



With the Government estimating that a fifth of the working age population could be off work as a result of the spread of the virus over the next few months, they are going to put in place temporary measures to help people access money. Please note due to the fast changing situation regarding COVID-19, this advice may become out dated. Always check the websites links below or contact the Benefit Officer for further advice.

1. Statutory Sick Pay entitlement to be temporarily extended. The Government has already announced that people who are off sick because of the coronavirus will be able to claim Statutory Sick Pay (if they are employed and entitled) from Day 1 rather than Day 4 for those who have COVID-19 or must self-isolate in accordance with Government guidelines.
2. Statutory Sick Pay entitlement will be temporarily widened to cover individuals who are unable to work because they have been advised to self-isolate and those who are caring for those within the same household who display COVID-19 symptoms and have been told to self-isolate.
3. Statutory Sick Pay is £94.25 (increasing to £95.85 in April) per week. Employed claimants with little other resources will need to make claims for Universal Credit for help with housing costs and council tax reduction.
4. The government has already issued guidance to employers advising them to use their discretion about not requiring a GP fit note for COVID-19 related absences. NHS will bring a temporary alternative to fit note during the next few weeks which employees will be able to use during the COVID-19 outbreak. This will enable those who are advised to self-isolate to obtain this notice from NHS111 which can be used as evidence for absence from work.
5. For the Self-employed, Contributory (New Style) Employment Support Allowance (ESA) will be available from Day 1 rather than 8th day for those affected by the coronavirus or self-isolating. Those not entitled to Statutory Sick Pay – for example, those who are self-employed and those whose earnings are below the Lower Earnings Limit (£118 per week) would have to claim Contributory (New Style) Employment and Support Allowance and/or Universal Credit. The Budget today announced measures to help claim these benefits quicker.
  - i. New-style ESA for those directly affected by COVID-19 or self- isolating according to government advice is payable from Day 1 rather than Day 8.
  - ii. People who need to claim Universal Credit if they are directly affected by COVID-19 or are self-isolating will be able to do so without attending the Jobcentre
  - iii. The Minimum Income Floor (an assumed level of income) will be ‘temporarily relaxed’ for those claiming Universal Credit who are self-employed during the duration of the outbreak for those directly affected by COVID-19 or self-isolating.

6. Self-employed may be able to claim ESA New Style and Universal Credit. Those already on Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction will need to inform of a change of income.
7. People will be able to claim Universal Credit and access advance payments without the current requirement to attend the jobcentre

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

Additional information can be found on our [FAQ Page](#)

**You can also get further advice from below websites.**

<https://www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk/coronavirus/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/coronavirus-support-for-employees-benefit-claimants-and-businesses>

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/scotland/health/coronavirus-what-it-means-for-you/>