

# Housing Benefit

## General Information Bulletin

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<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-work-pensions>

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**HB G10/2014**

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<b>Contact</b>	Queries about the <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>technical content of this bulletin</b>, contact details are given at the end of each article</li><li>• distribution of this bulletin, contact <a href="mailto:housing.correspondenceandpqs@dwp.gsi.gov.uk">housing.correspondenceandpqs@dwp.gsi.gov.uk</a></li></ul>
<b>Who should read</b>	All Housing Benefit staff
<b>Action</b>	For information

## Contents

	paragraph
Increase to waiting days for new claims to Jobseeker's Allowance and Employment and Support Allowance.....	1
An update on Universal Credit and an introduction to Universal Support – delivered locally.....	5
Update on the rollout of Personal Independence Payment.....	18
Migrants Access to Benefits – feedback and best practice.....	23
LA information on GOV.UK.....	25
Statutory Instruments.....	29
HB/CTB decisions by the Upper Tribunal.....	31
What's new on the web.....	34

### As a separate attachment

Migrants Access to Benefits – feedback and best practice..... Annex A

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## **Increase to waiting days for new claims to Jobseeker's Allowance and Employment and Support Allowance**

1. The Social Security (Jobseeker's Allowance and Employment and Support Allowance) (Waiting Days) Amendment Regulations 2014 ([SI2014/2309](#)) comes into force on 27 October 2014.
2. The regulations increase the number of "waiting days" served following a new claim to Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) and Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) from 3 days to 7 days. Waiting days are the days at the start of the claim in respect of which claimants (who otherwise satisfy the conditions of entitlement) are not paid benefit. The changes will apply to new claims made in respect of a waiting period which starts on or after 27 October 2014.
3. The increase in the number of waiting days which must be served doesn't affect entitlement to Housing Benefit (HB) during this period as the claimant is still entitled to JSA or ESA but not payment during this time. See regulation 2(3) of the Housing Benefit Regulations 2006 (SI 2006/213).
4. For further information please contact [housing.benefitenquiries@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:housing.benefitenquiries@dwp.gsi.gov.uk)

## **An update on Universal Credit and an introduction to Universal Support – delivered locally**

### **Plans announced for accelerated rollout of Universal Credit after success in North West**

5. This article was previously published in the October issue of HB Direct but is being repeated following the publication of a supporting Written Ministerial Statement.
6. Universal Credit is currently being successfully rolled out in the North West of England to new claims from single people and couples. The new service is already available in over 50 Jobcentres in England, Wales and Scotland, and will be available in nearly 100 Jobcentres by Christmas – more than 1 in 8 across Great Britain (GB).
7. A list of the current live [Universal Credit sites](#) can be accessed on GOV.UK
8. On Monday 29 September the Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) Secretary, Rt. Hon. Iain Duncan Smith announced that Universal Credit will be rolled out across GB to all Jobcentres and local authorities (LAs) from February 2015 for new single claimants previously eligible for Jobseeker's

Allowance. This will include people claiming with a current HB or tax credit award.

9. The full [news article](#) can be found on GOV.UK.
10. This announcement was recently supported with a [Written Ministerial Statement](#), laid on Monday 13 October, and is available on GOV.UK.
11. This approach is consistent with our '*test and learn*' commitment to expand the service in a safe, secure and controlled manner. This plan which has been assured by the Major Projects Authority and signed off by HM Treasury delivers national expansion and transition, enabling natural migration to build the Universal Credit caseload over time as household circumstances change and they become eligible for, and claim Universal Credit.
12. The Department will personalise support to maximise flows into work as more households move onto Universal Credit as legacy benefits close to new claims from 2016. This establishes the Universal Credit service across GB, complete by 2017, with caseloads continuing to build naturally thereafter.

### **Universal Support – delivered locally**

13. On 10 July 2014 Ministers announced the successful partnerships that will formally trial aspects of local support, now referred to as 'Universal Support – delivered locally', these trials began on 1 September in eleven partnership areas across GB. These trials will help to inform future delivery and will include the sharing of data, skills and estate to support more households into work.
14. The rebranding brings Local Support Services into the Universal Credit family. The original name was seen as a working title as the framework was produced but now that we have moved into a formal testing arena it is more appropriate to use a name that reflects that the support itself will be available and delivered locally rather than continuing to refer to the framework.
15. The expansion of Universal Credit during 2015 will also allow us to build a secure platform for the introduction of Universal Support by mobilising local partnerships nationwide, putting in place a robust infrastructure ready for later expansion to all claimant groups, including the more complex and vulnerable.
16. The Universal Credit Programme has written to all LA Chief Executive Officers about these changes.
17. More information about [Universal Credit for LAs](#) is available on GOV.UK.

## Update on the roll-out of Personal Independence Payment

18. Further to the information in Bulletin [HB G3/2014](#), we have confirmed that from 17 November 2014, we are further extending the rollout of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) natural reassessment to some Disability Living Allowance (DLA) claimants living in the postcode areas beginning CH (Chester), HD (Huddersfield), L (Liverpool) and M (Manchester) where
- an existing DLA claimant's fixed term award is coming to an end
  - they are approaching age 16
  - we receive information about a change in their care or mobility needs, or
  - an individual chooses to claim PIP instead of their DLA.
19. We have said consistently that we would take a controlled approach to the introduction of PIP, including the reassessment of existing DLA claimants, continuously learning lessons from live running. In the areas chosen to extend the natural reassessment rollout, the assessment provider has sufficient local capacity to handle the increased volumes.
20. Extending rollout in this gradual way ensures that we can continue to focus on reducing delays and improving the service to claimants. We will continue to monitor progress before making any decisions on extending natural reassessment further.
21. Existing DLA claimants who have a lifetime or indefinite DLA award will not be affected until at least October 2015, unless we receive information about a change in their condition that would affect their rate of payment or if they reach the age of 16.
22. Visit [gov.uk/dwp/pip-toolkit](http://gov.uk/dwp/pip-toolkit) for more information about PIP and what's happening when. For queries related to individual PIP cases, claimants can call the PIP enquiry line on 0845 850 3322 or 0345 850 3322.

## Migrants Access to Benefits - feedback and best practice

23. Following the introduction of access to HB for European Economic Area Jobseekers, the Migrants Access to Benefits project undertook an exercise to understand how well the measure had embedded in LAs. In particular checking that supporting products developed had been received and utilised ensuring staff felt sufficiently skilled to deal with the changes in the legislation.
24. We were tasked with obtaining feedback from LAs via an agreed question set. Attached to this bulletin at Annex A includes the feedback we received and examples of good practice.

## LA information on .GOV.UK

25. It has been just over a year since we migrated all of the Housing information from the DWP corporate website to GOV.UK. In recent weeks a small scale housekeeping exercise was carried out as the pages for circulars and bulletins were becoming more difficult to navigate through, we hope the changes that we have made have been helpful.
26. When we originally migrated all of the Housing related information to GOV.UK we provided a full list of links for every page that you might need to access as we originally couldn't have a main landing page. This has recently changed and you can now find a full list of all the information that can be found on the 'Housing Benefit claims processing and good practice for local authority staff' page. The full list can be found towards the bottom of the page under the heading '[Other DWP information for LA staff](#)'
27. We do know that on occasion LA staff would like to refer back to older Housing related information that we were not able to migrate, you can still access this information as it continues to be available in the [National Archive](#), you'll also find a full snap shot of the LA pages as they were.
28. If you are having difficulty finding the information that was previously available using the list of links provided please contact us at [housing.correspondenceandpqs@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:housing.correspondenceandpqs@dwp.gsi.gov.uk)

## Statutory Instruments

29. The following Statutory Instrument (SI) has been laid:
- 2014 2687, The Social Fund Cold Weather Payments (General) Amendment Regulations 2014, coming into force 1 November 2014
30. Copies of SIs can now be downloaded from DWP's own website <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/publications/specialist-guides/law-volumes/the-law-relating-to-social-security/> and the website of the Office of Publication Sector Information <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/stat.htm>

## HB/CTB decisions by the Upper Tribunal

31. Decision Making and Appeals (DMA) Leeds is aware of the following cases that have been decided by the Upper Tribunal:
- CH/3658/13: Diminishing notional capital rule not applied correctly
  - CH/1551/2013: Claimant appeal dismissed. Complex one-off series of benefit supersessions and revisions, and overpayment revisions.

- CSH/118/2014: B13(3)(a) HBR. B13(6)(a) not applicable as carer lived with claimant. Article 14 ECHR. *R (MA and others) v. SSWP [2014] PTSR 584* followed
- CSH/589/2014: B13 HBR. Article 14 ECHR. *R (MA and others) v. SSWP [2014] PTSR 584* followed.

32. Decisions of the Upper Tribunal are published on their website which can be found here:

<http://www.administrativeappeals.tribunals.gov.uk/Decisions/decisions.htm>

33. If you have any queries about cases before the Upper Tribunal Judges or courts, please contact us by Email:

[Fldmdma.customersupportservices@dpw.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Fldmdma.customersupportservices@dpw.gsi.gov.uk) or

Fax: 0113 232481

## What's new on the web

34. The following items can be found on the website link shown

Document Type	Subject	Link
G9/2014	HB higher permitted work disregard increase Student Uprating 2014/15 Social Security and Child Support Tribunal – improving communications with LAs Universal Credit Commencement Order Adult Social Care Financial Assessment HB/CTB decisions by the Upper Tribunal HB/CTB cases awaiting decision by the Upper Tribunal Statutory Instruments What's new on the web	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hb-bulletin-g92014">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hb-bulletin-g92014</a>

<b>U2/2014</b>	Removal of spare room subsidy – Upper Tribunal decisions	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hb-bulletin-u22014-court-of-appeal-judgement-relating-to-hb-size-criteria-for-social-sector-tenants">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hb-bulletin-u22014-court-of-appeal-judgement-relating-to-hb-size-criteria-for-social-sector-tenants</a>
<b>A13/2014</b>	Discretionary Housing Payments, reporting measures	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hb-circular-a132014-discretionary-housing-payments">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hb-circular-a132014-discretionary-housing-payments</a>
<b>A14/2014</b>	Special Educational Needs (Consequential Amendments to Subordinate Legislation) Order 2014 (SI 2014/2013)	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hb-circular-a142014-special-education-needs">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hb-circular-a142014-special-education-needs</a>
<b>A15/2014</b>	Real Time Information Bulk Data Matching Initiatives – Guide for LAs	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hb-circular-a152014-real-time-information-bulk-data-matching-initiative">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hb-circular-a152014-real-time-information-bulk-data-matching-initiative</a>
<b>A16/2014</b>	Real Time Information Bulk Data Matching Initiatives – additional guidance for LAs	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hb-circular-a162014-real-time-information-bulk-data-matching-initiative">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hb-circular-a162014-real-time-information-bulk-data-matching-initiative</a>