

Benefit changes

Find out more about how changes to the welfare system may affect you



Update your Universal Credit claim from 3rd April 2019

Please make sure that you have updated your online journal with the details of your new rent charges or your claim may be suspended if this is not actioned

You will need to advise the DWP that your rent has changed. Kindly check your on-line journal frequently as you should receive a 'to-do' on your online journal with regards to this.

For more information, we have provided a step-by-step guide to assist you.

Log into your online Universal Credit account on or just after 3rd April 2019.

If there are any difficulties accessing your online journal, you will need to get in touch with your local job centre straight away. The lead/main claimant will need to report the change online, if you are on a joint Universal Credit

claim

Once you have logged into your online journal, kindly follow these steps:

Step 1: Select the 'HOME' option at the top left hand side of the page, then choose the option to 'Report a Change'.

Step 2: Scroll down and click on the 'Where you live and what it costs' option.

Step 3: You will then be asked a number of questions and these include:

- What has changed? Select something else
- When did this change happen? Input 01/04/2019
- Do you have Housing Costs? Select Yes
- Where do you live now? Select housing association
- Confirm your property address

Step 4: The next few questions are really important as it asked for your new rent charges from the 1st April 2019, this can be found on the rent review letter that you have received from us.

If you're unsure of the amounts to include kindly contact your Community Housing Officer on 0300 111 7000

The next part of this step will ask you to confirm Accord Housing as your landlord so please input 0300 111 7000 as the contact telephone number and customerfirst@accordgroup.org.uk as the email address when prompted.

Step 5: Once you have submitted the change check your online journal to ensure that the record of this is showing. Your online journal can be retrieved by selecting the option on the top right hand side of the home page.

As you may be aware, the Government has been making changes to the welfare system since April 2013.

These changes continue and are commonly known as 'welfare reform'. If you receive Housing Benefit, Job Seeker's Allowance, Income Support, Disability Living Allowance or a range of other benefits, this will affect you. This section will tell you everything you need to know. The Welfare Reform and Work Act (2016) introduced some changes to the benefit cap and took effect in autumn 2016. It includes additional exemptions for recipients of Guardian's Allowance, Carer's Allowance and Universal Credit claimants who receive payments towards carer's costs.

Get tailor made advice from the Money Advice service

Is Universal Credit is being rolled out in your area? Search by postcode

Find out more about the benefit cap

Need some financial advice? We can help.

Our money advisers are benefit system experts, as the case studies below show. If you need help, then talk to us.

Mr & Mrs Smith had their benefits capped at Â£20,000/year in November 2016. Their housing benefit was reduced to 50p/week and Mr Smith had a back injury so his mobility was poor. Mrs Smith was also paying for her prescriptions. One of Accordâ€™s Money Advisers made applications to Watersure on the Smithâ€™s behalf and applied for a warm home bonus to assist them in the short term. The adviser also spoke to ESA to ensure that the Smiths were on Income-based ESA, and obtained a letter from the DWP giving both names so that Mrs Smith did not have to pay for prescriptions any more. A refund was granted of their charges which had accumulated to nearly Â£300. Our adviser also applied for Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and completed the application for them. This was granted at the daily rate of living and mobility, which increased their income with an additional Â£76.90. The Smiths also had their housing benefit paid at the full amount, and they received a back payment of over Â£1,500. The family admit that they had no idea about the benefit system because they had always been in work.*

Tom, 62, had been found fit for work by the ESA assessment. Tom had been off work for some time and also struggled with some mobility issues. He explained that he had tried to apply for Job Seekerâ€™s Allowance (JSA) and was referred to Universal Credit, then back to JSA. Our money advisers telephone the rapid reclaim line for JSA on Tomâ€™s behalf. They explained that Tom could in fact apply for either JSA or UC, given his age. He decided on JSA as he was familiar with it, so we arranged for a meeting with a job centre coach to get his claim started and in pay. We also pointed Tom in the right direction for getting help writing a CV and applying for jobs. Tom has now had housing benefit paid for the period of nil income and his JSA is in pay.*

**Names have been changed to protect identities.*
