

Derbyshire Welfare Rights Service

BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT PAYMENT – on or after 6/4/17

The rules for bereavement benefits changed on 6/4/17.

This leaflet describes the new scheme for deaths which occur on or after 6/4/17.

For information on the previous scheme, see our leaflet 'Bereavement Benefits' and call our helpline for advice.

What to do when someone dies

When you go to the Registry Office to register the death, the Registrar should tell you about the 'Tell Us Once' service.

Rather than make several calls to different agencies the Tell Us Once Service will notify all relevant agencies on your behalf including the Department for Work and Pensions, Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and Local Authorities.

The Registrar will either complete the process with you or provide you with a reference number and contact details to complete the process over the phone or online.

Note that the 'Tell us Once' service is operated across all parts of Derbyshire but it does not cover all parts of the country.

If you are using the Tell Us Once service bear in mind that this process can take a couple of weeks and benefits will continue to be paid until the notification is actioned, and the DWP will ask for these payments to be paid back. So you may want to inform them yourself so that payments can be stopped more quickly.

If you do contact the DWP they should put you through to their Bereavement Service where they will check if there is any entitlement to Bereavement Support Payments.

Derbyshire Welfare Rights Service

Bereavement Support Payment

Bereavement Support Payment (BSP) is a benefit which replaces previous bereavement support which consisted of three benefits: Bereavement Allowance; Widowed Parent's Allowance; and Bereavement Payment.

The Bereavement Support Payment applies to people whose spouse or Registered Civil Partner dies after 6.4.17. You cannot make a claim if you were living with someone without being married to them or if you are not registered as their civil partner.

Who can claim

- you were either married to or in a civil partnership with the person who has died
- you are under State Retirement Pension Age (if you reach pension age while BSP is payable, it will stop and you can claim your State Retirement Pension)
- you are ordinarily resident in Great Britain
- your husband, wife or civil partner had paid sufficient National Insurance Contributions – at least 25 weeks' Class 1 or Class 2 National Insurance contributions in any tax year in their working life
- if the person died as a result of an industrial accident or prescribed industrial disease, the National Insurance condition will be treated as being satisfied

How much do you get?

There are two rates of benefit - the standard rate and the higher rate. BSP is not taxable.

The higher rate

You will get an initial payment of £3,500 followed by up to 18 monthly instalments of £350.

The higher rate is payable if:

- you were entitled to Child Benefit when your husband, wife, or civil partner died or
- you start to claim Child Benefit for a child who was living with you and/or your husband, wife or civil partner when they died or
- you were pregnant when your husband, wife or civil partner when they died

The higher rate will continue to be paid even if your Child Benefit stops at a later date.

Derbyshire Welfare Rights Service

The standard rate

This is payable in all other cases.

You will get an initial payment of £2,500 followed by up to 18 monthly payments of £100

BSP is paid monthly, in arrears.

Making a claim

A claim for Bereavement Support Payment can be made over the phone by ringing the DWP Bereavement Service on 0800 731 0469

Textphone: 0800 731 0464

Alternatively, you can download and print a form online at gov.uk and hand the complete form to your Jobcentre or send it to:

Bereavement Support Payment

Mail Handling Site A

Wolverhampton

WV98 2BS

Time Limits for claiming

To get the initial payment you need to claim within 12 months of your husband, wife or civil partner's death.

The regular monthly payments are paid for up to **18 months** from the date of death.

A claim can be backdated for up to 3 months, but if you claim any later than this you will not get the full 18 months' worth of benefit.

What information needs to be sent in with the claim?

- Marriage certificate or Civil Partnership Certificate
- Death certificate

What effect does Bereavement Support Payment have on other benefits?

If you receive any other benefits, make sure that the office paying that benefit knows you are getting Bereavement Support Payment – this will avoid any mistakes being made over your entitlements.

Derbyshire Welfare Rights Service

For Income Support, Income-Based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income-Related Employment and Support Allowance, Housing Benefit and Pension Credit:

- the regular monthly payment does not count as income for the month for which it is paid, but after that any amount that you have not spent will count as part of your capital for these benefits and may affect your entitlements if it takes your capital over £6000 (over £10,000 in the case of Pension Credit)
- if you claim the initial payment of BSP after the death but before the end of 12 months, the initial payment will not count as part of your capital, but only for 12 months after you receive it
- any arrears (not counting the situation set out above) of BSP that you are paid are ignored for 52 weeks but will count as part of your capital after that
- if you receive Pension Credit, these arrears might not count as capital until a later date if you are in an 'assessed income period' (see our leaflet on Pension Credit)

BSP is ignored for the purpose of Tax Credit claims and does not affect benefits you may have claimed on the basis of your National Insurance contributions.

For Universal Credit - If you claim the initial payment of BSP after the death but before the end of 12 months, the initial payment will not count as part of your capital, but only for 12 months after you receive it.

The regular monthly payment of BSP does not count as income for UC and will not affect your UC payment.

Arrears of the regular monthly payment will however count as part of your capital.

Seek advice from the Helpline if you are not sure about these rules.

What happens if I begin a new relationship after claiming Bereavement Support Payment?

This will not affect your entitlement. But you cannot get BSP if you had divorced your spouse, your civil partnership was dissolved or you were living with someone else when the death occurred.

Other help - Social Fund Funeral Grant

There is a one off grant available for funeral costs which you may be eligible for if:

- You are the person responsible for the funeral (a close relative of the person who has died, or a close friend and it is reasonable for you to accept responsibility for the funeral costs.
- You are in receipt of a 'qualifying benefit'. These are: Pension Credit; Universal Credit; Income-based Employment and Support Allowance; Income-based Jobseekers Allowance; Income Support; Housing Benefit; Working Tax Credit IF you count as a disabled worker and Child Tax Credit IF you receive over the basic 'family' element.

Derbyshire Welfare Rights Service

- If you have just claimed one of these benefits and are waiting for a decision, you can still make a claim for Funeral payment. Mention on the claim form that you have made the claim. You can be paid if the benefit is backdated to cover the date you made the claim for the Funeral payment.
- There is no one else who is not in receipt of a 'qualifying benefit' who is an equally close or closer relative of the person who has died.
- The person who has died must have been ordinarily resident in the UK when they died, and the funeral must take place in the UK.

Making a Claim

You must claim within 3 months of the funeral.

You can claim using form SF200 or ring the DWP Bereavement Service on 0345 606 0265
CHECK

Carers' Benefits

If you have been claiming Carers Allowance for the person who has died, or have 'underlying entitlement' to Carers Allowance and receive a carer premium on another benefit, this will continue to be paid for 8 weeks following the death of the person you are caring for. The exception to this is if you were over 65 and entitled to Invalid Care Allowance on 27/10/02, in which case this benefit will continue indefinitely.

Further advice and information

To find out about any other benefits you might be entitled to or to discuss any of the information in this leaflet please contact Derbyshire County Council Welfare Rights Service (see below)

Additional information can be found on our website, visit www.derbyshire.gov.uk/welfarebenefits

To keep up-to-date with benefit changes in Derbyshire go to
www.derbyshire.gov.uk/benefitnews

Benefits Helpline – 01629 531535 or email
welfarebenefits@derbyshire.gov.uk

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday
11.00am – 4.00pm