

Universal Credit

Help and support from Wirral Council
for those claiming Universal Credit

Universal Credit is a benefit for working age people which replaces six existing in and out of work benefits into one single monthly payment. This leaflet will tell you more about the support and information from Wirral Council available to anyone who has made a claim or is about to make one.

Help with your Council Tax bill

You may be able to get help towards paying your Council Tax bill when you claim Universal Credit. This help is from Wirral Council and must be done as soon as possible as claims cannot be backdated.

To make a claim for Council Tax Support, visit www.wirral.gov.uk/benefitsapplication

You will need to upload your Universal Credit award decision from your on-line UC journal. You will be told if you need to supply any further evidence to support your claim. You must provide details of any changes to your household, wages or Universal Credit payments as soon as they happen.

If you have recently moved into a new home and have not yet received a Council Tax bill, register to manage your account online at www.wirral.gov.uk/council-tax/manage-your-account-online You can make your Council Tax Support claim at the same time.

Help with making an online Council Tax Support and Universal Credit claim

There are advisors in One Stop Shops to help you create an e-mail address, set up a Universal Credit account and make a Council Tax Support and Universal Credit claim. You will need to make an appointment to do this.

You can also get help at any Wirral based Job Centre. Your work coach will be able to tell you more about this.

Help with managing your money

If you feel worried about staying on top of your bills, speak to your work coach who can refer you for help to Wirral Council specialist advisors. This support will include practical help to make sure you are not paying too much for things like gas, electricity and mobile phones.

You can also arrange a Personal Budgeting Support appointment at any One Stop Shop.

If you are worried about paying your rent and have never had to manage this before you can talk to your work coach about options to have your rent paid directly to your landlord.

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Once you start to feel in control of your money you will be able to look for work knowing that you can budget when you are paid each month.

Help with Universal Credit Advance Payments

Once you have made your Universal Credit claim and provided evidence of your identity you can request an Advance Payment to help you manage your money until your first monthly payment is made. Ask your work coach or telephone 0345 600 0723 (Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm).

Advance Payments are paid back from ongoing Universal Credit.

If your Advance Payment does not last until your monthly payment is due and you cannot get help from family and friends, you can apply for Local Welfare Assistance. This can help with basic items such as food, heating and lighting. Apply online at www.wirral.gov.uk/lwa

Help with housing costs

If you need additional help to pay your rent you can ask Wirral Council to consider a Discretionary Housing Payment. This is a separate payment to help you meet your rent costs. It could help as you look for work and can then pay your rent from wages.

You can apply online at www.wirral.gov.uk/dhp You will need to supply details about your income and expenditure. These details can be uploaded as you make your application.

Help with serious housing issues

Sometimes your housing problems can impact on your ability to look for work. Wirral Council's Housing Options Team can provide help and support to negotiate with your current landlord, or help to find somewhere new to live that you can afford or give you information about your tenancy rights.

You can make a referral online at www.wirral.gov.uk/housing/information-and-advice

Help with Welfare Rights

If you require help to make an appeal about a benefit or award that has been refused or sanctioned Wirral Council's Welfare Rights Team offer free, impartial advice on all benefit problems. Find out more online at www.wirral.gov.uk/benefits-and-money/welfare-rights

Help with school meal costs

If you receive Universal Credit you can claim Free School Meals. This is a confidential service and also helps your child's school access additional pupil premium funding. You can apply online at wirral.gov.uk/free-school-meals



FURTHER ADVICE

For more information about Universal Credit, guides, leaflets, videos, plus eligibility information and how to claim, visit the DWP website: www.gov.uk/universal-credit