



Important Contacts: Where to Get Help & Advice

Universal Credit can be complex and confusing so it's best to make use of the information, help and advice that is out there. On this page, there are details of important contacts during your claim. This includes Universal Credit contact numbers, as well as number for independent advice agencies.

It's important to make sure you are getting advice from trusted sources. Beware false information sometimes circulating on the internet and social media.

All of the contacts provided could be useful at some point in your Universal Credit journey, so please do get in touch with them for support.

They are all waiting to help you!

[Independent support and advice agencies](#)

[Advice agencies involved in this guide...](#)

[Law Centre NI](#)

[Housing Rights](#)

[Important Universal Credit contacts](#)

[Support with your mental health](#)

[Access more of our info sheets](#)

Independent support and advice agencies

If you are experiencing difficulties with your Universal Credit claim, or any other welfare benefit application, it's really important that you get advice from the experts. There are a number of free, independent advice agencies across the UK who can provide advice and assistance, free of charge. You should never have to pay for these services!



- Northern Ireland
- England, Scotland & Wales

Advice agencies involved in this guide...

This guide was created by Universal Credit claimants but also with amazing input from advisers working at Law Centre NI and Housing Rights. Below you can find out more about what these brilliant organisations do and how they might be able to help you (if you're resident in Northern Ireland).

Many of us in UC:Us have had help from these organisations. One of our top tips for managing your UC claim is that if you're stuck or confused about anything you get in touch with Law Centre NI or Housing Rights!

Law Centre NI

Law Centre NI provides advice on a wide range of welfare rights including social security to members of the public and other advisers. You can contact their advice line or search their website for information about Universal Credit.

[Law Centre NI | Free Legal Advice & Support](#)

(Closed captions and transcript available soon)

Housing Rights

Housing Rights works to tackle homelessness and housing problems in Northern Ireland. They can provide advice and assistance with the Housing Cost Element of Universal credit and rent arrears caused by delays, or difficulties with your claim. Watch this video to hear more from Faith.

[Speak to an adviser | Housing Advice NI](#)

(Closed captions and transcript available soon)

Important Universal Credit contacts

Discretionary Support

0800 587 2750 option 1

Help with Health Costs

(Eye care and dental care)

HC1 form – available online and processed via post

UC Advance

0800 122 1331

Claim online through UC account

UC Contingency Fund

0800 587 2750 option 2

Hardship payment

(eligibility criteria must be met)

0800 122 1331

UC Budgeting advance

(loan to get into employment and stay in employment)

0800 122 1331

Support with your mental health

We know from our own experiences that claiming UC can be a stressful time. Do reach out for help and support if you're struggling with your mental health. There are some great organisations out there whose job it is to listen.

Here are some numbers and places for support:

Samaritans

(Northern Ireland, England, Wales and Scotland)

Freephone: 116 123 for more information, see:

<https://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/contact-samaritan/>

Mind

(Northern Ireland, England, Wales and Scotland)

For information on what help is available to you, see:

<https://www.mind.org.uk/need-urgent-help/using-this-tool>

Lifeline

(Northern Ireland only)

Calls to Lifeline are free to people living in Northern Ireland who are calling from UK landlines and mobiles.

Freephone: 0808 808 8000

Rethink

(Northern Ireland, England, Wales and Scotland)

Freephone: 0808 801 0525 for more information, see:

<https://www.rethink.org/aboutus/what-we-do/advice-and-information-service/>

Urgent local mental health helpline

To find an urgent mental health helpline in your area, follow this link:

<https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/mental-health/find-an-urgent-mental-health-helpline>

Access more of our info sheets

This document is part of a series of info sheets that have been produced from content hosted on [ucus.org.uk/ucguide](https://www.ucus.org.uk/ucguide). There are a number of guides in the series you can visit them here or view the guide in its original web form:

Download all the guides here!

[Helping you understand our guide](#)

[UC Lessons from Lived Experiences](#)

Key lessons our group have learnt from their lived experiences. Includes our “Talking Universal Credit: What I wish I’d known” videos

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[Before you apply](#)

Highlights key things that you need to know before making a claim for UC.

[How to make an application](#)

A checklist with all the information you need to have ready to make a claim online for Universal Credit.

[How to understand the UC elements](#)

Sets out all the different elements of Universal Credit to help you to understand more about the benefit.

[Where to get extra financial support](#)

Places where you may be able to seek financial help in addition to your UC claim.

[How to use the online journal](#)

Here we highlight some of the key do's and don'ts when using your online journal, which should help things run smoothly.

[How to challenge a decision](#)

A step by step guide to appealing decisions and lodging complaints along with details of help available.

[Managing Overpayments & Deductions](#)

Information on the reasons why overpayments and deductions occur and some options to manage them.

[Crisis support](#)

Find out support available for people living on a low income who are undergoing difficult circumstances.

[Want to change things?](#)

A quick run through of ideas for trying to change things and ways you can get involved.

[Important contacts](#)

Contacts for a number of free, independent advice agencies who can provide advice and assistance, free of charge.

Follow us on Twitter [@UcUs_Now](https://twitter.com/UcUs_Now) | #ucusguide | ucusguide@gmail.com

The Universal Credit Guide is a core output from a research collaboration between UC:Us participants, the universities of York and Ulster, Housing Rights and Law Centre NI. The research was funded by ESRC. Although it has not been involved in the production of this claimants' guide, UC:Us would also like to thank the Joseph Rowntree Foundation for funding the initial participatory research project that brought us together and for supporting our engagement with policymakers.

