

The help and
support you
need during
COVID-19

WEEK BEGINNING 18th May 2020



“We know that during the Covid-19 emergency, a lot of people are frightened and also experiencing significant change in their lives. We also expect the impact of social distancing measures and worries about employment will hit those people who were already vulnerable much harder. We are here to help you help them.”

NEED SUPPORT:



CALL US ON :
02476 253165
02476 252683



CALL US ON :
07957 711080
07496 881145

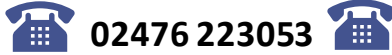


WHATS APP US ON :
07957 711080
07496 881145



E-MAIL US ON :
help@centralenglandlc.org.uk

CELC- OUR SERVICE



Coventry Law Centre is working remotely: all staff are available and their service continues as usual, but just on the telephone.

Lawyers will continue to represent in court (although the courts are moving hearings to take place by phone or Skype rather than in the court buildings).

All existing clients have direct contact details of their caseworker. Partners with established referral arrangements should continue to use them.

For new clients the Law Centre will operate a telephone only reception service between 10am and 3pm on **02476 223053**, or via e mail to enquiries@centralenglandlc.org.uk
Any changes to this will be posted on their website
www.centralenglandlc.org.uk

CELC- HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide will be updated each week while Covid-19 continues. It will help everyone in a frontline position who is in contact with service users and the public to be well-equipped to answer their concerns. The guide is in 4 sections;

- 1. This week's Must Read Items**
- 2. Basic facts about legal rights and how Covid-19 affects them.**
**compiled by our lawyers and updated regularly so you can trust you have the right info.*
- 3. Financial help**
- 4. Index of Specialist support services available across Coventry and how to access them/ National helplines and online service**

CELC- WHAT WE OFFER

We're a charity that employs lawyers with expertise in social welfare law. This is the law that affects every day life.

Areas of law we cover: Welfare Benefits, Housing, Health and Social Care, Child and Family Law, Immigration and Asylum, Employment, Discrimination and Public Law

We provide free specialist legal advice to those most in need and use legal processes to fight social exclusion. We advocate for people, challenge unfair decisions, take cases to the highest courts and work in partnerships with other support services.

As well as using the law to help people move from crisis to stability, we work to make sure people know what their rights are, and can use this knowledge to avoid getting into difficulty.

CELC- OUR GOALS AND YOUR FEEDBACK

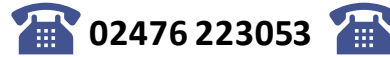


Our goal is to increase the number of people who get an expert and comprehensive answer to their problem from the first person they speak to; but we know that some will need specialist help and more support. As well as providing the contact details of other services, we have set up some additional points of contact for the Law Centre so frontline staff can easily get our help or refer people in to us. (**see numbers on cover sheet**). These numbers are for front line staff and can also be given to people they are dealing with so we can provide direct support to them



The guide will evolve as we go along and we're really keen to have your feedback. We want it to be useful so please tell us what you think, how we can make it better and if there is extra info that you'd like to see.

CELC- OUR SERVICES



Coventry Law Centre is working remotely: all staff are available and their service continues as usual, but just on the telephone.

For new clients the Law Centre will operate a telephone only reception service between 10am and 3pm on **02476 223053**, or via e mail to enquiries@centralenglandlc.org.uk

Alongside this, we are currently offering the new Covid-19 helpline that is promoted on the front of this pack, and we have a range of other services that can be accessed directly by specific partners or by the public and that continue to operate.

SERVICES FOR DIRECT ACCESS BY THE PUBLIC

EU SETTLED STATUS — a dedicated caseworker supporting vulnerable migrants to make applications for settled status.

To make contact:

Denisa.gannon@centralenglandlc.org.uk

07507726526

EMPLOYMENT ADVICE LINE

Covid-19 means the law around this area is new and constantly changing.

Our specialist employment help line on **02476 252 687** is open between

1.00 pm and 4.00 pm Monday to Thursday.

SERVICES FOR PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

ADVICE FOR FAMILIES — advice and support for families who are being supported by Coventry City Council early help service. Family hub workers can make referrals for families as usual to Anne and Shirley

anne.white@centralenglandlc.org.uk and shirley.cook@centralenglandlc.org.uk

07880193290

07741261039

MI FRIENDLY CITIES — providing legal health checks and immigration advice to clients of Mi Friendly Cities partnership and schools working with young people in need of advice about citizenship

We are a member of **COVENTRY WOMENS PARTNERSHIP**. This supports women accessing support of Coventry Haven Women's Aid, CRASAC, Kairos and Foleshill Women's Training. All referrals within the partnership will continue as usual

People who are vulnerable often present with one major issue that can be hiding lots of other problems. It is a good idea to try and explore using the key questions and suggested headers if there might something else going on.

Spotting Vulnerability

- Lots of unrelated questions/ comments
- Tendency to repeat things
- Saying Yes to everything
- Not talking very much and unable to answer questions
- Sounding easily flustered
- Suggesting someone else normally handles things for them

Supporting people with vulnerabilities

- Don't start with your own thoughts - listen to their opinions and ideas
- ask what they want help with
- Think about the language you use – not 'you should..., you must...' but 'I will help you... it's important..., we need to... let's... '
- talk clearly and slowly
- Summarise the key points
- Agree how and when is best to follow up

KEY QUESTIONS

Who Lives in their Household?

Is everybody currently well?

Can they get online/ use a phone?

Is this a new problem or have they had these difficulties before?

Are there people already supporting the individual/family?

Is this support active and when did they last see them?

What help do they need today?

Physical Health	Loneliness/ Isolation	
Mental Health	Pregnancy/ Maternity/ Postnatal	
Substance Misuse	Housing/Rent	
Education	Homelessness	
Advice on caring	Money Worries	
Abuse	Food Help	
Getting essential items	Accessing support	

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THIS WEEK'S MUST READ ITEMS

SELF-EMPLOYMENT INCOME SUPPORT SCHEME

There may be some difficulties in for HMRC in contacting people identified as eligible for the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (which opened last week). HMRC are running checks on eligibility and then contacting those who appear to be eligible.

However, if someone is self-isolating away from their usual address, or if they have moved address or their mobile phone number and have not updated HMRC, then they may not be able to make contact. Those in this situation need to be proactive and contact HMRC.

Other issues can arise because the checks that DWP are doing do not cover all of the eligibility conditions so some people may be overlooked.

It is therefore advisable for all self employed people to read the government guidance for themselves <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-a-grant-through-the-coronavirus-covid-19-self-employment-income-support-scheme> and then use the online checker.

If the online checker says they are not eligible and they feel this is wrong they can wait a couple of days and try again, but if after this it again says they are not eligible they should contact HMRC directly about their case.

FUNERAL EXPENSES PAYMENTS

The claim forms have been made available online here <https://www.gov.uk/funeral-payments>

Anyone needing help with funeral expenses should either download the form from the above address or alternatively they can contact the DWP Bereavement support service on 0800 731 0469

For any problems with a claim, contact local advice services for more help.

Entitlement to funeral expenses payments can be a difficult area of law and some people may be incorrectly refused.

Legal Rights and Covid-19

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! **NEW UPDATE**

! **NEW UPDATE**

NEED TO KNOW- ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES

New asylum claimants:

Appointments can now be made for new asylum claimants locally to attend the Home Office in Solihull rather than having to travel to Croydon. Appointments should be booked through the Asylum Intake Unit (AIU) appointment line on: 0300 123 4193. This operates Monday to Thursday, 9am to 4:45pm; and Friday, 9am to 4:30pm.

When an appointment is booked an appointment letter will be sent which must be taken to the appointment. It is a necessary requirement to attend a Home Office asylum registration centre to provide biometrics (fingerprints and facial photograph) when registering an asylum claim. Travel to the appointment at the asylum registration centre is therefore considered essential.

Applicants do not need to make an appointment if they have nowhere to live, however it is strongly advised. If a 'walk-in' appointment is necessary, it is advised that the applicant still contacts AIU appointment line who will be able to advise whether the applicant should attend the AIU in Croydon or which temporary location they should attend.

New asylum applicants are strongly advised to get specialist immigration advice before submitting a claim. Please contact the Law centre for advice.

Some Home Office requirements have been relaxed during Covid-19

- Asylum seekers do not need to report to Solihull as reporting centres are closed.
- There are no face to face interviews so their case is likely to be put on hold.
- If their asylum claim has been refused, then they will be able to stay in their accommodation and remain on asylum support at least until the end of June.

Don't miss deadlines! If they need to submit an application or an appeal they still need to do this in time.

- If they have been refused and their case is going to be heard in the First-tier Tribunal, they won't attend the tribunal. Their case might be dealt with using the internet or decided on the papers. If they are in this position, make sure they stay in touch with their legal representative or contact the Law Centre if they need representation and we will see if we are able to help.
- Refugees must continue to apply for indefinite leave to remain if they are coming towards the end of their leave to remain; but they will not be able to attend a biometric centre to give their documents and their fingerprints. However once the application has been submitted, their application is considered as 'in time' and they are still able to work, study and claim any public funds they are entitled to.

NEED TO CONSIDER

- Everybody should be accommodated by the Home Office or the local authority. If they are without accommodation then they may want to contact the Law Centre housing team.
- There is likely to be a delay in processing family reunion applications, with current applications put on hold as most Visa Application Centres are closed.
- Travel document applications are also likely to be delayed unless exceptional urgency can be shown.
- Fresh Asylum claims are now being dealt with by email/or letter. The email address is CSUEC@homeoffice.gov.uk. The Law Centre can assist with this.

NEED TO KNOW- EU/ EEA NATIONALS

- **All EU/EEA nationals who arrive here or are living here before December 31 2020, have the right to live and work in the United Kingdom.**
- People from these countries need to register under the EUSS (the EU Settlement Scheme).
- If there is no deal, registration under this scheme must take place by December 31 this year. If there is a deal registration must occur by end of June 2021. We don't know if there will be any change to these dates given the current situation.
- European nationals who have not registered as yet should do so if possible. If they need help with this, refer to the Law Centre
- All those granted settled status will have an automatic right to access public funds. If they have pre-settled status, the situation is more complicated and they might have to prove a right to reside to the DWP. If they are refused benefits on this basis contact the Law Centre.

NEED TO CONSIDER

Have they made an application yet under the EUSS? If not, do it!

- Is their passport or identity card up to date? This needs to be unexpired for an application under the EUSS to be accepted.
- Have they been refused benefits because they have been told they don't have a right to reside?
- Often these decisions can be challenged. The Law Centre can help them with that.

NEED TO KNOW- IMMIGRATION - OTHER NON EU MIGRANTS

- **The Home Office has made provisions that take account of the fact that people can't travel. However, anyone whose leave to remain is due to expire still needs to make an appropriate application to stay before the expiry date.**
- If someone is in the United Kingdom on a short term visa (for example as a visitor or a student) and cannot return home due to Covid 19 (for example they have symptoms, or there may no flights to their country of origin), then the Home Office will automatically extend their leave in the United Kingdom until end of May. In these circumstances they must submit the following online form to the Home Office:
<https://gov.smartwebportal.co.uk/homeoffice/public/webform.asp?id=199&id2=5C97E7>
- If their current leave to remain is expiring and they are here on a route leading to settlement (indefinite leave to remain), then they still need to make an application to the Home Office. For example if they are here as a partner/spouse or they have been given leave because of their family circumstances they still need to make an application to extend their leave if it is coming up for renewal.
- If they were intending to return to their home country and make an application to apply to remain in the United Kingdom in a long term category they can now apply (or switch visas) in the UK.
- Nurses, doctors and paramedics working for the NHS will have their leave to remain and the leave of their family members extended for a further year at no charge, If their current visa expires before the end of October. Others who are working part time for the NHS for example international students, are not restricted in the amount of hours that they do.
- If they have been subjected to domestic abuse or domestic violence and their immigration status depends on that of their partner, there is help and advice available. In the first instance please contact the police if they are in danger and for further support contact Coventry Haven on 0800 1114988. [HAVEN](#)


NEED TO CONSIDER

Is their visa about to expire?

- If so they still need to make an application. The date of their application is the date that the online form is completed.
- All biometric centres are closed (where they will need to go and have their fingerprints taken and submit their documents), but they still need to complete the application form on line before their visa expires.
- **The Law Centre may be able to assist them with this.**

People with a 30 day visa to travel to the UK for work, study or to join family that has expired, or is about to expire, can request a replacement visa with revised validity dates free of charge until the end of this year.

To make a request, they should contact the **Coronavirus Immigration Help Centre:**

 CIH@homeoffice.gov.uk. The email must be in English.

 0800 678 1767 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)

They'll need to include their name, nationality, date of birth and GWF reference number with 'REPLACEMENT 30 DAY VISA' in the subject line. If they've already contacted the Home Office about this, they should state this in the email.

They'll be contacted when Visa Application Centres reopen to arrange for a replacement visa to be endorsed in their passport.

They will not be penalised for being unable collect their Biometric Residence Permit while coronavirus measures are in place.

This process will be in place until the end of 2020.

RELAXATION OF RIGHT TO WORK AND RIGHT TO RENT CHECKS

- Whilst employers still have to carry out right to work checks, requirements have been relaxed so they can view electronic identity/immigration documents to confirm a right to work and the interview can be conducted remotely by videocall instead of face-to-face.
- Landlords/agencies can make checks remotely by videocall and with electronic copies of documents instead of the usual face-to-face requirement.

NEED TO KNOW- NO RECOURSE TO PUBLIC FUNDS

WHY ARE PEOPLE DEFINED AS NO RECOURSE TO PUBLIC FUNDS?

The term public funds is a creation of the Immigration Rules and includes most welfare benefits (apart from contributory benefits) and local authority housing assistance. It does not include NHS provision which is covered by a different set of regulations. Also there are different rules for EEA nationals and the term does not apply to them, although some EEA nationals will be ineligible to claim certain welfare benefits, but this is based on different tests (habitual residence and right to reside).

In general those who are going through the asylum system (including failed asylum seekers), overstayers with no leave to remain, and many people on visas who have come from outside the EEA will not have recourse to public funds. In most cases they will have an Asylum Registration Card (ARC) or Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) which will clearly state that there is a NRPF condition on the back of the card. If it is not stated on the back of the BRP then the person does have recourse. Additionally anybody who has indefinite leave to remain (ILR) or settled status (including EEA nationals granted under the EUSS) will have recourse.

There is a category of migrants who have been granted leave to remain under rules relating to private and family life. Usually most of these people will be on what is called a ten year route to settlement, meaning that every 30 months they will have to apply to extend their leave. The default position for this group of people is that the Home Office apply a NRPF condition. However it is possible that if the individual concerned is considered destitute, or is likely to become destitute, or if it is in the best interests of their children or if there are other compelling features, then the NRPF condition can be removed. This is achieved through making a Change of Conditions application (CoC) which can currently be made online.

HELP FOR PEOPLE WITH NO RECOURSE TO PUBLIC FUNDS

In a recent High Court case, the Home Office made a series of concessions for those who have leave to remain with a No Recourse to Public Funds endorsement.

They can apply to change their status IF

- Their financial circumstances have changed since being given permission to stay in the UK and they are no longer able to provide food or housing for themselves or their family
- Their child is at risk because of very low income
- They had financial problems when they first applied but they did not provide evidence of this and now want to provide this evidence

This is a great opportunity for those who are finding it hard to manage to apply to vary the conditions of their leave to remain. This allows people who are now unable to work because of Covid-19 to have immediate access to welfare support.

We have already helped some people to make this application and our experience is that they received a swift decision.

Applications are via an online form, which requires evidence and reasons. The form is here:

https://visas-immigration.service.gov.uk/product/change-of-conditions?_ga=2.120987336.1534300352.1585997678-139592328.1585330683

For help with this contact the immigration team at the Law Centre

NEED TO KNOW- NO RECOURSE TO PUBLIC FUNDS

FREE SCHOOL MEALS PROVISION EXTENDED TO SOME MIGRANTS WHO WERE PREVIOUSLY INELIGIBLE

The government has announced that new groups of migrants are now eligible for free school meals. The local authority is aware of these changes and is arranging with schools to ensure these children can be added to their free school meals return.

The newly entitled groups include people who have been given leave to remain in the United Kingdom in various categories based on their family life here:

- Children whose parents have been given leave under what is called the partner or parent routes or possibly (rarely) as what is known as a “Zambrano Carer”. (Don’t worry, the parents will normally have a Biometric Card or a letter from the Home office confirming this status)
- Other children being supported, with their parents, by the local authority will also be eligible and they should be able to obtain a letter from their social worker confirming this.

A maximum income threshold of £7,400 applies to both groups

- The children of failed asylum seekers receiving asylum support under what is called Section 4, will also be eligible. They should also have proof in the form of a letter or Aspen Card confirming their status. **This group does not have any maximum income threshold applied.**

Please note that these changes do not apply to children of EEA nationals who may also be in need as some are also not be entitled to claim benefits. For these children schools should use the emergency food parcel route.

Full details and how to check for eligibility are at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance/guidance-for-the-temporary-extension-of-free-school-meals-eligibility-to-nrpf-groups>

If you feel uncertain or worried that a family needs more help with anything related to this, please call the Law Centre Helpline on 07946881145 Or 07957 711080, or email Help@centralenglandlc.org.uk

NEED TO KNOW- RENTED HOUSING

New Possession Cases (evictions)

- No evictions can take place until 30 September 2020. This applies to people who rent from a both social landlords such as Citizen or who rent from a private landlord.
- This does not mean that a landlord (both social or private) cannot issue a tenant with a 'notice' seeking possession during this time. However as of 26 March 2020, a landlord will have to give 3 months' notice if they intend to seek possession (i.e. serve notice that they want to end the tenancy) This means the landlord can't apply to start the court process until after this period ie after 30 September 2020.
- This extended buffer period will apply in law until 30 September 2020 and both the end point, and the 3 month notice period can be extended if needed. The Government will provide updates on this.
- This protection covers most tenants in the private and social rented sectors in England and Wales, and all grounds of evictions. This includes possession of tenancies in the Rent Act 1977, the Housing Act 1985, the Housing Act 1996 and the Housing Act 1988. After 3 months if the tenant has not left the property a landlord will be required to make an application to court in order to proceed.

Existing Possession Cases (evictions)

- As of (27 March 2020) the court service suspended all ongoing housing possession action – this means that current cases currently in the system or any that were about to go in to the system cannot progress to the stage where someone could be evicted.
- This suspension of housing possessions action will initially last for 90 days, but this can be extended if needed. This measure will protect all private and social renters, as well as those with mortgages and those with licenses covered by the Protection from Eviction Act 1977. This will apply to both England and Wales.

NEED TO CONSIDER

- A tenant is still liable for their rent payments and should therefore maintain these payments where possible.
- Has the household had a drop in income? If a person is unable to pay their rent they should immediately contact their landlord and explain why.
- Has the person lost their job? Have they been furloughed? Is the cause of the drop in income related to COVID-19? They may be entitled to benefits including the housing element of Universal Credit to help them meet their rent.
- In some circumstances the Council can make a Discretionary Housing Payment [DHP](#) – the person may need advice before making an application please refer them to the Law Centre
- If in difficulties with making payments then they should speak to their landlord and try to work together to come to an arrangement.
- Any letters received from either their landlord or the Courts throughout this time will require specialist legal advice. Please refer them to the Law Centre
- A landlord may decide to take to law into their own hands and evict a tenant without a court order. This will be an illegal eviction and a Court application can be made for an Injunction requiring the landlord to let the tenant back in. Refer to the Law Centre
- Anyone threatened with an injunction or eviction for anti-social behaviour should be referred to the law centre. These hearings are still taking place.

Landlord's ongoing obligations- Landlords do not have carry out routine repairs at present, but must ensure urgent repairs or health and safety related repairs are still undertaken. If this is not happening, please refer to the Law Centre.

NEED TO KNOW- MORTGAGES

- The government has announced payment holiday scheme for people who own their own home and have a mortgage.
- Home owners should contact their mortgage company and may be entitled to a 3 month payment holiday.

NEED TO CONSIDER

- They will still be liable for their mortgage payments and should therefore maintain these payments where possible.
- Has the household had a drop in income? If a person is unable to pay their rent they should immediately contact their landlord and explain why.
- Has the person lost their job? Have they been furloughed? Is the cause of the drop in income related to COVID-19?
- They may be entitled to benefits including the housing element of Universal Credit to help them meet their rent.
- Should a client have been furloughed/lost their job they will need to consider what other benefits they may be entitled to [Benefits](#)
- If in difficulties with making payments then they should speak to their mortgage company and try to work together to come to an arrangement.
- People who request a mortgage payment holiday will have to consider the effect this will have on interest and payments going forward in the future as these may well increase as a result of the holiday. They should discuss with their mortgage provider.

NEED TO KNOW- ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Anti social behaviour Cases

- If someone has a complaint about their neighbour, they should report it to their landlord.
- Landlords can still take action for anti-social behaviour. If a landlord believes that a tenant is causing a nuisance at their property they are still able to apply to the Court to obtain a Anti-Social behaviour Injunction and a court hearing can still go ahead but the hearing will be held by telephone.
- Anyone threatened with an injunction or eviction for anti-social behaviour should be referred to the [law centre](#)

NEED TO KNOW- HOMELESSNESS

The Government has requested that all Local Authorities provide accommodation to all rough sleepers throughout this pandemic.

- The Local Authority has also been asked to make arrangements for people who may not have secure immigration status in the country, and have no recourse to public funds
- Accommodation is being provided through a range of hostels/hotels and self contained accommodation throughout the city.
- The Homelessness team will continue to assess existing and new homelessness cases to determine whether the local authority has a long term statutory duty to provide accommodation.

NEED TO CONSIDER

Unfortunately people will not have a choice where they are placed due to the demand on the service and limits to what accommodation is available.

- The customer service centre is now only operating by phone and email.
- People may be allowed to remain in temporary accommodation even if the council has decided it does not have a statutory duty BUT If a review decision is negative for a client they only have 21 days in which to appeal to the County Court from the date they received the letter.
- This will require specialist legal advice and contact should be made with the Housing Team at [Coventry Law Centre](#).

NEED TO KNOW- SOCIAL CARE FOR ADULTS

- Social services usually have duties to assess the needs of and provide care and support to a lot of vulnerable people, including adults with disabilities and carers, under the Care Act 2014.
- Emergency measures in the Coronavirus Act 2020 change or suspend many of these duties (because councils may simply become unable to fulfil these if their staff numbers are significantly depleted or the demand for support in the area increases too much). These emergency measures are called 'Care Act easements'.
- Care Act easements may affect those who already receive care and support from social services, as well as anybody who might need care and support for the first time.
- However, this does not mean social services no longer have any responsibilities to help disabled adults and carers.
- Social services should continue to comply with their duties to assess needs and provide care under the Care Act wherever possible. They should continue to do so unless it is no longer possible to do so without creating a risk the most serious needs might not be met, potentially risking lives.
- A number of councils in the Midlands region, including Coventry City Council, have already decided to start using Care Act easements. Government guidance states the decision to do so should not be taken lightly or on an ad hoc basis. It must be proportionate to circumstances that arise in the area. Any changes where councils do depart from Care Act duties must be reviewed regularly and remain in place only for so long as they continue to be necessary.
- Even when councils have taken the decision to depart from Care Act duties, social services still have *powers* to continue to assess needs and provide care and support to adults and their carers.
- Moreover, social services can't refuse to help if doing so would breach a vulnerable person's human rights, in particular their right to life (Article 2), their right to be free of inhuman and degrading treatment (Article 3), their right to private and family life (Article 8) and their right to freedom from discrimination (Article 14).
- Support for carers is available locally from [Carers' Trust HOE](#)

NEED TO CONSIDER

- **Specialist legal advice about social services' responsibilities towards disabled adults and carers is available from Central England Law Centre's Health & Social Care Team.**
- **Government guidance also provides information for:**
- **unpaid carers** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-providing-unpaid-care>,
- **those in residential care homes** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-admission-and-care-of-people-in-care-homes>,
- **those in supported living** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-residential-care-supported-living-and-home-care-guidance/covid-19-guidance-for-supported-living-provision>
- **and those who receive care at home** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-residential-care-supported-living-and-home-care-guidance/covid-19-guidance-on-home-care-provision>
- Social distancing measures might mean some disabled adults are not getting help or support they usually rely on from friends and family at home. This may make them more vulnerable and lead to a decline in their health or wellbeing. They may need care and support from social services.
- Adults who are usually fairly independent might find their condition is made worse/their independence declines and they might now need *extra* help at home they wouldn't need normally.
- Adults whose health deteriorates during the pandemic or who are discharged from hospital (whether due to Covid-19 or other illnesses/disabilities) may now need care and support from social services in care homes or residential placements. Where this occurs, the safety of adults in these placements, including how they might be shielded or protected from contracting Covid-19 should be considered in care planning.

CONTINUED ON NEXT SLIDE

NEED TO CONSIDER (cont)

SOCIAL CARE FOR ADULTS

- Adults who usually receive care and support packages from social services might not be getting that support at present, due to social distancing measures or closure of facilities/services they ordinarily access. In these circumstances, alternative ways of providing care and support should be considered, so they are not left without support to meet their assessed needs.
- Many vulnerable adults, including those with autism or learning disabilities, may find current limitations on going outside and doing exercise, as a result of the lockdown, particularly challenging. Where someone has a specific need as a result of their medical condition to go outside to exercise more regularly, they can do so without breaching the social distancing measures.
- Without social care support, people with behavioural difficulties associated to their conditions may display increasingly challenging or antisocial behaviour, which may place them or others at risk of harm or place them at risk of losing their homes (once evictions recommence). They may need care and support services from social services now to prevent further needs arising.
- Some disabled and vulnerable adults may be subject to judgments about whether they should be resuscitated if they become seriously unwell during the pandemic. There are strict guidelines about *how decisions should be taken about whether to treat or resuscitate seriously unwell people *and* *imposing advance 'do not resuscitate' instructions on care/medical files of those with illnesses/disabilities (particularly adults who have learning disabilities, autism or certain physical conditions but who are otherwise healthy).
- Without access to wider society (day centres, respite facilities, clubs, schools etc) some disabled people may be at increased risk of neglect or abuse, which might go unnoticed. Vigilance of those coming into contact with vulnerable individuals is required.
- Carers who usually have some respite from caring responsibilities might not have breaks from their caring role anymore, which may place them under so much pressure the care relationship could breakdown completely. They may need support from social services in their own right to sustain their caring role.
- **Specialist legal advice should be sought urgently if you are concerned about any of these issues from Central England Law Centre's Health & Social Care Team.**

IMPORTANT NEWS FOR CARERS!

Carers in receipt of Carers' Allowance who are temporarily unable to care for someone, either because either they or the person they care for has Coronavirus, can continue to be paid Carers' Allowance.

NEED TO KNOW- SOCIAL CARE FOR DISABLED CHILDREN

- Social services have various duties and powers to assess the needs of and provide care and support to disabled children and their carers. The Coronavirus Act 2020 does not change most of social services' duties and powers to assess the needs of and provide care and support to disabled children and their families.
- This means disabled children in receipt of care and support packages should continue to receive help and those who need support for the first time should have their needs assessed.
- However, one important change is the Coronavirus Act 2020 removes certain duties of social services from the Care Act 2014, Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 and Children Act 1989 to assess needs and provide support to disabled children transitioning from children's services to adults' services and to their carers. These changes are called 'Care Act easements'.
- Social services should continue to comply with their previous duties to assess needs and provide care wherever possible and should not depart from these duties unless the decision is taken it is no longer possible to do so without creating a risk the most serious needs might not be met, potentially risking life.
- Even if a decision is taken this is the case, social services still have *powers* to continue to assess needs and provide care and support to disabled children transitioning to adults' services and their carers.
- Very importantly, social services can't refuse to help if doing so would breach disabled children or their carers' human rights, in particular their right to life (Article 2), their right to be free of inhuman and degrading treatment (Article 3), their right to private and family life (Article 8) and their right to freedom from discrimination (Article 14).
- **Specialist legal advice about social services' care responsibilities towards disabled children and their carers is available from Central England Law Centre's Health & Social Care Team.**
- The Coronavirus Act 2020 also changes social services' duties regarding Special Educational Needs (SEND) provision and Educational, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) assessment and review processes. Separate legal advice about this is available from solicitors with expertise in Education Law.

NEED TO CONSIDER

- Social distancing measures might mean some disabled children are not getting help or support they usually rely on from friends and family who do not live in their household. This may make them more vulnerable and lead to a decline in their health or wellbeing. They may need of additional care and support from social services.
- Some disabled children who usually receive care and support packages from social services might not be getting that support – or aspects of it - at present, due to social distancing measures or closure of facilities/services they ordinarily access. In these circumstances, alternative ways of providing care and support to them should be considered so their needs do not remain unmet.
- Parent carers of disabled children who usually have periods of respite/short breaks from caring responsibilities might not have breaks from their caring role anymore, which may place them under so much pressure the care relationship could breakdown. They may be in need of support from social services in their own right to sustain their caring role.
- Disabled children nearing adulthood who need to transition from children's services to adult's services may find their needs, and/or those of their carers, are not being assessed and care and support packages from adults' social services are not being provided. These families are likely to need advice urgently to secure support to ensure their needs are met and their human rights are not breached.
- **Advice about social services' ongoing responsibilities towards disabled children and their carers and about the amended duties towards children transitioning to adults' services is available from Central England Law Centre's Health & Social Care Team.**

NEED TO KNOW- FAMILY LAW - CHILDREN

CONTACT WITH CHILDREN

- If children are currently being accommodated by the Local Authority they continue to have a duty to promote contact even if the current circumstances have interrupted an direct contact. The Family Rights Group have provided useful Guidance at <https://www.frg.org.uk/images/updated-parents-guidance-corona.pdf>
- If there is a current court order setting out who children live with and the arrangements for the children to see both parents, these arrangements should continue. The Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service [CAFCASS] have issued guidance on how this can be maintained. <https://www.cafcass.gov.uk/download/12285/>

COURT HEARINGS

- The Courts are only dealing with urgent work including Care Proceedings, usually where social services are involved; child arrangement applications where there are safeguarding concerns and applications for domestic violence injunctions.
- All Judges at Coventry County Court are working remotely. Magistrates do not have access to necessary technology to enable them to conduct hearings remotely.
- If someone has ongoing Care Proceedings and they do not have legal representation they should be referred to the Law Centre.
- If they have legal representation they should contact their solicitor to discuss any concerns about their case.

NEED TO CONSIDER

If COVID-19 makes it difficult to see children face to face there are options including Skype, FaceTime, WhatsApp etc.

Demands on the time of children's social care teams will have increased and if a family is working with them they will rely heavily on telephone and text messaging. It will be more important than ever that people are encouraged to respond to calls and messages to demonstrate maintenance of engagement with them.

NEED TO KNOW- FAMILY LAW – DOMESTIC ABUSE

IMMEDIATE DANGER

- If someone is in immediate danger and their life is threatened, they should dial the Police on 999
- If it's not safe for them to make a call, they can email: info@coventryhaven.co.uk or use Women's Aid on-line chat [chat.womensaid.org.uk](https://www.womensaid.org.uk). Both are easy to use and could be safer than calling.
- The Coventry SafeToTalk Helpline is open 7 days a week: 0800 111 4998

LEAVING THE PERPETRATOR

- At the moment, leaving might feel particularly difficult. Due to self-isolation staying with family and friends might not be an option. It may be harder to secure a refuge. Anyone concerned about where to go should be referred to the Law Centre.

COURT ACTION

- The courts are still hearing cases about domestic abuse and the Law Centre can assist with making applications for injunctions. Anyone who is experiencing domestic abuse should be referred to the Law Centre.
- A Domestic Violence Protection Order can remove a perpetrator from the residence and from making contact with the survivor for up to 28 days.
- An Occupation Order is an injunction which removes an abusers' rights to reside in the family home.

IMMIGRATION

One way in which an abuser might exert control is by threatening to report a victim to the Home office or have them sent back to their country. This treatment is never acceptable. Contact our immigration team who will be happy to advise them on options. Anyone worried about whether leaving their partner will affect their immigration status should be referred to the Law Centre.

NEED TO CONSIDER

There are lots of types of domestic abuse. Someone might be:

- Hurting someone
- Controlling their money or stopping access to it
- Controlling where they go, when and who you they talk to
- Making threats towards them or the people they care about

Right now, they might be taking advantage of the COVID-19 situation by:

- Trying to stop someone leaving the house for fresh air or essentials (please use <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus> for the current government advice on staying safe and who needs to isolate)
- They might be trying to stop someone having contact with family and friends via phone, text or video messaging, all of which are safe to do - even if people have to self-isolate

The Silent Solution system may be helpful. This is a system for victims of domestic abuse who might be afraid of further danger and escalation of harm if they are overheard when calling 999 in an emergency. When somebody calls 999, an operator will ask which emergency service is required. If the caller is not able to ask for help, the call will be forwarded to a police system and they will hear an automated message. If 55 is pressed by the caller, the system will detect this. The operator will then transfer the call to the relevant police force as an emergency.

NEED TO KNOW- EMPLOYMENT: EMPLOYEES

STATUTORY SICK PAY- COVID-19

- Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) is paid to workers if they're too ill to work. It's paid by the employer for up to 28 weeks. If workers are staying at home because of COVID-19 they can now claim SSP from day 1. This includes those who are self isolating or shielding and individuals who are caring for people in the same household and therefore have been advised to do a household quarantine.
- The new rules paying SSP from day 1 will apply retrospectively from 13 March. If the worker has COVID-19 or is self isolating they can get an 'isolation note' by visiting NHS 111 online, rather than visiting a doctor. For COVID-19 cases this replaces the usual need to provide a 'fit note' (sometimes called a 'sick note') after 7 days of sickness absence.

FURLOUGHED WORKERS

- If the employee and employer both agree, the employer might be able to access the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme in order to keep the employee on the payroll if they are unable to operate or have no work for the employee to do because of Covid-19 or because the employee is shielding. This is known as being on furlough. An employee cannot do any work for the employer while they are on furlough.
- Under the scheme the employer is able to claim a grant of up to 80% of the employees wage for all employment costs, up to a cap of £2,500 per month. The employee will remain employed while furloughed.
- The employer could choose to fund the differences between this payment and the employees salary, but does not have to. The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme runs until end of October 2020, and can be backdated to run from 1 March 2020.
- The employee must have been employed by the employer who is 'furloughing' them on or before 19th March 2020.
- Employees that were employed as of 28 February 2020 and were made redundant or stopped working for the employer after that and prior to 19 March 2020, can also qualify for the scheme if the employer re-employs them and puts them on furlough.
- An employee cannot insist on being furloughed and many work places are still open. If an employee is concerned about their health and safety they should speak to their union (if they have one) or they should be referred to the Law Centre for advice.

NEED TO CONSIDER EMPLOYMENT: EMPLOYEES

- **Not everyone is entitled to SSP. The person's earnings need to be more than the £120 lower earnings limit in order to be eligible for SSP?**
- If they aren't entitled to SSP, then they may need to apply for benefits such as Universal Credit <https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit/how-to-claim> or Employment Support Allowance <https://www.gov.uk/employment-support-allowance/how-to-claim>
- If an employee refuses to attend work without a valid reason it could result in disciplinary action.
- Shielding employees can work from home if their job allows them to do so
- If someone has been dismissed because of a reason related to COVID-19 or because of another reason but the person does not think it was the true reason it is important that they get advice
- **The sudden nature of changes might impact heavily – people may need immediate help with food, fuel, and Universal Credit Claims. This is available for people in and out of work. Support for rental costs will be paid through Universal Credit.**
- **Do they pay rent or have a mortgage? see the [housing advice section](#)**

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Employers have a duty to ensure their employees health and safety and provide adequate protective equipment. If someone thinks their employer is not complying with their duty they should seek advice from their union or the [Law Centre](#).

UNFAIR TREATMENT

- Some workers may be treated unfairly which can be challenged, if they need help please seek advice from the [Law Centre](#).
- Many claims to the Employment Tribunal must be made within three months, less one day.
- If anyone has a claim already in the Employment Tribunal and does not have legal representation they should be referred to the [Law Centre](#) for advice.

CONT ON NEXT SLIDE.....

NEED TO KNOW- EMPLOYMENT: EMPLOYEES

ANNUAL LEAVE

- Workers who have not taken all of their statutory annual leave entitlement due to COVID-19 may be able to carry it over into the next 2 leave years if they have been unable to take their leave in the current year because of business need e.g. health/social care workers.

CHILD CARE OR CARING RESPONSIBILITIES

- An employer is not required to furlough an employee because they have childcare or caring responsibilities. An employee is entitled to time off to provide care but it is usually unpaid. Some employers offer paid leave and anyone in this situation should check their contract of employment and speak to their employer.
- The Government is encouraging anyone who can work from home to do so. If someone needs to be at home because of caring responsibilities and believe they could do their job from home they could make a flexible working request. They should speak to their employer and explain how they could do their job at home.
- An employee whose employer unreasonably refuses to allow them to work at home in these circumstances may be able to bring a claim in the Employment Tribunal.

LAY OFFS AND SHORT TIME WORKING/REDUNDANCY

- An employer can ask an employee to stay at home, reduce their hours or take unpaid leave if there's not enough work for them and they have a contractual right to do so. The Furlough scheme may not apply in these circumstances. It is important to get legal advice from a union (if the person is a member) or refer them to the Law Centre for advice.
- Many businesses are closing. If a business closes an employee may be eligible for a redundancy payment if they have been employed for more than two years and most employees would be entitled to notice pay
- The law sets out rules employers must follow in these types of situations so it is important that any employees who are in this situation should get advice from their union or the [Law Centre](#)

NEED TO CONSIDER EMPLOYMENT: EMPLOYEES

The sudden nature of changes might impact heavily – people may need immediate help with food, fuel, and Universal Credit Claims. This is available for people in and out of work. Support for rental costs will be paid through Universal Credit. Do they pay rent or have a mortgage? see the housing advice section

Some workers may be treated unfairly which can be challenged, if they need help please seek advice from the Law Centre.

Many claims to the Employment Tribunal must be made within three months. If anyone has a claim already in the Employment Tribunal and does not have legal representation they should be referred to the Law Centre for advice.

NEED TO KNOW- EMPLOYMENT: SELF EMPLOYED

TAXABLE GRANT FOR SELF-EMPLOYED

- The Government introduced the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS). This will support self-employed people (including members of partnerships) who have lost income due to coronavirus (COVID-19).
- The scheme will allow self-employed workers to claim a taxable grant of 80% of their average monthly trading profits, paid out in a single instalment covering 3 months, and capped at £7,500 altogether. This is a temporary scheme, but it may be extended.

Those eligible will need to be a self-employed individual or a member of a partnership and:

- were operating their business in the Tax Year 2019 to 2020 and intend to continue trading and they
- earn at least half of their income through self-employment;
- have trading profits of no more than £50,000 per year;
- have traded in the tax year 2018/2019 and submitted their self-assessment tax return for that year on or before 23 April 2020.

The scheme opened on 13th May. The first payments will be made by 25th May and claimants will generally be paid within 6 working days.

HMRC is contacting people who may be eligible to claim.

If people want to check if they are eligible for this scheme they can check this on this government website <https://www.tax.service.gov.uk/self-employment-support/enter-unique-taxpayer-reference>

NEED TO CONSIDER

- It may be difficult for some people to show that they have been 'trading' for the required period.
- The rules are quite complex - it might be necessary to speak to HMRC
- Some people may employ staff and they need to make sure they take legal advice before laying staff off or furloughing them.

OTHER FINANCIAL HELP

- A claim can be made for universal credit to cover the period to 13th May. <https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit/how-to-claim>
- There is a new 'Time to Pay' service offered by HMRC for anyone with outstanding tax liabilities. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/time-to-pay>
- Self-employed people are not usually eligible for sick pay (SSP). If someone is diagnosed with COVID-19 or is required to self-isolate because they or someone in their household is showing symptoms or has been told to self-isolate they may be able to apply for Employment Support Allowance <https://www.gov.uk/employment-support-allowance/how-to-claim>. This benefit will now be payable from day 1 of sickness, rather than day 8.
- A self-employed person who is not sick or self-isolating, but now has no work and doesn't qualify for SEISS can claim Universal Credit which may also be able to help with rental costs.
- If the person has a mortgage, they may be eligible for a payment holiday

NEED TO KNOW- WELFARE BENEFITS

THE BENEFITS SYSTEM IS COMPLEX

If you are dealing with someone who is already claiming benefits but is struggling financially, please refer them to the Law Centre or one of the [advice agencies](#)

WHAT FOLLOWS IS SOME GUIDANCE FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE NEWLY CLAIMING BENEFITS BECAUSE OF THE IMPACT OF COVID-19

UNIVERSAL CREDIT

- Anyone who has little or no income, whether unemployed, employed or self-employed, may qualify for Universal Credit.
- Universal Credit is a benefit designed to provide a minimum amount of money for day-to-day living and rent payments.

NOTE: If the person receives other benefits already, including Housing Benefit (to help them with their rent), a new claim for Universal Credit will result in their Housing Benefit stopping. Refer them to the Law Centre for advice.

CLAIMING DURING COVID-19

Claims are made on line <https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit/how-to-claim>

- An application for Universal Credit involves verification of the claimant's identity (and the identity of their partner) and home address (if they have one).
- In normal circumstances this has been done by way of a face-to-face meeting. The Job Centre will now ring people and conduct a verification interview with them over the phone.
- As part of the regular online claim process an individual claim 'journal' will be created. People may use this to message the Job Centre (and vice versa) about particular aspects of their claim.

TELEPHONE CLAIMS: If someone is unable to claim online, claims may be made by phone. The number is 0800 328 5644, textphone 0800 328 1344. Lines are very busy.

Anyone struggling to make a claim can get help from the [Citizens Advice Help to Claim service](#)

NEED TO CONSIDER

EXISTING UNIVERSAL CREDIT CLAIMANTS

- The Government has announced an increase in Universal Credit of £1,000 per year. This will be paid on the claimant's first payday on or after 6th April.
- Households affected by the benefits cap will not get the increase (if a household affected by the cap contains someone with a disability, the cap should not be in place – refer them to the Law Centre)
- If someone has been claiming universal credit and has been furloughed, they don't need to do a change of circumstances. Their employer will notify the Job Centre.
- People can experience hardship as a result of deductions or sanctions on their existing claim- these things can be challenged or payment arrangements changed. Please refer to the [Law Centre](#)

OTHER BENEFITS

People may be entitled to a range of benefits related to their personal circumstances - this includes those who are unwell physically or mentally, disabled, caring for an adult or child who needs special support. Anyone who needs help with this should be referred to the Law Centre or one of the [advice agencies](#)

IMPORTANT POINTS

- People are being asked where possible to make their Universal Credit claim online
- Keep phone lines free for those who really need them The Universal Credit phone lines are very busy.

OTHER HELP

- **There's a 5 week wait to get Universal Credit and people often experience hardship and difficulties which they may need help with. An advance payment can be requested**
- People may be entitled to help with council tax or eligible for grants to support them if they are in financial difficulty as a result of their circumstances

New! DWP ONLINE INFORMATION

The DWP has launched new online information about claiming benefits and changes arising due to Covid 19 which may answer many queries. It is available here <https://www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk/employment-and-benefits-support/>

NEED TO KNOW- WELFARE BENEFITS

SELF-EMPLOYED PEOPLE CLAIMING UNIVERSAL CREDIT

The new Self Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) will make its first payments on 25th May, and until then many self-employed people will need to claim Income Support to replace their earnings or top up reduced earnings. If self-employed people claiming Universal Credit have set aside money to cover their tax liability this will be viewed as a business asset and the capital will be disregarded. The usual Universal Credit upper capital limit is £16,000 and people with capital above this level cannot normally get Universal Credit so this concession is helpful for those with other capital or with a lot of money set aside for tax liability.

PROTECTION FOR TAX CREDITS

Claimants who are unable to work their usual hours (whether employed or self-employed) will generally retain their entitlement to their usual level of Tax Credits. There is no need for them to contact HMRC about reduced hours or being furloughed. HMRC state that these arrangements will continue until the Job Retention scheme (furloughing) and the Self-employment Income Support Scheme end, even if the person concerned is not supported through either scheme.

Claimants should still notify HMRC if they have lost their jobs, been made redundant or if their self-employed business ceases to trade.

NEED TO CONSIDER

CAUTION WHEN MAKING A NEW CLAIM FOR UNIVERSAL CREDIT

Some people may not be aware that they will lose many of their existing benefits if they make a claim for Universal Credit. There is now new information about this on the Tax Credits website.

The government is considering what more can be done to help with this problem.

Meanwhile we would advise that anyone who has other benefits in place and is considering claiming Tax Credits to ensure that they have checked that their new Universal Credit will be more than their Tax Credits and their benefit income, and have taken advice about this if they are unsure.

It is possible to lose out financially as a result of making a claim for Universal Credit in this situation. This is particularly likely for larger families.

THERE ARE SOME REPORTS ABOUT CERTAIN PAYPOINTS RUNNING OUT OF CASH.

Paypoints are used by people who do not have bank accounts and who are paid their benefits through the Payment Exception scheme.

Claimants affected are advised to use another Paypoint in their area. Paypoints can be located using this website <https://consumer.paypoint.com/>

NEED TO KNOW- WELFARE BENEFITS

UNIVERSAL CREDIT CHILDCARE COSTS Universal Credit are saying that they will only pay childcare costs that have actually been used to pay for childcare, i.e. they will not pay for retainers. They have also said they will restrict new claims for childcare costs paid on Universal Credit to the children of key workers. We understand that Tax Credits may be more generous than this. There is some ambiguity in the wording of the statement about this on the Universal Credit website and we would encourage anyone who is refused Universal Credit to cover childcare while they have been working to seek further advice.

TEMPORARY RELEASE FROM PRISON – BENEFITS ENTITLEMENT

Due to Covid-19 some people have been temporarily released from prison. They are treated by the benefits system as not in prison, so claims can be made for means-tested benefits such as Universal Credit, Housing Benefit (for people in supported or temporary accommodation and pensioners) and Pension Credit.

If the claimant has rejoined their partner then they can be added to the partner's claim for means-tested benefits. In addition to the 3 benefits named above this will include Income Support, Income Based Job Seekers Allowance, Income Support and Tax Credits. This can be done by the partner declaring a change of circumstances. If these claims or changes are delayed they should be backdated to when the person came out of prison.

If more help is needed refer to the Law Centre.

NEED TO CONSIDER

SOCIAL FUND FUNERAL EXPENSES PAYMENT

For claimants who meet the conditions to claim a Funeral Expenses Payment from DWP, there has been an increase in one of the elements that goes into calculating the sum. The DWP allows for burial fees, cremation fees, cost for documents to release the deceased's assets, transport costs for the deceased and the person arranging the funeral and, for people who have died since 8TH April, up to an additional £1000 for any other funeral costs (the figure was £700 for people who died before this date.)

NEW STYLE ESA

New Style ESA is the replacement for Contributory ESA and is the benefit paid to people who have lost their jobs after they have been working and paying Contributions. There is a limited test of income and no test of capital for this benefit. For people on low incomes they may need to claim Universal Credit as well to top up New Style ESA.

The change that has been made is that it is now possible for New Style ESA to be claimed online. Claimants will need to have available their National Insurance number, bank account details, GP details, income details and the date that their payment of Statutory Sick Pay ends where this has been paid. People who are appointees for claimants cannot claim online and will need to claim over the phone. More information about this is available here.
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/new-style-employmentand-support-allowance-detailed-guide>

PENSION CREDIT

Underclaiming of Pension Credit is a widespread problem

The DWP has launched a Pension Credit take up campaign on Facebook, in GPs practices and in Post Offices which encourages people over state pension age to check if they're eligible for Pension Credit. Older people can have their entitlement to Pension Credit and other benefits checked by contacting their local advice agencies.

NEED TO KNOW- WELFARE BENEFITS

COVID-19 - ARRANGEMENTS TO CLAIM BENEFITS FOLLOWING THE BIRTH OF A NEW BABY

Register offices are closed due to Covid-19 and families with new-born children are unable to register their births. So there are new benefit claims processes to help them.

- If this is the first child, Child Benefit can be claimed by completing the Child Benefit form CH2. A copy can be found on line and printed https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/877959/Child_Benefit_Claim_form_-_English.pdf A note should be added to explain that the claimant has been unable to register the birth. The claimant will need to post this form – the address is on the form.
- If a parent who is already in receipt of Child Benefit has an additional child and has been unable to register the birth, they can either fill in the CH2 as above or can ring 0300 200 3100 and register the claim for the extra child over the phone.

It can take up to 12 weeks to process a new Child Benefit claim. Child Benefit can be backdated for up to 3 months.

Once a claim has been made for Child Benefit, if tax Credits are in payment (Child Tax Credit or Working Tax Credit) then the parent should declare a change in circumstances for an increase to be paid in these benefits.

For people in receipt of Universal Credit or making a claim for Universal Credit the claim for the additional child should be accepted without the birth having been registered as this is not a requirement. If any difficulties are experienced, please refer to the Law Centre.

NEED TO CONSIDER

DWP has stopped recovery action associated with benefit overpayments, tax credits debt, and social fund loans.

They said

“We will no longer start to recover any new debts and will be suspending repayment of any debts already being recovered. This includes deductions for the repayment of benefit overpayments, tax credit debt and social fund loans from all benefits, direct debit plans, and repayments made to employers.

You do not need to speak to an adviser to ask us to do this, we have arranged this on your behalf.

If you currently make repayments through a bank standing order, please contact your bank to cancel your arrangement. If you currently make repayments by bank giro credit, please suspend these payments immediately. If you currently make repayments through online banking, please suspend these payments immediately.”

They will also pause deductions from benefits through the Eligible Loans Deductions schemes. This scheme enables responsible lenders to collect debts from DWP where other arrangements have failed.

Local Authorities are suspending recovery of all Housing Benefits

overpayments. This will include voluntary payment arrangements and direct earnings attachments. If these are not cancelled or if they are being made through bank standing orders or direct debits the bank can be asked to cancel the arrangement.

NEED TO KNOW- WELFARE BENEFITS

STATUTORY SICK PAY

From 16th April 2020 the Government has extended entitlement to Statutory Sick Pay to people who are shielding as a result of the Covid-19.

The new rules mean that SSP should be paid by employers to people who are certificated as too ill to work by their employers and also to people who are defined in public health guidance as extremely vulnerable and at high risk of severe illness from coronavirus due to an underlying health problems and who have been notified to follow rigorous shielding measures.

People who are shielding could alternatively be furloughed – see [employment rights](#)

STATE PENSION CLAIMS

There will be an option for people claiming their State Pensions to do online claims to reduce pressure on the DWP phone service.

STATUTORY FAMILY PAYMENTS AND MATERNITY ALLOWANCE PROTECTED

Payments of Statutory Paternity Pay, Statutory Maternity Pay, Statutory Adoption pay and Statutory Shared Parental Leave Pay and Statutory Parental Bereavement Pay, as well as Maternity Allowance, are based on average earnings which means that there is a risk that some workers who are furloughed will receive a lower rate of these allowances. **The Government has announced that where people are furloughed the calculation of payments made after 25th April will be based on their usual earnings as if they had not been furloughed.**

NEED TO CONSIDER

FOR PEOPLE SHIELDING - POST OFFICE CARD ACCOUNT CUSTOMERS.

The DWP has agreed with the Post Office a new payment service for benefits for anyone using one of these accounts who is shielding at home to ensure they are able to access cash without having to go out.

Where benefits are being paid into one of these accounts the clients will be contacted by the Post Office to establish if they are shielding at home. **If they are, the Post Office can arrange for them to have cash delivered to their house using Royal Mail Special Delivery and they will receive this by 9pm the day after their payday.**

PERSONAL INDEPENDENCE PAYMENT.

Claimants are usually given a month to return PIP2 forms, which are the forms asking for details of their health conditions. **This has been extended to 90 days to allow for the difficulties claimants may have in accessing help with these forms.**

The PIP assessments will be done over the phone and claimants will be told in writing when to expect the call. They can arrange to have another person to join in the phone call potentially in a 3 way conversation to give them additional support. This third person could be a Support Worker, carer, relative or friend.

It is important to be available to answer this call which will come from a withheld number. Benefit can be refused if claimants fail to participate after they have been called several times.

DISABILITY BENEFITS – EXISTING AWARDS

The government has announced that people with existing awards of Personal Independence Payment, Disability Living Allowance or Attendance Allowance which are time limited and due to end in the next 3 months will have their awards automatically extended by 6 months so that they do not need to do a renewal claim at present.

It should be noted that the Government are reporting a 50% reduction in the numbers of new claims for disability benefits so we would encourage claimants to still get new claims in. They can contact Coventry Independent Advice Service or Citizens Advice for assistance and advice on form completion.

NEED TO KNOW- COUNCIL TAX

COUNCIL TAX DEBT DURING COVID 19 – HELP AVAILABLE

People you are supporting may suddenly be experiencing financial hardship as a result of Covid-19. This may make it very difficult for them to keep up their council tax payments.

If someone has missed a payment or is unable to pay they should contact Council Tax immediately using the email counciltax@coventry.gov.uk putting the title as Covid-19.

Council Tax will then be able to consider with the bill-payer a range of help options

- spreading payments over different months
- Covid-19 hardship support
- considerations around eligibility for council tax reduction.

Reassure the person you are supporting that if they miss a payment during April or May the Council will not take any court action against them until June at the earliest. They will receive a reminder following the missed payment, and if they can bring your account up to date before June then no court action will be taken.

The Council has instructed it's enforcement agents (formerly known as bailiffs) not to visit people in April and May about new or existing debts. The enforcement agents (Newlyn and Equita) may still make contact by phone or in writing to discuss an existing debt that has arisen prior to April 2020.

APPLYING FOR COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT

Council Tax Support is a benefit that helps with the payment of council tax by reducing the amount to be paid.

People experiencing difficulties in paying rent, food and other bills are often struggling with their council tax. It's important to ask about this.

Covid-19 has changed many people's circumstances quickly and they should be encouraged to consider if they might now be eligible for help with their Council Tax bill.

- Council Tax Support is not included in Universal Credit; a separate application needs to be made to Coventry city council.
- A successful application can significantly reduce the amount people have to pay, making it easier to manage finances and stay on top of bills.
- People in receipt of Universal Credit, Personal Independent Payment (PIP), Job Seeker's Allowance, Employment and Support Allowance, or other benefits are likely to be eligible for Council Tax Support

If the person you are supporting has made a new Universal Credit claim they need to make a separate claim for council tax support. The level of Universal Credit they are awarded will be directly linked to their council tax support application and will result in a revised bill - so they may not owe as much as they think.

MORE HELP ON NEXT SLIDE

NEED TO KNOW- COUNCIL TAX

CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH A COUNCIL TAX BILL CAN BE REDUCED – not means tested, available to all who fit these categories irrespective of income

SINGLE PERSON OCCUPIER DISCOUNT

The Single Person Occupier discount gives a 25% discount on a council tax bill. If the occupant:

- lives alone in the property **OR**
- lives in the property with another person who is “disregarded” for council tax purposes.

To find out more the person should contact the council

DISABLED PERSON’S RELIEF

If the person, or someone they live with, has a disability, they can get help with their council tax bill and have it reduced. This is called the Disabled Person’s Relief.

This discount is designed to help people with a life-impacting disability and who requires a specific room or equipment in their house.

SEVERE MENTAL IMPAIRMENT

If the person has a serious mental diagnosis, the “Severely mentally impaired” exemption can help them with their council tax bill. If they are eligible, they will not have to pay council tax. This exemption requires a signed document from a GP. If you think you someone you are supporting might have a serious mental diagnosis, it can be helpful for them to talk to GP/psychiatrist about this council tax exemption. They will know about this exemption and which document they need to sign.

A GP must confirm that they are “severely mentally impaired”. This has been defined as someone with: “a severe impairment of intelligence and social functioning which appears to be permanent”.

Examples of this can be:

Dementia/Alzheimer’s, Parkinson’s Disease, Learning difficulties, Schizophrenia, Bipolar disorder

This is not a complete list. **If someone you are supporting has a serious and permanent mental condition which makes it difficult to manage social relationships or function in day-to-day life, they could be entitled to an exemption and this should be explored with their GP.**

The impairment must “appear to be permanent”. Conditions like anxiety and depression are not considered to be permanent.

WHAT TO DO NEXT

Anyone who has been affected by coronavirus and is concerned about making Council Tax payments can call 024 7683 1111, or email counciltax@coventry.gov.uk, putting ‘COVID-19’ in the subject box.

If you think someone might be eligible for Council Tax support and would like help to support someone to claim please call Law Centre

FINANCIAL HELP

DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS (DHP)

If you cannot afford to pay your rent you may be able to claim extra help from the Council called Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs). The Council has a limited amount of money for paying out DHPs so we may not be able to pay every claim. Our main priorities are to help prevent people from becoming homeless and to help ease financial pressure for vulnerable people who live in Coventry.

Who can claim a Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP)?

To be able to make a claim you must be a resident of Coventry and must be getting:
Housing Benefit, or
Universal Credit with an award for rent costs

Customer telephone lines will be open Monday to Friday between the hours of 11am – 2pm. If you need to contact us outside of these hours please email us on dhpteam@coventry.gov.uk.

Coventry City council Replaced the DWP's discretionary Social Fund system with a scheme called **Community Support Grants**.

There are two types of Community Support Grants: **Support Grant and Crisis Award**. You will have to meet an eligibility criteria. **No cash payments will be made.**

GRANTS AND SUPPORT

Hundreds of small charities give grants to individuals, from one-off sums to help with things such as furniture, decorating, clothing or ways to improve quality of life (eg, holidays or training) to regular amounts to help cover bills and household expenses.

The grants usually depend on an individual's circumstances, maybe any illnesses they have or their nationality, occupation, age or income.

Charity-run website [Turn2us](https://turn2us.org/) has an easy-to-use grant search which tells you how to contact any suitable charities directly, or you can register for a free account to send online enquiries and applications to charities through the site.

COUNCIL TAX AND HARDSHIP FUND

Anyone who is finding it difficult to pay their Council Tax should contact the Council Tax Team to discuss alternative payment arrangements.

If you have been affected by coronavirus and you are concerned about making your Council Tax payments, visit our [COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\) and Council Tax page](#), call 024 7683 1111, or email counciltax@coventry.gov.uk, putting 'COVID-19' in the subject box so we can give your email priority.

Please get in touch as soon as possible if you're struggling because of the current situation.

New Claims and Changes in Circumstances on-line application forms for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support will be available later today at www.coventry.gov.uk

There will also be an option for customers to claim Free School Meals as part of the application.

The new forms will replace the existing new claim form and the four different changes in circumstances forms that currently are accessed through the Council's customer portal.

The forms will be accessible through the Council's website on the Benefits page.

UTILITIES

Martin Lewis at Money Saving Expert has lots of great information to help people at this difficult time. **Self isolating and/or struggling to top up gas and electric cards/prepayment meters?**

There's help available:

This link provides contact details, and up to date information, from all energy suppliers on the support that is currently available.

<https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/news/2020/03/uk-coronavirus-help-and-your-rights/#energy>

This link is for anybody considering switching to a cheaper energy provider.

<https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/utilities/you-switch-gas-electricity/>

Struggling with water bills? There's help available

The link sets out the contact details and detailed help that is available from all water providers.

<https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/news/2020/03/uk-coronavirus-help-and-your-rights/#water>

All water companies offer some kind of help.

Services Index Page



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NEW UPDATE

NEED TO KNOW- DOMESTIC ABUSE

Service: Haven Coventry



: 02476 444077

The helpline will continue to run as normal on
0800 111 4998. The helpline is open Monday-Friday
8.30am-5.30pm and Saturday-Sunday 10am -1pm.

For professionals and for general enquiries
Please call **02476 444077**

There is currently no group work or drop in clinics.

For refuge enquiries please call the helpline on
0800 111 4998.
**Our refuges are full and we do not anticipate any women leaving refuge
during this uncertain period.**

Service: Safe to Talk



0800 111 4998

Coventry City Council's Domestic Abuse Website
Helpline **0800 111 4998**. Monday-Friday 8.30am-5.30pm and Saturday-
Sunday 10am -1pm. E mail enquiry form

Service: ManKind Initiative

www.mankind.org.uk

Helping men escape domestic abuse. Provides emotional, practical and legal support
CALL 01823 334244 Weekdays 10am to 4pm
Confidential helpline for male victims of domestic abuse and domestic violence

Service: RESPECT Men's
Advice Line

www.mensadviceline.org.uk

Helping men experiencing domestic abuse. Provides emotional, practical and legal
support
CALL 0808 8010327 Webchat available Weds, Thurs and Friday 10-11am & 3-4pm
Or email info@mensadviceline.org.uk

NEED TO KNOW- RAPE & SEXUAL ABUSE

Service:  **CRASAC**
COVENTRY RAPE AND SEXUAL ABUSE CENTRE



: 02476 277777

Helpline and referral process: Our Helpline will be offering a reduced service. We will not be able to respond to 'live' calls but we will be checking the answering service on a regular basis within each working day and providing call backs to victims/survivors, supporters and professionals.

Whilst referrals for counselling are still be accepting and processed, assessments will not take place currently as these are not suitable or safe to take place by phone. helpline@crasac.org.uk

Counselling and therapeutic services 11+:

Current clients will be offered a choice (if appropriate) to:

- Postpone their counselling (dependant on how many sessions they have engaged with) and receive emotional support check in calls.
- Access telephone counselling
- Access email counselling
- Access secure online counselling - via a 'skype style' bespoke system

Independent Violence Sexual Violence Advisors Service (ISVA): This service will continue to operate with no waiting list and a response time of 48 hours. This service offers specialist support through the Criminal Justice System, from information and options about reporting, through to trial. No pressure is put on any client to report. ISVAs also provide advocacy support on all issues related to sexual violence. ISVAs will be based remotely, so support will be limited to telephone, email and online, with the exception of some critical face-to-face support (i.e. attendance at Court etc.) as agreed between ISVA and client and only where possible and permitted in line with government guidance.

Counselling and therapeutic support for 5-10 yr old:

Direct service is currently suspended as this is not appropriate in an online setting.

Support in these cases will alternatively be offered to parents/carers of these children and young people.

Further options of direct work with this age group will be available once full services resume.

ASARC and PSARC counselling (Crisis counselling for adults, children and young people after attendance at a Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC):

This service will continue offering telephone assessments and time-limited counselling (including pre-trial therapy). This service will be offered by telephone, email or online.

Please note that clients accessing this service would often benefit from the support of an ISVA, please ask us about this is making a referral. Please also see ISVA section below.

University Outreach ISVA Service: This service continues offering independent, specialist and bespoke support to students and staff at Warwick University who have experienced or been impacted by sexual violence. Support will be offered via telephone, email and online, with the exception of some critical face-to-face support (i.e. attendance at Court etc.) as agreed between ISVA and client and only where possible and permitted in line with government guidance.

Service: Kairos WWT



: 02476 559 550

Kairos WWT is working remotely and continuing to support women with an extended outreach on Wednesday evening in the Hillfields area.

NEED TO KNOW- WOMENS SUPPORT

Service: FWT



: 02476 637693

FWT is postponing face to face delivery and FWT led sessions at the centre.
The teams are contactable currently via **024 7663 7693** or email office@fwt.org.uk where your email will be directed to the appropriate staff member.

Through Coventry Women's Partnership Faye Pettitt is continuing to support service users remotely and has direct links with teams at FWT and across the partnership. Please continue to contact **Faye Pettitt** on **07538092997** and faye.pettitt@fwt.org.uk

NEED TO KNOW- MENTAL HEALTH WELLBENG

Coventry Mental Health Service Information For all providers and members of the public during the COVID-19 outbreak Is available on the Councils website

https://www.coventry.gov.uk/info/151/mental_health/3581/mental_health_service_information_during_covid-19_coronavirus

Young Minds

www.youngminds.org.uk

I am a...young person looking for help and support

Advice and support to empower young people's mental well-being. Text the Young Minds Crisis Messenger, for free 24/7 support across the UK if you are experiencing a mental health crisis.

If you need urgent help text YM to 85258

All texts are answered by trained volunteers, with support from experienced clinical supervisors

Texts are free from EE, O2, Vodafone, 3, Virgin Mobile, BT Mobile, GiffGaff, Tesco Mobile

RETHINK MENTAL ILLNESS

www.rethink.org

Equality, rights, the fair treatment and maximum quality of life for all those affected by mental illness, their carers, family and friends. Their information hub includes 'supporting yourself', 'support for carers' and 'emergency changes to the Mental Health Act'.

NEED TO KNOW- OLDER PEOPLE

Service: AGE UK COVENTRY



: 02476 231999

Age UK Coventry and Warwickshire's Information and Advice service can support anyone 18+ with a physical disability and/or dementia. Although the service is currently unable to see people face-to-face the advice team are providing support to people over the phone or via email. The advice team can support people with benefits, supporting with charitable applications, advice about housing and social care needs. Information and Advice is open Monday – Friday 10am – 3pm 02476 231 999 People can sign up at info@ageukcovwarks.org.uk

Service: Good Neighbours
Coventry



: 07563 902 904

Good Neighbours Coventry- Helping older people during COVID-19

Good Neighbours Coventry scheme was founded in 2016 to provide friendship and social activity for over 50s in Coventry. Face to face befriending and all social clubs are currently suspended.

As of 20.4.20, we are now also temporarily offering befriending and home shopping to disabled/self-isolating isolated adults aged 18-49 in CV1-CV6.

If you are able to shop online or via the telephone, you can find our list of local shops offering food delivery here: tinyurl.com/covfooddelivery.

Service: Alzheimers Society



: 033 1503456

Alzheimers Society: **We have sadly taken the decision to suspend our group and face to face services for people affected by dementia across the region.**

This is to protect those attending and help prevent the virus spreading.

We are still continuing to offer telephone support and would encourage you to contact your local office if you need any information or support. Our website www.alzheimers.org.uk is also a great source of information, including factsheets, updates and our online community 'Talking point'.

Please use our Dementia Connect number: **0333 150 3456**

Service: AGE UK



: 0800 678 1602

www.ageuk.org.uk

Providing telephone and website support.

If unable to get through have advised to call: Salvation Army 0207 367 4500
British Red Cross 0344 871 1111 Royal Voluntary Service 0330 555 0310

THE SILVER LINE



0800 4 70 80 90

www.thesilverline.org.uk

The Silver Line operates the only confidential, free helpline for older people across the UK that's open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days of the year.

We also offer telephone friendship where we match volunteers with older people based on their interests, facilitated group calls, and help to connect people with local services in their area.

Our specially trained helpline team can offer information, friendship and advice, link callers to local groups and services, offer regular friendship calls and protect and support older people who are suffering abuse and neglect. **All helpline calls are free- 68% of calls to the helpline are made at night and weekends.**

NEED TO KNOW- CARERS SUPPORT

Service: Carers Trust HoE



: 02476 632972

Following the updated government guidance on Coronavirus, we are avoiding meeting face-to-face to help reduce the spread of the virus.

We are still here to support Carers and are continuing to offer 1:1 support however this will be done by telephone appointments or email.

We understand that Carers still need information, advice and support and we will continue to provide these services, along with Carers Assessments and contingency planning support.

Please rest assured that if you are in self-isolation and need someone to talk to, our Wellbeing Advisors will be available on our Wellbeing helpline: 02476 632972 (opt 1). We have extended the hours to Monday to Thursday 9am - 5pm and Friday 9-4.30pm and Saturday 10-2pm

If you think you have symptoms and can't get through to NHS 111 or are not sure what to do, we can guide you through the online screening as recommended by the NHS via telephone.

www.carerstrusthoef.org.uk

Where to get additional help and support:

CRESS: Our CRESS Emergency and planned support service will still be running as normal for the time being and will be there to help and support you as much as possible.

The CRESS service can be contacted on 02476 258816 and 07079 503 133 in an out-of-hours emergency. Please make sure you are registered and have been assessed.

Care Companion: an online digital platform to find out more about the condition of the person you care for and local support available: www.carecompanion.org.uk/

Care We Share: An innovative web portal that allows carers to coordinate care, share caring responsibilities and obtain support from their network which is currently being offered free of charge to carers. If you need help setting it up our support line can help: www.careweshare.org

Carers Trust Heart of England website – www.carerstrusthoef.org.uk/ **Carers Trust Heart of England Facebook page:** www.facebook.com/CarersTrustHeartofEngland

Carers Trust national website advice on Coronavirus page: carers.org/guidance-coronavirus **Carers UK website:** www.carersuk.org/

If you do not have access to the internet, please call one of our Wellbeing helpline - 02476 632972 (opt 2) - and a Wellbeing Advisor will guide you through the information.

Here to support carers in Coventry and Warwickshire

We want to reassure carers that we remain totally committed to supporting carers, staff and the cared for and we will continue to update you on the practical steps we are taking to minimise any potential impact to our services going forward.

NEED TO KNOW- CARERS SUPPORT

Coventry Young Carers Service

www.youngcarerscoventry.com
www.facebook.com/yccov

One to one Emotional Support

We already have online support processes in place using online messaging services such as Facebook messenger, zoom and Whatsapp and other platforms used by young carers. These are used for text messaging, calls and video calling. This will become the main port of call for one to one support for young carers and their families who need support. Telephone and online support will also be available during working hours 8:30 – 16:30 , and appointments can be made out of hours with young carers who need it.

Assessments

Young Carers Assessments can be accessed by any young carer aged 5 -17 years old. The assessment will look at what the young carer is doing as part of their caring role, how it affects them emotionally, physically and will explore other aspects of their lives, such as social life, mental wellbeing and education amongst others.

Assessments can be completed via video call or over the telephone.

Assessment forms can be sent to young carers to complete. For younger young carers this can be done with the support of parents. They will then send them back to the worker who will undertake a telephone session to discuss the information submitted on the forms as would be done face to face.

Activities

As we cannot run face to face group sessions, we have created a private Discord Channel to enable young carers registered with the service to have fun online chats with staff and other young carers. This is to ensure that young carers are still having social contact with others. This is for registered young carers and is accessed on an invite only basis. Young Carers can request invites by contacting the team who will then send out a link to access the chat.

We have developed family activity packs to enable young carers and their families to have some fun. These include; arts and craft activities, recipes and games. We do these fortnightly and they are accessible to all via our website activities page

We provide weekly competitions via our social media page www.facebook.com/YCCOV for young carers to win prizes such as gadgets, and vouchers.

NEED TO KNOW- SUBSTANCE MISUSE/ADDICTION

Service: Change Grow Live



: 02476 010241

Updates to the service:

Our opening hours have changed. For now, we're open from 10:00 - 15:00 on weekdays.

If you have questions about your prescriptions take a look at our [prescription information page](#).

For now, we are doing all appointments over the phone.

Telephone Triage: New clients can complete a telephone triage in order to be referred into treatment.

Drop ins: Advice is not to drop into the service.

However, people will currently be seen if they do drop in.

Prescriptions: We will post your prescriptions to your chosen pharmacy.

Currently we are unable to give out prescriptions at the service.

Groups: We're sorry to say that our groups aren't going to be running for a while.

If you're worried about something, please get in touch.

You can contact us during normal hours on



02476 010241



coventryreferralsandenquiries@cgl.org.uk

You can also contact us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Alcoholics Anonymous

www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

0800 9177 650

Support with recovery and continued sobriety of those with alcohol problems.

help@aamail.org

Al-Anon

www.al-anonuk.org.uk

0800 0086 811

Support those affected by someone's substance misuse.

Helpline available 10 am - 10 pm, 365 days year. Please do not leave a message as, to ensure callers' confidentiality, we are unable to return calls.

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

0300 999 1212

The NA Helpline is often the first point of contact for people needing support and advice about the nature of drug addiction. Anyone from the using addict, their friends and family members through to drug workers and the press are welcome to call.

Everyone who volunteers for shifts are Recovering Addicts, many of whom called the Helpline themselves at some point. The NA Helpline is open until midnight, seven days a week, but if, for some reason, you get an answer-phone, please DO leave a message and we will get back to you, with the utmost discretion, as soon as possible.

GAMCARE

www.gamcare.org.uk

0808 8020133

Advice and support for those experiencing gambling issues. Telephone assessment & telephone ongoing treatment available. Live chats remaining on offer and forum/live chat options. One to one support & GAMECHANGE online treatment course available.

**NEED TO KNOW-
ASYLUM and REFUGEES**

Service:
**COVENTRY REFUGEE AND
MIGRANT CENTRE**

www.covrefugee.org

Due to the Coronavirus, it is with a heavy heart that we have had to suspend all face to face appointments to protect staff, volunteers and clients. We are operating a telephone and email service. If you need help, please use the contact numbers listed below:

Housing	07715 998 660	Lingo Links	07715 998 665
Employment	07795 954 867	Therapy	07918 551812
Immigration	07917 235 898	AMIF	07747 219 117
Complex Needs	07918 551812	AMIF Referral Officer	07747213269
Advice	07788 973 474	Mi Friendly Cities	07776 527 706
Building Bridges/ESOL	07918 553 469	Rough sleepers	07799 463 050
Integration	07787 428 639 (Available: Tue & Thu)		
Integration	07715 998 664 (Available: Mon, Wed & Fri)		

Service: Carriers of Hope



: 07429 415489

We are not able to continue at the Church on Tuesday mornings but we want to be able to help you. Please text your name and address to **07429 415489** if you need our help with;

Baby things, you have a new empty house, your children want toys, you want towels, pillows, blankets, duvets, cutlery, pots and pans, or plates and cups.

If you need food, nappies, toiletries or sanitary towels.

Please text your name and address to 07712 661314 if you need Furniture.

Please tell us what you need.

**ASAP ASYLUM SUPPORT
APPEALS PROJECT**

www.asaproject.org/resources

0203 716 0283

Advice Line: 0203 716 0283 (Mon, Wed, Fri 2-4pm)

Easy-to-use resources for anyone with questions about asylum support

NEED TO KNOW- ADVICE SERVICES

Service: Coventry Citizens Advice



: 03444 11 444

In response to the latest government advice regarding working from home, and avoiding unnecessary travel where possible, Coventry CA have reviewed the potential corporate risk level now posed by COVID-19 and are implementing its contingency strategy.

From 17.00 hours today (March 18th 2020) we will close our face to face client services. Telephone lines operate 9am-4pm.

A large proportion of our workforce will operate from home offering telephone and digital services to our clients.

We will continue to provide support for our existing and new clients.

General advice (core service) - Adviceline on 03444 11 444 (9am to 5pm Monday to Friday) or go to www.advicebuddy.org

Help to Claim (Universal Credit) - telephone 0800 1448 444 (8am to 4pm Monday to Friday)

Integration project - 02476 252060

Pensionwise - 0800 138 8292 or visit www.pensionwise.gov.uk/en

Big Difference Scheme - 02476 252600

Power Up - 02476 253190 or WPD@coventrycab.org.uk

STEP (Fuel Poverty) 07950 903526 or CO'Neill@coventrycab.org

Money Advice Service (accredited debt services) MAS@coventrycab.org.uk

Resilience (food banks) 02476 252627 - resilience@coventrycab.org.uk

Building Better Opportunities – breakthrough@coventrycab.org.uk

Help in Crisis – rooted@coventrycab.org.uk

HIV/TB - This is a Referral only Service. If you identify a person who may benefit from this type of help and they meet the criteria, they can be referred by their TB nurse or support worker by emailing us outreach@coventrycab.org.uk

Macmillan - If you identify someone with cancer, a family member or carer for someone with cancer then please refer them to the service. Anyone can be referred where they meet the criteria through a health professional or by getting in touch directly – 02476 252050 or macmillan@coventrycab.org.uk

Major Trauma - majortrauma@coventrycab.org.uk

Service: Coventry Independent Advice (CIAS)



: 07923 126 426/
07923 126 430

Due to the continuing Coronavirus (COVID-19) situation, we are now offering advice by telephone and online. If you need help with a benefits problem or with debt:

- Check our self-help page for links to online information resources and details of other services in Coventry. This might give you a quick answer to your questions.
- Ask us for advice at any time by using our online enquiry form. We check these enquiries regularly, so this is a really easy way of getting in touch with us.
- Telephone us for advice on 07923 126 426 or 07923 126 430. Lines are open 9 am to 7 pm each weekday (except Wednesday afternoons when lines close at 1pm). Our adviser will either answer your query straightaway or arrange a time to call you back to discuss further.
- Chat with us using the 'live chat' feature on this website. A little 'chat with us' box will appear on screen when this service is available.

General (non-advice) enquiries can still be made via our main office number (024 7652 1100) or by email to info@covadvice.org.uk.

Service: NATIONAL DEBT LINE




: 0808 808 4000

We know many people are worried about their finances right now. We are here to help.

1. For instant information and guidance see our [Coronavirus fact sheet](#).
2. [Webchat](#) with an adviser 9am - 8pm Monday to Friday.
3. Call to speak to an adviser on **0808 808 4000** 9am - 8pm Monday to Friday.
4. Use our [Digital Advice Tool](#) to do a budget if you're ready and get online advice about your debt solution options.

NEED TO KNOW- BEREAVEMENT

Service: Cruse
Bereavement Care

 : 0808 808 1677

www.cruse.org.uk

If you are a current Cruse client

If you are receiving one-to-one support your volunteer or Local Service will be in touch to let you know how we can continue to support you.

Group support, Understanding Your Bereavement, Friendship Groups, Activity Groups and Training are all postponed until 1st May 2020. We will continue to review the situation in line with government's advice.

If you are bereaved and self-isolating

If you rely on support from others while dealing with a bereavement – whether that's family, friends, being at work – and you are struggling being on your own then our helpline is open - call 0808 808 1677

If you have been bereaved by the virus

You can contact our helpline – 0808 808 1677

The helpline is open Monday-Friday 9.30-5pm (excluding bank holidays), with extended hours on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings, when we're open until 8pm.

NEED TO KNOW-

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE and PARENTS

COVENTRY HEALTH VISITING TEXT CHAT SERVICE

ADVICE & SUPPORT for parents of pre-school children in Coventry

TEXT : 07507 329114

9am - 5pm, Monday to Friday

Messaging from UK mobile numbers only, at your normal charge rate.

THIS IS NOT AN EMERGENCY SERVICE

For urgent medical attention please contact your GP or call 111 or 999

SUPPORT FOR PARENTS ON LINE

https://www.coventry.gov.uk/info/38/family_support/2884/positive_parenting/2

Parents Helpline



0808 802 5544

I am a...parent worried about my child

Speak to our experts at the Parents Helpline—call 0808 802 5544

Or email the Parents Helpline using the contact form on line

Infant feeding



07904984620

Infant feeding are offering telephone support at this time.

National Breast Feeding Helpline



0300 100 0212

Continuing to offer telephone support on 0300 100 0212.

Boobie Buddies



07904984620

Boobie buddies are offering support through their Facebook Page “Boobie Buddies Breastfeeding Support Group”.

They are also offering email support on boobie-buddies@outlook.com

Service: NSPCC



: 0808 800 5000

NSPCC are operating within the government guidelines to keep staff and the families we work with safe. As a result Coventry Service Centre plan is as follows;

- **As of 5pm today Coventry Service Centre will close**, with all staff working from home. They can be contacted via the service centre telephone number 024 76222456 or email coventry.servicecentre@NSPCC.org.uk, help@nspcc.org.uk
- their work mobiles and emails if you have them
- We are currently undertaking risk assessments of all families we are working with to determine whether we can end our involvement and safely close the case. Continue to work with a family but only have remote contact (phone/skype calls), or whether we need to have face to face contact.
- Once the risk assessments are completed we will have a better understanding of the level of support needed and will decide how we will manage that.
- Practitioners will contact other agency workers to update in terms of individual families, particularly if there is a safeguarding concern
- We will continue to operate a duty system each morning 9am – 1pm where anyone can call for an enquiry or advice and signposting
- We are unable to take any new referral at present but can offer consultation
- If you have recently made a referral to the centre and were waiting for the case to be allocated Julia Bayliss Team Manager should have contacted you to advise we cannot allocate at present but will be in touch again once things begin to return to normal
- Please advise families they can still access Childline 0800 1111 or the Helpline 0808 800 5000

We are going to be reviewing this situation on a weekly basis and will contact you again in the near future

NEED TO KNOW-

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE and PARENTS

Childline

www.childline.org.uk

0800 1111

Advice and support for young people's physical and mental well-being. Including online, telephone and chat support.

Kidscape

www.kidscape.org.uk

Advice and support for parents, carers and young people.

CHATHEALTH - FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE TO CONTACT SCHOOL NURSING

This is a confidential text messaging service that enables children and young people (aged 11-18) to contact their local public health nursing (school nursing) team. This service is provided by Coventry Family Health and Lifestyles Service.

TEXT: 07507 331949

Also see [help for young carers](#)

NEED TO KNOW-

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE and PARENTS

Coventry Family Hubs and Early Help



:0800 8870545

The Family Hub is a place and a service where you can get free help for you and your family today!

There are 8 Family Hubs in Coventry, and 4 of these remain open to the community:

- Mosaic Family Hub
Jardine Crescent, Tile Hill, CV4 9PL.
- Park Edge Family Hub
Roseberry Avenue, Bell Green, CV2 1NE.
- Harmony Hub
Clifton Street, Hillfields, CV1 5GR.
- Wood Side Family Hub
Upper Ride, Willenhall, CV3 3GL

The “Here to help” service is available 9 am – 5 p.m Monday – Friday and families are encouraged to phone or email to talk to someone about the help that they need.

email : EarlyHelp@coventry.gov.uk

Family Hubs provide advice and guidance and a personal response to a range of issues affecting families:

- free use of ICT
- a phone and information to help families access the services they need to thrive
- practical provision such as access to food bank vouchers and equipment and baby clothes for those in need.

Social distancing is accommodated and PPE is available in the Family hubs. Family Hubs are a place of safety in the community for those in need

Service: Catch 22

email : Rochelle.Green@catch22.org.uk

In Coventry we are concerned about children and young people being criminally exploited and becoming involved in youth violence and gangs and criminal networks. Child criminal exploitation is common in county lines and occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18. This affects girls, as well as boys and young people are often ‘groomed’ as part of a powerful process where the abuser:

- befriends the child
- gains their trust
- makes them feel they are in a loving relationship or friendship
- distances them from family & friends
- takes total control over them
- provides them with gifts such as money, mobile phones, drugs, alcohol, ‘sense of belonging’

So what can I do to help?

- Know the warning signs.
- Keep up to date with technology and slang terms.
- Share information with professionals . Speak to the Police, call a Family Hub or report anonymously through Crimestoppers – 0800 555 111 or online at <https://crimestoppers-uk.org> or NSPCC – 0808 800 5000 or help@nspcc.org.uk

NEED TO KNOW- SPECIALIST

BEAT

www.beatatingdisorders.org.uk
0808 8010677

Advice and support for adults experiencing eating disorders. Helpline and online support available

DIABETES UK

www.diabetes.org.uk
0345 123 2399

Includes up to date information about corona virus for people with diabetes and their families.

MACMILLAN

www.macmillan.org.uk
0808 00 00

Macmillan provide specialist health care, information and financial support to people affected by cancer. Up to date guidance for people with cancer, Macmillan supporters and volunteers. Includes specific advice around cancer and the coronavirus (Covid-19).

Helpline Monday to Friday 9-5 0808 00 00

Chat online Monday to Friday 9-5

SCOPE DISABILITY EQUALITY CHARITY

www.scope.org.uk
0808 800 3333

Scope provide practical information and emotional support when it's most needed and campaign relentlessly to create a fairer society.

They have a helpline Monday-Friday 8am-8pm and Saturday to Sunday 10-6pm, email support and an online community. helpline@scope.org.uk

They provide advice and support around a range of topics including coronavirus, benefits, work, families with children with disabilities, disability equipment, housing and home adaptations, legal advice, friendships, relationships and sex.

BRITISH HEART FOUNDATION

www.bhf.org.uk

Includes up to date health information about heart and circulatory disease and the corona virus.

ASTHMA UK HELPLINE

www.asthma.org.uk
0300 2225800

Speak to an asthma expert nurse on our helpline 0300 222 5800. info@asthma.org.uk
We are experiencing exceptionally high call volumes. Many more people are seeking our help than usual, due to the current coronavirus situation. We are providing the best service we can under these extraordinary circumstances. Please be mindful of the pressures in the whole system when using our services.

CANCER RESEARCH UK

www.cancerresearchuk.org

Cancer Research Uk funds scientists, doctors and nurses to help beat cancer. They raise money, work together with other bodies to make best use of the funds they receive to carry out world class research and develop policy.

Includes specific advice around cancer and the coronavirus (Covid-19)

NEED TO KNOW- REGIONAL

BIRMINGHAM LGBT

www.birminghamlgbt.org.uk

Birmingham LGBT is the city's leading charity advocating for and supporting lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans communities in Birmingham and beyond.

Birmingham LGBT is offering a reduced service until further notice. Our premises are currently closed to the public.

Staff are available on the phones 10am to 6pm, Monday to Friday on 0121 643 0821.

For general enquires please email hello@blgbt.org.

Wellbeing Support service

Our Wellbeing Support service is still available during the partial lockdown. For general practical and emotional support we can still offer telephone or virtual support appointments through Zoom video conferencing. For more information or to make a referral into the Wellbeing Support service please email Dannii

Richards danniirichards@blgbt.org.

Trans Wellbeing service

For any trans or non-binary service users wishing to access Wellbeing Support, we can still offer telephone or virtual support appointments through Zoom video conferencing.

Please email Alexis Savage alexussavage@blgbt.org.

For the Trans Counselling service for trans and Non-binary people, please email

Kirandeep Kaur kirandeepkaur@blgbt.org.

The waiting room

<https://the-waitingroom.org/>

"Wellbeing services at your fingertips." Links to National and West Mids supports for a range of issues affecting adults and young people. Translated into 100 languages.

NEED TO KNOW- HOUSING

Service: SHELTER

www.england.shelter.org.uk

Up to date information provided about coronavirus & housing, and advice on rights and the latest legislation.

Free webchat service available

Chat to an expert housing adviser online.

Our advisers are available to chat during the hours below:

9am - 5pm on weekdays

What to expect

Most chats usually take around 20 minutes, but can be shorter or longer depending on your issue

Please have any relevant paperwork, information or details about your situation to hand

You can let us know if you'd like us to email a copy of the chat to you

We are unable to call you back, as we can only provide advice during the chat

Our advisers can help with housing issues in England only. If you're in Scotland or Wales, you can get advice from [Shelter Scotland](#) and [Shelter Cymru](#).

[TEL:08088004444](tel:08088004444)

Talk to an expert housing adviser if you're in urgent need of housing advice.

You should use this line if:

you have nowhere to sleep, or might be homeless soon

you have somewhere to sleep, but nowhere to call home

you are/could be at risk of harm

Our helpline is open every day of the year:

8am - 8pm on weekdays

9am - 5pm on weekends

Service: Crisis

Helping homeless people



: 0247 708 7400

Please call us **0247 708 7400** or email us at **coventry@crisis.org.uk** and we will get back to you as soon as possible, so we can arrange support.

The help and
support you
need during
COVID-19

WEEK BEGINNING 18th May 2020



NEED SUPPORT:



CALL US ON :
02476 253165
02476 252683



CALL US ON :
07957 711080
07496 881145



WHATS APP US ON :
07957 711080
07496 881145



E-MAIL US ON :
help@centralenglandlc.org.uk