



| LAW CLINIC

COVID 19 Benefits Factsheet

All individuals affected should contact the **PHA Helpline on 111**, they are moving towards issuing fit notes (sick lines) for the purposes of ESA and SSP but this will likely take time.

Means Tested Job Seekers

Payments will continue as normal and sign on is now postponed. Do not attend the JBO.

Contribution based Job Seekers/New Style JSA

If you have lost your job but are not isolating or ill, you may be able to claim JSA based on your National Insurance Contributions. This is payable if you've paid or have been credited with enough National Insurance contributions (6 months in the last 2 years). This benefit ignores the income of your partner but is taxable. **To claim contact the local JBO (<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/contacts/jobs-benefits-offices>)**

Means Tested ESA

Payments continue as normal for current claimants. For those who are in the process of renewing, face to face assessments are cancelled and will be replaced by telephone assessment or a decision will be made based on the medical evidence provided with the medical questionnaire.

Contribution based ESA/New Style ESA

If you are unable to work as you are self-isolating or have contracted COVID-19 and you are not eligible for SSP you may be able to claim ESA based on your National Insurance Contributions. This is payable if you've paid or have been credited with enough National Insurance contributions (6 months in the last 2 years). No medicals will take place face to face, they will be carried out over the phone or a decision will be made on the medical information provided with the form. This benefit ignores the income of your partner but is taxable. **Telephone the new claims line 0800 085 6318.**

Universal Credit

Current Claimants conditionality will be lessened and face to face elements will be removed. Contact your work coach via your journal and let them know of any changes in relation to your income or your ability to meet your conditions (if you are self-isolating or if you have contracted COVID-19 you will be treated as too ill to work). If your income has been reduced inform your work coach immediately and your benefit will be altered for the assessment period affected.

If you are self-employed and your earnings have reduced as a result of COVID-19 inform your work coach immediately and the minimum income floor will not be applied to your claim, this means that your profit will be deemed as your earnings and your benefit will likely increase.

New claims can be made online for those who are unemployed or are unable to claim SSP. There may be issues in relation to verifying identity online but department are working on this. If you are unable to work due to COVID 19 you will be treated as having a limited capability for work and have the majority of conditions turned off for your claim. Claimants can access a UC advance or contingency fund payment (loan or grant) via the discretionary support line to help during the 5 week wait for their first payment.

UC Helpline will support more claimants if they are struggling to make the online claim 0800 012 1331.

PIP

Payments continue as normal. For renewals and fresh claims face to face assessments are cancelled and will be replaced by telephone assessments or a decision will be made based on the medical evidence provided with the PIP 2 form.

Working Tax Credits

Tax Credits allow claimants to be sick for 28 weeks and still retain their claim. If annual income reduces by more than £2,500 per annum tax credits can reassess your claim.

Statutory Sick Pay

Statutory Sick Pay is available for workers who are diagnosed with COVID-19 or those who are unable to work because they are self-isolating. If you are classed as an employee and are working for your employer, you earn on average £118 per week and you inform your employer you are self-isolating due to COVID-19 you can claim SSP from day one of your confinement.

For further details please contact:

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