

Social Security announcements in Budget 2020

Change	Due when (probably)	Notes
Statutory Sick Pay temporarily extended so that it will be paid from Day 1 if absence from work is due to Coronavirus or related self-isolation, including Carers of sufferers.	COVID-19 Bill imminent	Currently only payable after 4 days of sickness from work.
Temporary system to be put in place for Med 3 certificates (Fit notes) to be obtained via NHS 111, not just GPs	Imminent	Government has already issued guidance to employers advising that GP fit notes should be discretionary during this period
New-style ESA which is a contributory benefit now payable from Day 1 if absence from work is due to Coronavirus or related self-isolation.	COVID-19 Bill	Currently only payable after 7 days of sickness from work.
The requirement to attend a Jobcentre Plus office at the beginning of a new claim of Universal Credit is lifted if affected by Coronavirus or self-isolating.	Imminent	Almost all new claimants are usually required to attend a Jobcentre Plus interview for various reasons such as identify verification, claimant commitment etc.
The minimum income floor that applies to some self-employed Universal Credit claimants is temporarily suspended during Coronavirus outbreak for those affected or self-isolating.	Imminent	The minimum income floor will usually apply if self-employed claimants are not earning enough according to the UC regulations. It effectively presumes profit you are actually not making and therefore reduces your UC award.

Further reduction in the rate that debts can be deducted from Universal Credit, reducing from 30% to 25%	October 2021	Until recently the maximum deduction was 40%
Period over which Universal Credit advances can be repaid will increase up to 24 months	October 2021	Previous announcement increased the period in 2021 from 12 months to 16 months
Introduction of Neonatal Leave and Pay for employees whose babies spend an extended period in neonatal care. Up to 12 weeks leave.	Paid leave from 2023	
Increase to Universal Credit Severe Disability Transitional Protection payments. No details of increase yet.	Imminent	Following successful Court of Appeal challenge the Government is required to properly compensate claimants who have lost their Severe Disability Premium as a result of claiming Universal Credit.
Additional exemptions to the shared accommodation rate when calculating either Housing Benefit or Rent Support in Universal Credit. Will include former rough sleepers aged 16-24, care leavers up to 25, victims of domestic abuse and victims of human trafficking.	Possibly 2023	Exemption from the shared accommodation rate allows 1-bed private sector rents to be used in the benefit calculation rather than much lower shared rate which applies to non-exempt single people if they are under 35. Care leavers are currently exempt up to 22 years.
EEA migrants arriving in UK from January 2021 will have access to non-contributory benefits restricted for first 5 years in UK	From January 2021	Current presence test is to have resided in UK for two out of the previous three years.