

Windrush Compensation Scheme claimant tender assistance launched

A tender for a contract to provide assistance to people claiming compensation through the Windrush Compensation Scheme has been launched today (Monday 20 April).

The successful bidder will provide hands-on support to those applying for compensation. This will include helping them to complete their application forms with over-the-phone and face-to-face appointments.

The scheme, designed with independent oversight, is intended to be as straightforward as possible with dedicated caseworkers assessing claims as quickly as they can. The first payment was made within just 4 months of the scheme opening.

The Home Office also funded a support contract currently run by Citizens Advice which has been operating since April 2019.

The next phase of this programme is now open for bids. The successful bidder will have to show that they can provide this service throughout the UK, offer a holistic service to all claimants and spot particular vulnerabilities of those they are assisting to make sure that they receive help in all aspects of their life.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

The ignorance and thoughtlessness towards the race and history of the Windrush generation was at the heart of the Windrush lessons learned Review.

Although no amount of money will ever be able to repay people for the hurt and suffering they have endured, I want to ensure that those who have suffered are compensated for their losses, and that is why I am ensuring that support is continuing to be available for those who need it to apply.

The Home Office will continue to do everything possible to listen to and support those were affected by this scandal and the Windrush Compensation Scheme is fundamental to that.

The tender will be open for 10 weeks rather than 6, to give organisations which have been affected by coronavirus additional time to bid for the contract.

The tender will be open from 22 April 2020 and close on 1 July and interested organisations can find out how to access the relevant documents on the [GOV.UK Contracts Finder](#). However, we will keep the situation under review and will

extend the deadline if necessary.

The [Windrush Compensation Scheme](#) was launched in April 2019 to ensure that affected members of the Windrush generation receive payments for the impact on their lives.

This includes payment for loss of employment, benefits and other forms of hardship. The first payments were made within four months of the scheme opening. For the latest information on the scheme, please see the [Windrush Compensation Scheme factsheet](#).

The Wendy Williams Lessons Learned review was published in March 2020. The Home Secretary made clear in her statement to the House of Commons on the day of publication that the department will carefully consider the detail of the report and its recommendations to develop a comprehensive plan for changing the ways of working of the Home Office.

As announced by the Home Secretary in March, the Home Office will shortly launch a separate £500k fund for grassroots organisations to promote the Windrush Schemes and provide advice services. We will work with stakeholders to co-design the fund.

[Traffic Commissioners issue guidance on remote auditing during the Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#)

- Only go outside for food, health reasons or work (but only if you cannot work from home)
- If you go out, stay 2 metres (6ft) away from other people at all times
- Wash your hands as soon as you get home

Do not meet others, even friends or family.

You can spread the virus even if you don't have symptoms.

[DVLA opening hours: early May bank holiday 2020](#)

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Welsh volunteers step in to support communities

A group of keen sewers who work at Wylfa Site, on Anglesey, are converting bedding and other material into scrub bags for NHS workers.

The staff put their uniform in the bags at the end of their shifts and then put the bag and the contents straight into the wash, minimising handling and helping to avoid spreading the virus from work to home.

Volunteer Sue Evans said: "During such unprecedented times we all want to do our bit to help in any way we can. So, when Lisa Thomas forwarded a shout out to all sewers, Elaine Hulse and I took to our sewing machines.

"Instructions were provided and after an initial test run I ended up making 10 – the first of many. It is surprising what you can do with an old duvet cover!"

Kevin Titley, a Quality Assurance Engineer from Trawsfynydd Site, has become the Community Volunteer Co-ordinator for Llanbedr Community.

Kevin said: "I've taken the lead in setting up and coordinating a community volunteer group in Llanbedr, where I live. The group collect shopping, prescriptions and other essentials for people.

The scheme operates under the umbrella of Llanbedr Community Council, where I'm the current Chairman, and we now have 23 volunteers, including some people who are self-isolating but still able to take phone calls."

And engineer Jon Hall, also based at Trawsfynydd Site, has turned his home office into a production line for 3D printing of visors and accompanying headbands for GP practices, using acetate sheets and polypropylene.

New video service for deaf claimants accessing Universal Credit

The service can be used to help make a new claim or for those already claiming Universal Credit.

This supports a package of measures put in place to provide quicker and easier access to benefits during the Coronavirus outbreak.

British Sign Language users can now easily access Universal Credit through a video relay service provided by the Department for Work and Pensions. The move will support many of the 87,000 Deaf BSL users currently living in the UK.

The Video Relay Service (VRS), allows users to make BSL interpreted video calls via their tablet, smartphone, computer or laptop. A professional interpreter then relays the call in English to a member of DWP staff.

Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work, Justin Tomlinson said:

With more than 1.4 million people accessing Universal Credit in these unprecedented times, this technology will provide vital and equal accessibility for Deaf people and those with hearing loss.

It is fantastic to see concern for increasing accessibility going right to the top and I am delighted that we are championing this cause for people accessing the welfare safety net.

The service, which is already available for people accessing other disability benefits and the Access to Work scheme, will be available through GOV.UK.

DWP staff won't see the caller or the interpreter; but will receive a phone call from the interpreter who will translate into BSL. There is no need to book the service in advance which allows the conversation to take place in real time.

Customers will be able to access a VRS hyperlink on GOV.UK. Alternatively, SignVideo offer an app that can connect to Universal Credit. Colleagues won't see the caller or the interpreter; they simply receive a voice telephone call and allow additional time for translation into BSL.

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