

Benefits for Resettled Ukrainians

Emergency legislation was passed in March 2022 to allow Ukrainians fleeing conflict access to all benefits, as well as to public funds, housing and work.

The visas granted to Ukrainians entering the UK through the Ukraine Family Scheme or the Homes for Ukraine scheme give time limited leave to remain in the UK for a period of three years. These rules are separate to the normal immigration rules that apply to asylum seekers and refugees.

Ukrainians entering the UK under these schemes are exempt from the residence conditions that normally apply to the benefits in this factsheet. It is important to note that the other conditions of entitlement, as well as the normal rules of the particular benefit, still apply. This factsheet explains which benefits are available and provide an overview of the normal rules of entitlement.

What you may be able to claim

Universal Credit – if you are working age and have a low income

Pension Credit – if you are over State Pension age and have a low income

Housing Benefit – if you are over State Pension age or live in specified accommodation and need help to pay your rent

Child Benefit – if you are responsible for a child/children who normally live with you

Disability Living Allowance – if you are disabled and a child under the age of 16

Personal Independence Payment – if you are disabled and working age

Attendance Allowance – if you are disabled and over State Pension age

Carer's Allowance – if you provide at least 35 hours per week care for someone who receives a qualifying disability benefit.

Note: this is not an exhaustive list – other benefits are available.

Means-tested or non-means-tested?

Means-tested benefits are determined by the amount of income and savings that you have. They may be paid if you have no other money coming in or to top-up money that you have. You do not need to have paid National Insurance contributions to be entitled to these benefits.

Non-means-tested benefits are benefits which are paid if you meet the qualifying conditions, without reference to your income or capital. Some non-means-tested benefits depend on your National Insurance contributions.

Universal Credit

Universal Credit is a means-tested benefit available if you are working age and have a low income. You can claim it whether you are in or out of work. It can include amounts for housing costs and children, as well as additional amounts if you are a carer, have childcare costs, or have limited capability for work.

To be entitled to Universal Credit, you must meet the following conditions:

- **Age** – you must be over 18 and you or your partner if you live with one must be under State Pension age (limited exceptions apply for 16 and 17 year olds).
- **Capital** – you must have no more than £16,000 in savings and capital (this includes your partners savings, if you have one). To count in this calculation, savings must be accessible to the claimant. The market value of a property which you do not live in is normally taken into account as capital. Exceptions may apply. There has been no official easement of this rule for Ukrainians who have property in Ukraine, but it may be arguable that any such property should currently have a nil valuation.
- **Education** – you cannot normally qualify for Universal Credit if you are in full-time education. Limited exceptions apply.
- **Immigration and residence** – you must meet the immigration, presence and residence tests. Ukrainians fleeing the conflict may be granted special immigration leave and are exempt from the habitual residence test.
- **Claimant Commitment** – you must usually accept a claimant commitment before you can qualify for Universal Credit. Your claimant commitment sets out the work-related requirements that you must fulfil and may include appointments at the Job Centre, interview preparation and courses designed to improve your skills. If you do not do what is required, you are at risk of being sanctioned (your benefit may be reduced).

How much is Universal Credit?

Universal Credit is calculated by adding together several different elements before deductions are made for any income that you may have. There is a standard allowance, with different amounts payable depending on your age and whether you have a partner. Additional elements are payable if you have children, housing costs, are a carer, have limited capability for work, or childcare costs.

- **Children**

Any appropriate child element or elements should be included from the start of the claim. Entitlement to this element is not conditional on a Child Benefit award. A two-child limit applies to payment of the child element in Universal Credit – this may mean that you only receive two elements even if you have more than two children.

- **Housing Costs**

The housing costs element can cover commercial rent and certain service charge payments. The amount of the housing costs element may be less than the amount of rent that you actually pay. If you live in private rented accommodation, the housing costs element is based on the **Local Housing Allowance** rates for the area that you live in. If you live in local authority or housing association accommodation, the amount of the housing element is determined by the actual rent you pay, however if

your home is under-occupied, your housing costs element will be reduced. If your housing costs element does not cover your full rent, you may be able to apply for a **Discretionary Housing Payment** from your local authority to help you cover the shortfall.

Universal Credit: frequently asked questions

How do I apply?

Apply online at www.universal-credit.service.gov.uk/start

To apply online, you will need bank details, an email address and access to a phone. If you do not have these, call the Universal Credit helpline on 0800 328 5644. You do not need to have a National Insurance number to make a claim, but you will need to provide evidence of your identity and if your claim is successful, you will be given one.

If you need help to make a claim, contact the Citizens Advice help to claim service:

England: 0800 144 8 444

Scotland: 0800 023 2581

Wales: 08000 241 220

What if I start work?

Universal Credit can be paid in and out of work. If you work, earnings will be taken into account and your Universal Credit award is likely to reduce or may stop completely.

The earnings taken into account are based on the actual amount received within each monthly assessment period.

If you or your partner are responsible for a child or have limited capability for work, your net earnings will be reduced by a work allowance. There is a lower amount for claimants who have housing costs included in their award and a higher amount for claimants that don't have housing costs included in their award. The work allowance is an amount of earnings that can be ignored when working out how much Universal Credit you are entitled to.

After the application of any appropriate work allowance, the remaining earnings are tapered by 55%. The result is the amount of earnings that are used in your Universal Credit calculation.

What if I am ill?

If you have an illness or disability that limits your ability to work, you can ask for a Work Capability Assessment. You must provide a fit note. If you are found to have limited capability for work, you will not be expected to look for work. If you are found to have limited capability for work-related activity, you will not be expected to look for work, you will have no work-related requirements (such as work preparation), and an additional element will be included in your award.

How long will it be before I receive my payment?

Universal Credit is paid monthly in arrears, within 7 days of the end of your monthly assessment period. This means that you may have to wait at least 5 weeks before your first payment. If you are in financial need while you wait for your first payment,

you may be able to get an advance payment. This is recovered from subsequent payments, usually over 24 months.

Does getting Universal Credit entitle me to anything else?

Receiving Universal Credit may mean that you are automatically entitled to other payments – including free school meals, help with health costs and healthy start vouchers.

Pension Credit

Pension Credit is a means-tested benefit that can be claimed if you are State Pension age and on a low income. Pension Credit guarantee credit ensures that no one lives on less than a specified amount. Extra amounts might be payable if you have a disability, you are a carer or you are responsible for a child or qualifying young person.

Pension Credit may be paid to top up other income.

How do I apply?

Apply online at www.gov.uk, or by calling the Pension Credit claim line on 0800 99 1234.

Housing Benefit

Housing Benefit is a means-tested benefit that helps you pay your rent if you are on a low income. You can only make a new claim for Housing Benefit if you are over State Pension age, or you live in specified accommodation. If you cannot claim Housing Benefit, you may be able to claim Universal Credit for help with housing costs instead.

How do I apply?

To make a claim, contact your local council.

Child Benefit

Child Benefit is a non-means-tested benefit that you can claim if you are responsible for a child or qualifying young person.

Child Benefit is £21.80 per week for the eldest child, and £14.45 per week for any subsequent children.

There is no two-child limit in Child Benefit.

You can claim Child Benefit at the same time as other benefits.

How do I apply?

Apply by calling the Child Benefit Office on 0300 200 3100, or by downloading a form from www.gov.uk

Disability Benefits

If you have a health condition or disability, you may be able to apply for a disability benefit. Which benefit you can apply for depends on your age. Each benefit has its own entitlement criteria. It is not enough to have a health condition or disability – you must meet the specific criteria. Disability benefits are not means-tested, which means they don't depend on your income or savings, and they can be paid on top of other benefits.

Disability Living Allowance – 16 and under

Disability Living Allowance is paid if your child is disabled and needs help with personal care and supervision or help with getting around outdoors.

Get a claim pack by calling the Disability Living Allowance helpline on 0800 121 4600.

Personal Independence Payment – working age (entitlement continues past State Pension age if you are already entitled)

Personal Independence Payment is paid if you have a physical or mental condition and your ability to carry out daily living activities or mobility activities is limited or severely limited as a result.

Get a claim pack by calling the DWP on 08000 917 2222.

Attendance Allowance – State Pension age

Attendance Allowance is paid if, due to severe disability, you need help with personal care or continual supervision to avoid danger. There is no help with mobility problems through Attendance Allowance.

Get a claim pack by calling the Attendance Allowance helpline on 0800 731 0122.

Carer's Allowance

Carer's Allowance is a benefit for people who spend at least 35 hours a week caring for a person who gets:

- Personal Independence Payment – daily living component
- Attendance Allowance
- Disability Living Allowance – middle or higher rate care component
- Child Disability Payment (Scotland) – middle or higher rate care component
- Constant Attendance Allowance
- Armed Forces Independence Payment

You must be 16 or over, and you must not be studying for 21 hours or more a week. Carer's Allowance is not a means-tested benefit, but you must not earn more than £132 per week.

Carer's Allowance is £69.70 per week. It counts as income for Universal Credit. Claiming Carer's Allowance may affect the benefits of the person that you care for – seek advice.

How do I apply?

Apply by contacting the Carer's Allowance Unit on 0800 731 0297, or by downloading a form from www.gov.uk.

Benefit Cap

If you are working age, there is a limit (cap) on the total amount of benefits you can receive. Your Universal Credit or Housing Benefit award may be reduced if your benefit income exceeds set levels. Not all benefits are included in the cap, and several exemptions apply.

For more information, visit www.gov.uk/benefit-cap

Where to go for help

Benefits can be complicated and confusing. If you need support to work out what you are entitled to, you can contact your local Citizens Advice or call their national helpline. Your local council may also be able to help.

www.citizensadvice.org.uk

You may find it useful to use an independent benefit calculator to give you an idea of what you might be entitled to. Please be aware that these calculators do not guarantee entitlement and are not official claim forms.

www.entitledto.co.uk

Additional information is available on the following sites:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/welcome-a-guide-for-ukrainians-arriving-in-the-uk

www.advice-ukraine.co.uk/

www.redcross.org.uk/get-help/get-help-as-a-refugee/help-for-refugees-from-ukraine