

Dear Partner

We are hugely grateful to our stakeholders and partners for everything you have done, and continue to do, to support citizens and get accurate information to them during these uncertain times. Thank you for the important role you are playing.

You should have been receiving regular information from us about changes that apply to the organisation you represent. I wanted to update you on our current position, and signpost you to where you can get up to date information from our department.

DWP has experienced a huge increase in claims and our phone lines have been extremely busy as a result. We have taken urgent action to boost capacity, by moving large numbers of existing staff to help our front line colleagues, and we're recruiting more.

New claims to Universal Credit should be [done online where possible](#). Customers do not need to call DWP to arrange an appointment and they shouldn't attend the jobcentre.

People making new claims for Universal Credit no longer need to call DWP as part of the process. Instead, a bolstered team are calling claimants back if they need to check any of the information provided as part of the claim. This change has been in effect since 9 April. It should free up phone lines for those unable to claim online.

All of this will mean our staff can make more calls, ensure claims are progressed as quickly as possible and get much needed support to those who need it.

I am currently working from home, juggling a number of roles, so I am still available if you want to contact me, there is no change in my contact details.

You may be making changes to how you operate as a business as a result of coronavirus. Please keep in touch with details of how you are delivering your services and support.

Here's how you can keep up to date up with any changes we are making. This will help you when you are offering advice and support to local people.

Key websites

GOV.UK is the primary site for all the key information to support individuals, businesses and other organisations. Here is a link to the dedicated pages [GOV.UK: Coronavirus](#), which includes information on how to stay safe.

DWP's employment and benefits support

The [Employment and benefits support](#) website includes the latest guidance and messages on sick pay, existing benefit claims, new claims to benefit, self-employment, housing and more.

Touchbase

[Register to receive the DWP Newsletter - Touchbase](#) which is sent out each week to keep you up to date on changes.

Coronavirus business hub

The [business hub on GOV.UK](#) is the first point of call for people seeking government information on support for business.

HMRC Help and Support

Employers in particular may wish to [register to receive help and support emails from HMRC](#). Individuals and businesses can sign up to receive email alerts about a range of help and support products that are available. These include live and recorded webinars, YouTube videos and online guides.

Kind regards,

Lena Brooks

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