

Tax credits: it's time to update your award

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) is reminding tax credits customers that they need to tell HMRC about any changes in their circumstances or income by 31 July 2020.

Tax credits help working families with targeted financial support so it is important that people don't miss out on money that they are entitled to.

Renewing tax credits online is quick and easy. Customers can [log onto GOV.UK](#) to check the progress of their renewal, be reassured that it's being processed, and know when they will hear back from HMRC.

While most tax credit awards will be renewed automatically in 2020, the self-employed, those in receipt of taxable social security benefit, or those who have other income may need to review their total household income and tell HMRC if the income held is incorrect.

Customers who need to respond to the annual review pack will need to do so by 31 July – or their payments will stop.

HMRC's Director General for Customer Services, Angela MacDonald said:

During these uncertain times, while the UK comes together to combat COVID-19, tax credits payments are a vital source of support for millions of people and their families.

If you have been contacted by HMRC to provide your income details, I urge you to contact the department before 31 July.

Don't leave it too late, get in touch and make sure the information we hold is correct.

If any information HMRC holds is incorrect or incomplete, customers may have to pay back any tax credits that have been overpaid. They may also have to pay a penalty.

Customers can use the HMRC App on their smartphone to:

- renew their tax credits
- check their tax credits payments schedule
- find out how much they have earned for the year

Customers should be aware that criminals could take advantage of tax credits renewals to text, email or phone the public, offering fake support. The scams mimic HMRC messages in an effort to look genuine.

If someone texts, emails or calls claiming to be from HMRC, saying that a customer can renew a tax credits award or access financial help, and asks for credit card or bank details, it's likely to be a scam. People should check GOV.UK for information on [how to recognise genuine HMRC contact](#).

Customers can get help and information on renewing tax credits:

The deadline for people to renew their tax credits is 31 July 2020.

In April, HMRC announced Working Tax Credit customers would receive up to £20 extra each week from 6 April 2020 until 5 April 2021, as part of a number of measures to support the country during the Coronavirus pandemic. To make sure the information HMRC holds is correct and up to date, letters have been sent to some customers to reconfirm their income details.

To establish how the total income was calculated, or report any changes use the webchat service. Go to GOV.UK and search 'tax credits general enquiries'.

Customers who are self-employed, and have not filed their tax return for the 2019 to 2020 tax year, must estimate their profit or loss and report this to us online by 31 July 2020. If they don't tell us, we will finalise their award using the information we hold, and they will not be able to change it at a later date. Once they have provided an estimate, they'll need to contact us again when they know their actual income, by no later than 31 January 2021.

Customers that receive a letter or text and the details are correct, or have already made their declaration including confirming their income and circumstances, don't need to do anything.

Contact HMRC straight away if you disagree with any of the information in the letter or need to tell us any changes.

Tax credits will gradually be replaced by Universal Credit. Customers cannot receive tax credits and Universal Credit at the same time. For more information, they need to go to www.gov.uk/universalcredit.

HMRC's scams advice

Stop:

- take a moment to think before parting with your information or money
- genuine organisations like banks or HMRC won't normally contact you out of the blue to ask for personal details

Challenge:

Protect:

- forward suspicious emails claiming to be from HMRC to phishing@hmrc.gov.uk and texts to 60599.
- contact your bank immediately if you think you've fallen victim to a scam, and report it to [Action Fraud](#)