

Boyes Turner Newsletter Article

Benefits and Coronavirus

The coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak has had a fundamental impact on everyone and the way we live. During this difficult time, it is important to know what help is available to you, particularly to help with finances. The outbreak has had an impact on benefits and a summary of the main points is below.

Please note the situation is fast-changing so there may be further changes over the coming weeks.

Existing benefit claimants:

If you were already receiving benefits before the outbreak, then there are some changes that you should be aware of.

Universal Credit

Universal Credit will continue to be paid as normal. The standard allowance increased on 6 April 2020 by £20 per week. The increase will apply to existing and new Universal Credit claimants.

You do not need to attend any Jobcentre Plus appointments or medical assessments during the outbreak. This will apply until at least 19 June 2020. The Jobcentre Plus may still ask to talk to you by phone. You should not attend the Jobcentre Plus unless directed to do so for an exceptional purpose.

You do not need to search for work or be available for work. This will apply until at least 29th June, it doesn't matter what work-related activity group you are in.

If you are self-employed and claiming Universal Credit, since 30 March 2020, your payment will be based on your actual earnings rather than an assumed level of earnings.

You must still inform them of any change to your circumstances.

Carers Allowance

You will keep getting Carers Allowance if you stop caring for someone for a while because you have or might have coronavirus or are keeping away from other people to avoid coronavirus.

Other benefits

Your payments will not be affected if you get:

- Jobseekers Allowance
- New style Jobseekers Allowance
- Employment and Support Allowance
- New style Employment and Support Allowance
- Disability Living Allowance
- Personal Independence Payment

As with Universal Credit, you do not need to attend any Jobcentre Plus appointments or health assessments in person during the outbreak. You must also advise the DWP of any changes to your circumstances.

This article was kindly provided by Charlene Hughes/Gemma Garside, Associate Solicitor, [Boyes Turner](http://www.snapcare.co.uk), for the Snap Care Newsletter www.snapcare.co.uk

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If you have not claimed benefits before:

You might be able to claim benefits if you have been affected by the outbreak. You might be able to claim Universal Credit and potentially Statutory Sick Pay (SSP).

SSP could be claimed if:

- You have coronavirus
- You have symptoms of coronavirus
- Someone you live with has coronavirus or symptoms of coronavirus
- The NHS has sent you a shielding letter.

You cannot claim SSP if you are self-employed, but you can claim Universal Credit.

How can we help?

If you have any queries or questions about benefits then please contact our specialist Court of Protection team by email on cop@boyesturner.com