

DWP Stakeholder Bulletin – January 2014

Welcome to the January 2014 issue of the DWP Stakeholder Bulletin.

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Universal Credit on the Red Button

Millions of people who do not have internet access at home can now find information about Universal Credit (UC) by hitting the [red button](#) on their TV remote control.

The new UC channels by DWP, in partnership with [Looking Local](#), have been designed to give information about the new benefit to the seven million adults who do not have home internet access.

Claimant Commitment in over half of all Jobcentres

Over half of the Jobcentres in the country are running the [Claimant Commitment](#), a new form of the Jobseekers Agreement, as its roll out continues ahead of schedule.

All new claimants to Jobseeker’s Allowance have to agree to the Claimant Commitment. It outlines what job seeking actions a claimant must carry out to give them the best chance of getting into work, in return for the support they receive from the state. The Claimant Commitment is being rolled out in around 100 Jobcentres a month, until it covers the whole network by the spring.

Updated welfare reform communications toolkit

The welfare reform communications toolkit has been updated and is available on [GOV.UK](#). The toolkit helps explain why and how DWP is changing the welfare system. The update includes information on announcements in

December's Autumn Statement. If you have any questions about the toolkit, please contact the [Strategic Engagement and Partnership team](#).

Disability Living Allowance (DLA) to Personal Independence Payment (PIP) – reassessment areas extended

DWP are inviting DLA claimants living in Wales, the Midlands or East Anglia to claim PIP if their disability-related needs change, they reach 16 or if they reach the end of their award.

From 13 January, these areas have been extended to postcodes beginning DG, EH, TD and ML. From 3 February, areas further extend to postcodes beginning CA, DL, HG, LA and YO.

An individual can also choose to claim PIP instead of their DLA if they live in a reassessment area. For more information, including a [postcode map](#), visit the [PIP toolkit](#).

Cross-government review of family stability

DWP is leading a cross -government review of family stability and is gathering evidence from professionals and organisations in order to assess and recommend the best ways of supporting families.

The review follows on from [Social Justice: Transforming Lives](#), published in March 2012, which set out the government's vision for supporting the most disadvantaged families and individuals across the UK.

It highlighted the crucial role the family plays in providing a foundation for a child's development and success in later life. This was followed by the [Social Justice Outcomes Framework](#).

Information about the invitation to contribute to review is [here](#) and contributions should be emailed to [family stability review](#)

New measures to restrict migrants' access to benefits

As part of the government's long-term economic plan to get people into work, [reforms](#) have been put in place to ensure migrants do everything they can to find a job. In addition to a more robust Habitual Residence Test, from 1 January 2014:

- European Economic Area (EEA) and British jobseekers need to have lived in the UK or the Common Travel Area for three months before receiving income based Job Seekers Allowance (JSA).
- A new assessment will check if EEA nationals have genuine prospects of work. Without compelling evidence to support this, their JSA will end after six months.

New Enterprise Allowance kick-starts new business

From ‘Tasty Pastry’ to ‘Gadget Cabin’, the Government’s [New Enterprise Allowance \(NEA\)](#) has helped enterprising jobseekers to set up 32,520 new businesses.

NEA has been extended until 2016 and the [latest figures](#) show that around 2000 new businesses are being set up every month with the help of NEA and 7500 businesses started by people aged 50 or over.

Minister for Employment Esther McVey said: “Starting your own business takes guts and passion. Budding entrepreneurs need support and advice if they are to turn their ideas into a successful business, which is what New Enterprise Allowance helps to provide.”

Support for very long term unemployed trailblazer

Statistics recently [published](#) by DWP show the continuing and long term positive impact of policies designed to support the long term unemployed. Participants spent less time on benefit and more time in work over a twenty one month period.

The two support options tested were intensive Jobcentre Plus support, and work placements of community benefit. Given their success in the trailblazer, these policies will be rolled out nationally from April as part of the [Help to Work](#) scheme. They will be known as the Mandatory Intervention Regime and Community Work Placements.

Jobseeker’s Allowance Back to Work Schemes guide

DWP has published the Jobseeker’s Allowance Back to Work schemes guide on [gov.uk](#). This guide gives claimants information about Skills Conditionality, sector-based work academies, work experience, New Enterprise Allowance, Mandatory Work Activity and the Work Programme.

The guide tells claimants about what these schemes involve, the eligibility criteria, when they may be referred and the sanctions regime which apply to these schemes. Jobcentre Plus advisers are informing claimants about the guide and encouraging them to read it.

More than two million people enrolled in workplace pensions

More than two million workers are saving into a workplace pension scheme as a result of automatic enrolment, according to latest figures from The Pensions Regulator.

Automatic enrolment began in October 2012 and is rolling out from the largest to smallest employers across the UK. All employers, including charities and the public sector, must comply with the new law by assessing their workforce and automatically enrolling eligible workers into a suitable pension scheme.

The Pensions Regulator [website](#) has more information and a free planning tool for employers.

Appeals Reform and Employment and Support Allowance

To help DWP provide a good service and make the right decision first time round, anyone claiming Employment and Support Allowance must provide all medical evidence at the start of their claim, or as soon as it is available.

If someone disputes a decision and a Mandatory Reconsideration is requested, further evidence isn't necessarily required. However, if any is available, then it should be forwarded to DWP without delay.

If evidence has been omitted or a person's circumstances change at any stage in a claim, they should inform DWP immediately, even if a Mandatory Reconsideration has already taken place. Further information can be found [here](#).

Disability Living Allowance/Attendance Allowance telephone numbers.

DWP is separating Attendance Allowance (AA) telephone calls from Disability Living Allowance (DLA). This will improve access for claimants by providing a more streamlined approach.

From 29 January 2014 a new number for AA will be introduced. Claimants can contact the AA Service Centre on 0345 or 0845 605 6055. The new Text phone number for Attendance Allowance will be 0845 604 5312.

The DLA/AA Helpline number (0845 712 34 56) will become a dedicated line for DLA only. DLA Text phone will also remain on the same number (08457 224433).

DWP consultations

All current live DWP consultations and the latest published consultation responses are available on the [consultation pages](#) of GOV.UK.

If you have a comment or feedback about this bulletin, please email the [Strategic Engagement and Partnerships team](#).

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