

Derbyshire Welfare Rights Service

Health and school meal costs help on Universal Credit

NB Universal Credit is paid monthly in arrears – the calendar month over which your UC is worked out is referred to as an ‘assessment period’. This will be shown on your online UC award notice.

NB that entitlement to full help with NHS costs depends upon your circumstances in your last complete assessment period before your health costs arose.

Health Costs

You will need your UC award notice to support your claim for help with NHS costs. You will need to show the section stating your take-home pay in the last UC ‘assessment period’.

Seek advice if you have problems showing that you are entitled to UC for your health costs. UC is claimed and managed online and so you will not have a printed letter to show to NHS providers.

You are entitled to maximum help with prescriptions, dental treatment, sight tests and glasses, wigs and fabric supports and fares to receive NHS treatment if:

- you receive Universal Credit and had no earnings or net earnings of £435 or less during your most recent assessment period
- you receive Universal Credit which includes an element for a child and/or limited capability for work or limited capability for work related activity, and you had no earnings or net earnings of £935 or less during the most recent assessment period

If you are part of a couple, the threshold applies to your combined net earnings.

If you are unsure whether you are entitled to help with health costs, for example because you are waiting for your Universal Credit claim to be decided or to receive an award notice, you should pay the relevant charge and ask for a refund form at the same time. For prescription charges, you will not be able to get the refund form (FP57) at a later stage.

Once you have received your UC award notice and can prove your entitlement to help with health costs, you may claim a refund.

Remember – you may be exempt from some health costs owing to your age or because you have a specific medical condition. If you do not qualify for full help and your income is low, you may apply via the Low Income Scheme – see NHS leaflet HC11

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School Meals

Until 1/4/18, all claimants of UC could claim free school meals.

From 1/4/18 for new claimants, you can claim free school meals on UC provided you have an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400. This is assessed by earnings from up to three of your most recent 'assessment periods'.

If you were already receiving help with school meals prior to 1/4/18 or you gain eligibility after 1/4/18:

You will continue to receive free school meals for a 'transitional' period which is expected to last until 31st March 2022, and then after this help will carry on until the end of your child's 'current phase' of education (i.e. primary or secondary school)

This help will apply even if you cease to meet the criteria after you have become eligible.

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