

# Claimants are asked to apply online as jobcentres limit access

With a rise in new claims, and with demand for support over the phone increasing, the Department for Work and Pensions is taking unprecedented action to make sure people can get the support they need, including moving 10,000 existing staff to focus on processing new claims.

In line with recent Government guidance and to best serve those who need support, the Work and Pensions Secretary has taken the decision to limit access to jobcentres from tomorrow, with members of the public not admitted into jobcentres unless they are directed to do so with a booked appointment.

Only the most vulnerable claimants who cannot access DWP services by other channels will be invited to attend, with the public urged to use online services.

In addition, the Secretary of State has also today announced that [reviews and reassessments](#) for disability benefits are being suspended for the next three months. The suspension will be kept under regular review and extended if necessary.

These stronger measures come in response to the changing situation and mean more staff are being deployed to process new claims and make payments, with remote support a top priority for the department.

Around 10,000 existing staff will be moved to process new claims, with 1000 already in place. In addition, the Department is expecting to recruiting 1500 extra people to aid the effort.

The changes are part of the Government's effort to stop the spread of the virus, supporting people to stay at home, protect the NHS and save lives. The measures follow Government guidance last week that people were not expected to attend face to face jobcentre appointments, and the suspension of face-to-face assessments for all sickness and disability benefits for the next 3 months.

In the meantime, all services can be accessed online and over phone with the Work and Pensions Secretary Therese Coffey is urging people to use online services first, helping keep phone lines free for those who really need them.

Secretary of State for Work and Pensions Therese Coffey said:

"Our jobcentres are fully committed to supporting people facing challenges during these extraordinary times. To help people most effectively and efficiently, we need people to claim online. If you cannot get online, phone us for help and we will only see people face to face in our jobcentres if invited."

Those looking to put in a claim for Universal Credit or Employment and

Support Allowance should apply online. For more information visit [Understanding Universal Credit](#)

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