

Benefits - Information for ICS Volunteers

ICS is committed to ensuring that a diverse range of young people are given the opportunity to participate in its programmes.

Many young people who go on ICS receive benefits or may need to claim benefits in the future. ICS is not able to provide legal advice or information about benefits however this document may help to inform you about how your benefits might be affected by going overseas for 10 – 13 weeks.

****It is your responsibility to tell your contact at ICS and speak to your benefits advisor as soon as possible to find out how they might be affected****

If you need a letter for the jobcentre or your benefit advisor to explain what your commitment to ICS is, ask your contact at ICS who will be able to provide you with one.

Universal Credit

Universal Credit is a new benefit which will replace six benefits and credits with one single monthly payment. The Universal Credit system has now completely rolled out across the UK.

The six benefits Universal Credit will replace are:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment Support Allowance
- Housing Benefit
- Working Tax Credit
- Child Tax Credit

All newly unemployed people who have not claimed benefits before will be moved onto Universal Credit straight away.

If you are currently receiving any of the benefits listed above, when you return from ICS you will be claiming for Universal Credit.

What will happen to my benefits if I go overseas?

When you return from placement it could take a few weeks for a payment to come through, therefore we advise you to have some money to return to so you can support yourself in case this happens.

<p>Universal Credit</p>	<p>***If you are receiving universal credit, your payments will stop after 4 weeks of going overseas***</p> <p>Make sure you speak to benefits advisor about your commitment to ICS and your change in circumstances. Your contact at ICS will be able to provide you with a letter to help explain your commitment to ICS.</p>
<p>Job Seekers Allowance</p>	<p>If you are currently claiming JSA, this will stop when you go overseas. You will be able to re-start your claim when you return however be aware that your new claim will be for Universal Credit.</p> <p>Speak to your advisor about how to start a ‘rapid reclaim’ which may help you to re-start your claim more quickly when you return. Your contact at ICS will be able to provide you with a letter to help explain your commitment.</p>
<p>Housing Benefit</p>	<p>If you have not yet transferred to Universal Credit, you may be able to claim housing benefit for up to 13 weeks whilst going overseas. However, you should check with your local jobcentre about whether this will apply to you.</p> <p>Unfortunately, under the new Universal Credit rules, housing benefit stops after 4 weeks of a claimant being away from home.</p> <p>We are currently working with the government to overcome this rule however if it affects you, do think carefully about what kind of support you will have upon your return from placement. Speak to your ICS contact to discuss your situation.</p>
<p>Employment and Support Allowance</p>	<p>You can receive ESA for 4 weeks if you are going abroad. We advise that you contact your Jobcentre Plus or benefits advisor in advance to avoid any sanctions.</p>

	<p>You will be able to re-start your claim when you return, however your new claim will be for Universal Credit. Speak to your advisor about how to re-start your ESA claim when you return.</p>
<p>Personal Independence Payments</p>	<p>PIP can be paid for up to 13 weeks if you are away from your home as long as you intend to return and your absence will not exceed 52 weeks.</p> <p>We advise you to speak to your benefits advisor in advance to avoid any sanctions.</p>
<p>Child Benefit</p>	<p>If you are in receipt of child benefits, you may be able to continue to claim for up to 8 weeks while you are abroad. Child Benefit is separate from Universal Credit so the 4 week rule will not apply. However you should speak to your benefits advisor to avoid any sanctions.</p>
<p>Child Tax Credit</p>	<p>If you have not been moved to Universal Credit, you may be able to claim child tax credits for up to 8 weeks while you are abroad.</p> <p>Child Tax Credits are being incorporated into Universal Credit, therefore you should speak to your benefits advisor as soon as possible about how your tax credits may be affected. If you are on Universal Credit, your benefit will stop after 4 weeks of being overseas.</p>
<p>Carers Allowance</p>	<p>You can still get Carer's Allowance for up to 4 weeks if you go on a break.</p> <p>If you receive carer's allowance, you must report any change in your circumstances as soon as possible, as being away for more than 4 weeks will also have an impact on the benefits of the person you are caring for.</p>

Useful Contacts and Links

<p>Jobcentre Plus</p>	<p>Provides contacts for new and existing benefit claimants and information on how to check eligibility. Provides link to create an online application for Job Seekers Allowance</p> <p>Visit: https://www.gov.uk/contact-jobcentre-plus</p> <p>Call:</p> <p>New benefit claims:</p> <p>Telephone: 0800 055 6688 Textphone: 0800 023 4888</p> <p>Existing benefit claims:</p> <table data-bbox="432 1003 1393 1160"> <tr> <td>JSA, Income Support, ESA</td> <td>Universal Credit</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Telephone: 034 608 8545</td> <td>Telephone: 0345 600 0723</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Textphone: 034 608 8551</td> <td>Textphone: 0345 600 0743</td> </tr> </table> <p>Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm</p>	JSA, Income Support, ESA	Universal Credit	Telephone: 034 608 8545	Telephone: 0345 600 0723	Textphone: 034 608 8551	Textphone: 0345 600 0743
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<p>Gov.uk</p>	<p>Provides an overview of all benefits, who is eligible and includes information about how they may be affected by going overseas.</p> <p>Visit: https://www.gov.uk/browse/benefits</p>						
<p>Citizens Advice Bureau</p>	<p>Advice on all civil rights including benefits, housing, health, immigration, work, law. The website allows you to find a local citizens advice bureau for local contact details. Includes advice translated into British Sign Language</p> <p>Visit: https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/</p>						
<p>Turn2Us</p>	<p>A national charity that helps people in financial hardship gain access to welfare benefits, charitable grants and support services</p> <p>Visit: https://www.turn2us.org.uk/</p>						