



Department
for Work &
Pensions

jobcentreplus

DWP has experienced a huge increase in claims and our phone lines have been extremely busy as a result. We have taken urgent action to boost capacity, by moving large numbers of existing staff to help our front line colleagues, and we're recruiting more.

New claims to Universal Credit should be [done online where possible](#). Customers do not need to call DWP to arrange an appointment and they shouldn't attend the jobcentre.

People making new claims for Universal Credit no longer need to call DWP as part of the process. Instead, a bolstered team are calling claimants back if they need to check any of the information provided as part of the claim. This change has been in effect since 9 April. It should free up phone lines for those unable to claim online.

All of this will mean our staff can make more calls, ensure claims are progressed as quickly as possible and get much needed support to those who need it.

Within Essex, many of the Disability Employer Advisors, Employer Advisors and Team Leaders have been redeployed. We have a central in-box for current enquiries which is being regularly monitored. If you have any queries, you can direct them to EMPLOYER.SERVICEESSEX@DWP.GSI.GOV.UK

You may be making changes to how you operate as a business as a result of coronavirus. Please keep in touch with details of how you are delivering your services and support.

Here's how you can keep up to date up with any changes we are making. This will help you when you are offering advice and support to local people & businesses.

Key websites

GOV.UK is the primary site for all the key information to support individuals, businesses and other organisations. Here is a link to the dedicated pages [GOV.UK: Coronavirus](#), which includes information on how to stay safe.

DWP's employment and benefits support

The [Employment and benefits support](#) website includes the latest guidance and messages on sick pay, existing benefit claims, new claims to benefit, self-employment, housing and more.

Touchbase

[Register](#) to receive the DWP Newsletter - Touchbase which is sent out each week to keep you up to date on changes.

Coronavirus business hub

The [business hub on GOV.UK](#) is the first point of call for people seeking government information on support for business.

HMRC Help and Support

Employers in particular may wish to [register to receive help and support emails from HMRC](#). Individuals and businesses can sign up to receive email alerts about a range of help and support products that are available. These include live and recorded webinars, YouTube videos and online guides.