

March 24th 2020

| Topic  | Links/Documents   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Council Tax Relief Measures</b></p> <p>The Government has today (24<sup>th</sup> March) announced that a £500 million hardship fund will be made available to provide council tax relief for vulnerable households. The Fund will provide council tax relief for vulnerable people and households to help those affected the most by coronavirus.</p>  | <p><a href="#"><u>Hardship Fund for Council Tax Relief</u></a></p>  |
| <p><b>Benefit reviews and reassessments suspended</b></p> <p>Reviews and reassessments for disability benefits are being suspended for the next three months. From today (24<sup>th</sup> March), DWP have suspended all face-to-face assessments and reviews / re-assessments, for 3 months. This applies to Personal Independence Payment (PIP); Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) and some on Universal Credit (UC), as well as recipients of Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit. This is a precautionary measure intended to protect vulnerable people from an unnecessary risk of exposure to coronavirus. Customers entitled to benefit will continue to receive support. For full details click on the opposite link.</p> | <p><a href="#"><u>Reviews &amp; Reassessments Suspended</u></a></p>   |
| <p><b>Customers are asked to apply online as Jobcentres limit access</b></p> <p>People are being urged to use online services before turning to the telephone for help with their benefit claim. From today (24<sup>th</sup> March), Jobcentres will be closed to all but the most urgent, vulnerable cases where actions cannot be completed through any other channel in order to receive timely payment of benefit. Inside Jobcentres, social distancing measures will be in place. Signs will be placed in windows asking people to claim online and / or over the telephone. Click on the link for more information on this and other measures.</p>   | <p><a href="#"><u>Customers asked to Claim Online</u></a></p>   |
| <p><b>Increase to Working Tax Credits</b></p> <p>The government has announced that Working Tax Credits payments will be increased from 6 April 2020. The 'tax credits calculator' will be updated on 6<sup>th</sup> April to reflect this change.</p>  | <p><a href="#"><u>Increase to Working Tax Credits</u></a></p>   |
| <p><b>Increase to Universal Credit</b></p> <p>From 6 April the government is increasing the standard allowance in Universal Credit for one year. This will increase by £20 per week on top of planned annual uprating. This will apply to all new and existing Universal Credit claimants. This means that for a single Universal Credit claimant (aged 25 or over), the standard allowance will increase from £317.82 to £409.89 per month. Information about this can be found on the 'Understanding Universal Credit' website - opposite. The Chancellor has also delivered an updated statement on Coronavirus – for more information and to find out who will be affected, click on the links opposite.</p>                           | <p><a href="#"><u>Understanding UC - Coronavirus</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Chancellors Coronavirus Update</u></a></p> |
| <p><b>Get coronavirus support as an extremely vulnerable person</b></p> <p>Register if you have a medical condition that makes you extremely vulnerable to coronavirus. For example, you'll be able to ask for help getting deliveries of</p>  | <p><a href="#"><u>Support as an Extremely Vulnerable Person</u></a></p>   |

essential supplies like food. If you're not sure whether your medical condition makes you extremely vulnerable, register anyway. Click on the link to register.

### **[Coronavirus - Business support to launch from 23<sup>rd</sup> March](#)**

Businesses will be able to access government support from today (Monday 23 March) to keep operating in the face of the global economic emergency brought on by coronavirus.

### **[DWP Visiting Service Update](#)**

Home visits will still be undertaken for those who are most vulnerable and in order to ensure that benefit payments can be made, or safeguarding checks undertaken. DWP Visiting are currently reviewing and prioritising all existing referrals.

### **[Guidance for employees, employers and businesses](#)**

Updated 24th March Gov.UK have published the latest healthcare advice and guidance for employers; employees and support for businesses. To access this information click on the link opposite.

### **[Sick Pay from day one](#)**

On 4<sup>th</sup> March the Prime Minister announced that Statutory Sick Pay would be made available from day one when self-isolating, instead of day four. This move has been included in emergency legislation to help deal with coronavirus.

### **[Plans set out to support pupils eligible for free school meals](#)**

Update on 19<sup>th</sup> March - Children eligible for free school meals will be offered meals or vouchers as an alternative if they can no longer attend school due to coronavirus measures – full details use the link opposite.

### **[Energy Support for Vulnerable People](#)**

Updated on 19<sup>th</sup> March, the Government have agreed measures with energy industry to support vulnerable people through COVID-19. Proposals agreed to ensure vulnerable customers who may fall into debt, remain supplied with energy while in self isolation.

### **[Additional Support for Rough Sleepers](#)**

Rough sleepers, or those at risk of rough sleeping will be supported by £3.2 million of initial emergency funding if they need to self-isolate to prevent the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).

### **[Protection for Renters and Landlords](#)**

On the 18<sup>th</sup> March the Government announced a radical package of measures to protect renters and landlords affected by Coronavirus. Including a complete ban on evictions and additional protections for renters.

### **[Touchbase Coronavirus Special](#)**

Includes specific advice for employers and businesses; people already claiming support; people who need to make a new claim for financial support; employees and the self-employed.

**As this situation continues to evolve, it is important to keep up to date with Government announcements and changes – for the most up to date information always check Gov.UK first – you can sign up to receive all Coronavirus updates as they are published by clicking on the opposite link.**

### **[Launch of Business Support](#)**

### **[Guidance for employees; employers and businesses](#)**

### **[Sick Pay from day one](#)**

### **[Supporting those Eligible for Free School Meals](#)**

### **[Energy Industry Measures to Support the Vulnerable](#)**

### **[Emergency Support for Rough Sleepers](#)**

### **[Protection for Renters and Landlords](#)**

### **[Touchbase Coronavirus Special](#)**

### **[Sign up for email alerts](#)**

