

# Benefits Bulletin

## Managed Migration: Update...

21<sup>st</sup> February 2024

Issue **4** [2024]

### 1. Introduction...

1.1: From this week we will see people who are getting 'legacy benefits' and living in Wolverhampton (and surrounding areas) getting a 'migration notice' as part of the further expansion of 'managed migration'.

1.2: Under 'managed migration' those getting 'legacy benefits' will be expected to move on to Universal Credit. People will be issued with a 'migration notice' when it is their time to apply.



1.3: If a person receives a 'migration notice' and does not apply for Universal Credit then their 'legacy benefits' will stop and they will not be entitled to Universal Credit.

The '**legacy benefits**' are Child Tax Credit (CTC), Working Tax Credit (WTC), Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), Income Support (IS) and Housing Benefit (HB).

### 2. The Expansion...

2.1: It is understood that those people getting tax credits (Child Tax Credit and/or Working Tax Credits) only will be the first to be sent a 'migration notice'.

2.2: It is understood that for this group 'migration notices' will be sent out between the period **19<sup>th</sup> February 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024**.

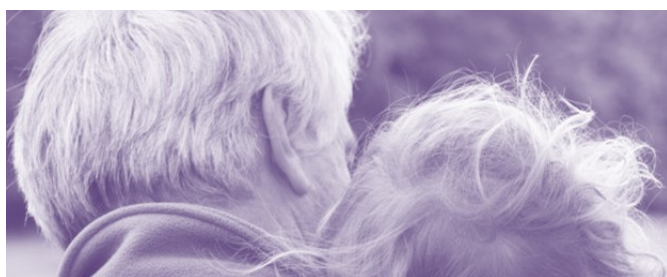


2.3: The expansion to claimants of other 'legacy benefits' will, of course follow. Whilst we are not in a position to share the exact timing / sequential order of the rollout it is understood that, as things stand, the aim is to have targeted all 'legacy benefit' recipients by the autumn (but please see 2.5 below).

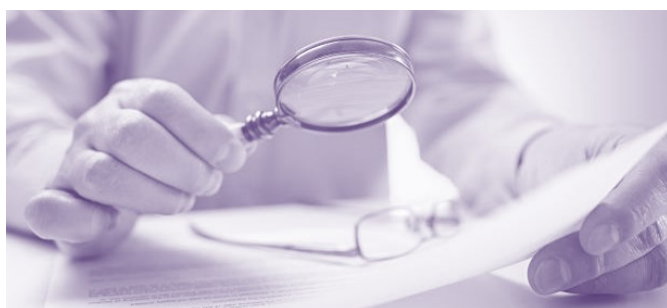
2.4: It is understood that at some point during late summer some work will be undertaken in relation to people who are of 'state pension age' and getting tax credits. The aim being to end their tax credit claim and move them on to Universal Credit / Pension Credit.

2.5: As things stand. people who receive Income-related ESA (without any tax credits) will not be expected to make the move on to Universal Credit until at least 2028.

2.6: People will have **THREE MONTHS** from the date they are sent their 'migration notice' to apply for Universal Credit.



2.7: People who are within six months of 'state pension age' (unless part of a mixed age couple) should be excused from the process. They should be able to remain on their 'legacy benefits' and, if applicable, apply for Pension Credit / Housing Benefit.



2.8: People who are terminally ill, or who have an appointee or who have a visual impairment should be invited to apply for Universal Credit at a later date - once the DWP have put in place a suitable support process / claimant journey for them.

Should someone be in this situation and receive a 'migration notice' then they should contact the DWP Managed Migration Helpline - please see number below.

**Note: Supported Accommodation** Whilst Universal Credit is designed to replace all existing 'legacy benefits', if a person is living in 'supported accommodation' then they will continue to receive / be entitled to apply for Housing Benefit (in place of any Universal Credit 'housing cost' element) to help them with the cost of their rent and service charges. Please see [Benefits Bulletin 6: Managed Migration](#) (dated 18<sup>th</sup> September 2023) for more information on what counts as 'supported accommodation'.

## 3. Key Questions

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3.1: It is clear that some of the key questions people will ask will be:

- How do I apply for Universal Credit?

Please see 4. Help to Claim below for more details about applying / help to apply for Universal Credit.

If a person has received a 'migration notice' and they need help to apply for Universal Credit or more time to apply, then they should contact the DWP Managed Migration Helpline on 0800 169 0328.

- When should I apply?

The important thing here is that people apply within the three-month window where possible.

The consensus of advice is that it may be beneficial for people to delay claiming until after they get paid and/or receive a tax credit payment. This is because once they apply for Universal Credit, they will have to wait 5 weeks before they will get their first Universal Credit payment. It may also pay to wait until the annual increase in benefit rates (which takes place in April) and/or any rent increase has taken place. This is because these factors could impact on the amount of Universal Credit awarded long-term.

It is most important that a person does not apply for Universal Credit unless they have received a 'migration notice' or they have received expert advice that they will be 'better off' under Universal Credit. This is because if a person does apply before they get a 'migration notice' they will not be entitled to any 'transitional protection' and so they could end up financially worse off or find that they are not entitled to Universal Credit at all, if they are a student or tax credit claimant.

- What if I need help to apply or more time?

If someone needs help to apply for Universal Credit or more time to apply for Universal Credit then please see 4.2 on page 4.

- Will I be worse off?

Special 'transitional protection' rules are in place which are designed to ensure that people do not get less under Universal Credit than they did under the 'legacy benefit' system. Anyone who finds themselves 'worse off' should consider challenging the decision made on their Universal Credit award.

- How will I manage?

People need to be aware that once they apply for Universal Credit any 'legacy benefit' entitlement will end at that point and they will not receive their first payment of Universal Credit until 5 weeks after the date they claim.

However, if someone is getting Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Income Support and/or Housing Benefit then they will get a, so called, TWO-WEEK RUN-ON. This means that they will get a two-week payment of these benefits. There is no equivalent 'two-week run-on' in the case of tax credits.

If someone is going to find it difficult to pay their rent / make ends meet then they can apply for an [Advance Payment](#) - a form of Universal Credit loan that they would need to repay from deductions from their future payments of Universal Credit. A person can apply for an Advance Payment through their JobCentre or through the DWP's Universal Credit helpline on 0800 328 5644.

They can also apply through their Universal Credit Journal.

Universal Credit is paid monthly. The payments they get will include money for them to pay their rent. If a person thinks that they will struggle to budget / keep on top of their rent then they may apply for an [Alternative Payment Arrangement](#) under which a person can be paid their Universal Credit twice monthly or depending upon the person's circumstances four times within a month. A person can ask for 'managed payments' which will involve the DWP paying their rent direct to their landlord. A person can also ask for 'split payments' whereby the award of Universal Credit can be split between each member of a couple.



- What will happen if I get Housing Benefit? Who will pay my rent?

The help that people formerly received in their Housing Benefit payments will be built into a person's Universal Credit calculation / award. It will then be up to them to pay their rent from this money. If they do not, then they will fall into rent arrears and that will obviously put their tenancy at risk.

- What will happen to my rent direct payments?

If a person's Housing Benefit was formerly paid to their landlord, then this will stop. However, if the person remains in rent arrears or will likely experience problems paying their rent perhaps because of e.g. substance or alcohol dependency, then an application for a 'Alternative Payment Arrangement' (APA) (see this [LINK](#)) should be considered.

- What do I need to do if I get a DHP?

If someone has been getting a Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) to help them with their rent, then they do not need to tell the Council when they apply for Universal Credit under 'managed migration'.

This is because the DWP will notify the Council of the fact that they have applied for Universal Credit / that their 'legacy benefit' entitlement has ended.

The Council will then follow things up with the person.

- Will I need to tell Council Tax Support?

If a person is getting Council Tax Support, then they do not need to notify the Council when they apply for Universal Credit under 'managed migration'. This is because the DWP will inform the Council that they have applied for Universal Credit / that their 'legacy benefit' entitlement has ended. The Council will then follow things up with the person.

Please see the note on **Supported Accommodation** (on page 2) if the person moving on to Universal Credit lives in supported accommodation - accommodation that provides them with support / temporary accommodation designed to address homelessness.

## 4. Help to claim...

4.1: The general expectation is that a person will apply for Universal Credit online and within the relevant time limits.

4.2: If a person has received a 'migration notice' and needs help to apply for Universal Credit or more time to apply for Universal Credit, then they should contact the DWP Managed Migration Helpline on:

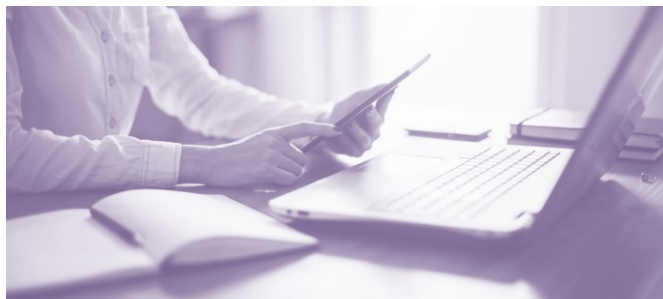
# 0800 169 0328

DWP Managed Migration Helpline

4.3: People are also being asked to ring this number if upon having received a 'migration notice' they do not intend making an application for Universal Credit. This is because the DWP want to find out why they do not wish to apply for Universal Credit and make sure that they are making an informed decision.

4.4: Please see this [LINK](#) for further information on applying for Universal Credit once you have received a 'migration notice'.

4.5: The DWP may allow a person to apply over the phone if they are unable to apply online.



4.6: Alternatively, if a person needs help to apply then they can contact Citizens Advice Help to Claim service on 0800 144 8444 for assistance.



# 0800 144 8444

[Citizens Advice Help to Claim](#)

4.7: A person can also go to the [Information and Advice Directory - Universal Credit Supplement](#) for details of local groups and organisations who can advise on Universal Credit matters and/or support them with making an application for Universal Credit.

Please see [Benefits Bulletin 1: Managed Migration](#) (dated 25<sup>th</sup> January 2024) for more details on 'managed migration' and the impact it will have.

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