Press release: Free helplines for Universal Credit claimants

All DWP Universal Credit phone lines are now free and nobody will be charged when they need to call to get help with their Universal Credit claim.

In October, Secretary of State for Work and Pensions David Gauke committed to making all DWP helplines Freephone numbers by the end of the year.

Secretary of State for Work and Pensions David Gauke said:

> We're building a welfare system that is fit for the modern world where people increasingly manage their affairs online.
>
> The vast majority of people apply for Universal Credit online, setting up an account that they can access 24 hours a day to manage their claim.
>
> Work coaches are also there to support people with their online account but we know this is a big change for many, and we want to make sure people can get the extra help they need, without worrying about paying for a phone call. That's exactly why we've set up the new Freephone numbers, which are available from today.

The key Universal Credit Freephone numbers include:

Anyone calling the old numbers will hear a message informing them of the change and the new number to call.

Freephone numbers for other DWP benefits and services are set to follow, with all numbers switched over by the end of 2017.

99% of applications to Universal Credit are made online.

Universal Credit claimants can update any changes in circumstances, check on their payments and rearrange appointments 24 hours a day through their online journal.

Previously, calls were charged at local rates set by providers and were free for many people as part of their call package. If someone had been concerned about the cost, they could request a free call back.

Anyone calling the old numbers will hear a repeated message informing them of the change and the new number to call. They won't be charged for listening to this pre-recorded message as long as they hang up before the call is terminated. The message will be clear about the need for the caller to end the call before they are cut off.

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