



Process for Care Leavers to Start Their Claim for Universal Credit Up to Their 18th Birthday

Introduction

This guidance explains the process for care leavers under the age of 18 years old so that they can start to make a claim for Universal Credit up to their 18th birthday.

Please note however, that due to COVID-19, this guidance is subject to ongoing and regular review. Please therefore ensure that you always have the latest up-to-date information to hand which is available from the live links to the gov.uk website contained in this guidance.

How to Claim Make a Claim

Making a claim for Universal Credit is subject to a strict timeframe.

Applications for Universal Credit should be made [online](#) and must be made up to 28 days before the young person's 18th birthday.

It is important that they do not submit their claim until the actual date of their 18th birthday or after their 18th birthday. If they submit their claim before their 18th birthday, their application will be rejected.

Once a claim has been submitted online, Jobcentre will call the young person to arrange a follow up appointment with them.

If the care leaver cannot access online facilities, they can make a claim by telephone via the contact centre by calling 0800 328 5644 or via the CAB Help to Claim service on 08001448444.

Universal Credit Benefits

If the young person lives in temporary or supported accommodation (recognised by the Children's Trust/Local Authority), they will also be able to claim Housing Benefit. Claims for Housing Benefit should be made directly to Birmingham City Council's [Housing Benefit Service](#).

The amount of Universal Credit a young person will be entitled to varies and is based on their individual circumstances. Information about the different rates is available in the following [“Entitled to” Checker](#).

Those living in their own tenancies such as in private rented accommodation, social housing or in [staying-put arrangements](#), can claim rent costs (at the Birmingham rate, also known as the [Local Reference Rent Level \(LRR\)](#)) by making a claim directly via Universal Credit.

Useful Links

Resource	Link
For information about Universal Credit	https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit/what-youll-get
Making a claim for Universal Credit online	https://www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk/employment-and-benefits-support/
<i>Touchbase Bulletins</i> enable Social workers to sign up to receive the latest updates on benefits.	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/touchbase-dwp-news-about-work-working-age-benefits-and-services
<i>Turn2us</i> , a national charity, provides financial advice to young people	https://www.turn2us.org.uk/Your-Situation/a-young-person-aged-16-18/Young-People-and-benefits/Who-is-a-young-person
Care Leavers Protocol Agreement Between BCT 18+ Service and the DWP Locally	https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms1/media/5812/protocol-doc-bct-update-2019-current-120520.doc