universal Credit?](#)

[The move to Universal Credit](#)

[Where to get support in Newcastle with Universal Credit](#)

[Universal Credit](#) (a simple guide)

[Universal Credit more detailed guide](#)

Other information/news

Introduction to Benefits – training

For staff and volunteers supporting Newcastle residents

If you want to get a basic idea about:

- how benefits work
 - how to help people get what they're entitled to and to avoid problems
 - where you and residents can get support and information on benefits
- then sign up for this free live course on Teams:

Available dates:

- Wed 13 December 2023. 2-4.30pm
- Wed 20 March 2024. 2-4.30pm

Further information and how to register:

www.newcastle.gov.uk/financialinclusionforprofessionals
or [direct link to the courses](#)

If you are dealing with someone's benefit or simply have a question...

And you work or support residents in Newcastle... **ring Newcastle Council's Welfare Rights consultancy line**. It could save you time and help you know what to do next.

Details in [Information for professionals and volunteers - financial inclusion](#)

Where to get benefit and debt advice in Newcastle

The **latest** version of **Where to get benefit and debt advice in Newcastle**, can be found on the Newcastle City Council website page: [Benefit advice services in Newcastle and benefit offices](#) and includes details on the Welfare Rights Service's Public advice line.

Further support, information and training

Find our **earlier Benefit Bulletins** on our [website page for professionals and volunteers](#) and for **more information on benefit changes**, see our website page [Changes to the benefits system](#) which includes a **timeline of the main benefit changes**

More details about benefits, including those mentioned above, can be found on [our welfare rights and money advice website pages](#), including benefit self-help factsheets

Find **Where to get advice in Newcastle** on the [benefit advice services website page](#)

For details of our 'live' **training on Teams** and **e-learning modules** for professionals such as 'Introduction to Benefits' and 'Universal Credit', see our [website page for professionals and volunteers](#)

Professionals can get phone advice from [the Council's Welfare Rights' consultancy line](#)

You can subscribe to the DWP information for professionals in [Touchbase](#)



This Benefit Bulletin was written by the Active Inclusion Service at Newcastle City Council. It is normally provided bi-monthly and at times of important benefit changes and news. It is as accurate as possible at the time of writing

We also write a regular email for advisers and interested others, with quick benefit news and information. Email clive.davis@newcastle.gov.uk to go on the mailing list

We also produce a weekly **Active Inclusion Newcastle e-bulletin** which provides a brief update on financial inclusion and homelessness prevention issues. If you want to receive this, or for more details, email activeinclusion@newcastle.gov.uk

Appendix – What the migration notice looks like

So far, migration notices were sent to Tax Credits single people then couples. We have been told for the migration notices that are to be sent to those in Northumberland and Tyne & Wear, it will be sent to both. This is a sample of the one sent to couples. Of course, the wording may change by January. Note the deadline date will be 3 months after the date of the letter.

	 HM Revenue & Customs
<p>PARTNER NAME 0 EGMONT ROAD RUNCORN ROAD TS4 2HT</p>	<p>Telephone: 0800 169 0328 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday</p> <p>www.gov.uk/dwp/move-to-uc</p> <p>Your Ref: TYDX- XHKKJX1S</p> <p>22 September 2023</p>
<h3>You and your partner need to claim Universal Credit</h3> <p>You must claim by 22 January 2024 to keep receiving financial support</p>	
<hr/> <p>Universal Credit Migration Notice</p> <p>Dear Partner Name,</p> <p>Universal Credit is replacing your Child Tax Credit.</p> <p>You and your partner must make a joint Universal Credit claim by 22 January 2024 to keep receiving financial support.</p> <p>We define partners as 2 people who live in the same household and are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• married to each other• civil partners of each other• living together as if they were married <p>Universal Credit is a Department for Work and Pensions benefit. You can make a claim even if you:</p>	
<p>Page 1 of 4</p>	

- are working
- have renewed your tax credits
- have capital or savings of more than £16,000

Your tax credits award will end from the date you make your Universal Credit claim.

How to claim Universal Credit

Go online to claim Universal Credit: www.gov.uk/dwp/move-to-uc

If you cannot claim online, call the Universal Credit Migration Notice Helpline for free on 0800 169 0328.

▲ How to get help

- call the Universal Credit Migration Notice helpline for free on 0800 169 0328
- visit the Universal Credit website: www.gov.uk/dwp/move-to-uc
- visit your local jobcentre

You can also call us for free on 0800 169 0328 if you:

- need more time to claim
- are not the person named on this letter
- do not intend to claim Universal Credit

For free, independent and confidential help, call the Citizens Advice Help to Claim service on 0800 144 8444 or go to their website: www.citizensadvice.org.uk/help-to-claim

Check who can help you in your local area at: advice.local.uk

How much you will get

Most people will be entitled to the same amount or more on Universal Credit. If the amount you are entitled to on your existing benefits is more than you would get on Universal Credit, a top up is available. This is called transitional protection.

This Migration Notice entitles you to transitional protection if your circumstances do not change before you claim Universal Credit. If your circumstances change before you make your claim, this may affect the amount you may get.

If you have certain kinds of debt, this may affect the amount of Universal Credit you get. Call 0800 169 0328 if you think this will affect you.

Why you need to claim Universal Credit

Universal Credit is replacing the following:

- Working Tax Credit
- Child Tax Credit
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-based Employment and Support Allowance
- Income Support
- Housing Benefit

If you have already made a claim

Ignore this letter if you have already made a claim for Universal Credit.

Yours sincerely,

Universal Credit

This is a migration notice issued under regulation 44 of the Universal Credit (Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2014 (MNJC1).

We have many different ways we can communicate with you.

If you would like braille, British Sign Language, a hearing loop, translations, large print, [audio](#) or something else please tell us using the phone number at the top of this letter.

How DWP collects and uses information

We will treat your personal information carefully. We may use it for any of our purposes. To learn about your information rights and how we use information, please see our Personal Information Charter at GOV.UK.

Call charges

Calls to 0800 numbers are free from landlines and mobiles.

Equality and Diversity

We are committed to treating people fairly, regardless of their disability, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, transgender status, marital or civil partnership status,

age, religion or beliefs. Please contact us if you have any concerns.

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