

# Your guide to Universal Credit during the Coronavirus Pandemic



Early in the pandemic, Universal Credit rates were increased by around £20 per week. This may end in April 2021 – the government hasn't decided at the time of writing this supplement.

While the increase is in place, some people with income other than benefits, like wages or a work pension, who weren't entitled to any Universal Credit before the increase will now be entitled. If you're self-employed, the minimum income floor has been suspended until April too so your Universal Credit payment will be based on what you actually earn.

Check if you can get Universal Credit at [www.entitledto.co.uk](http://www.entitledto.co.uk) or by calling Help to Claim on **0800 023 2581**.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic some aspects of claiming Universal Credit are working differently from usual.

- If you don't have internet access or a connected device at home, while public computer access points like libraries remain closed you can claim by phone instead. Call Help to Claim on **0800 023 2581** who will connect you to the DWP to make a phone claim. When things get back to normal your claim can be converted to an online one.
- You won't be asked to attend an interview at the Jobcentre unless there are exceptional circumstances. ID verification and claimant commitment interviews will be carried out by phone.
- If you're claiming as a jobseeker, your claimant commitment should be reasonable, taking into account the local jobs market as well as your personal circumstances.
- When the DWP call you, they may call from an 0800 or withheld number so be sure to answer. They will ask you the security questions you set up when you made your claim, so you'll know it's them.
- If you aren't fit for work, you'll still need to get a Fit Note, but you won't be asked to take or send it to the Jobcentre. Add it to your UC account online or call the UC helpline on **0800 328 5644** if you have a phone claim. Then keep it safe as the Jobcentre may ask to see it once restrictions are lifted.
- Your GP will most likely issue a Fit Note for you to collect from the surgery. If you're having problems getting a Fit Note, call the Help to Claim helpline on **0800 023 2581** or CARF on **03451 400 095**.
- DWP have suspended face-to-face work capability assessments while Covid restrictions last. You may be asked to take part in a phone assessment instead.