

Don't miss out, claim Child Benefit by phone or post, HMRC tells new parents

Parents of new-borns will still be able to claim Child Benefit despite the outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19), HMRC announced today (7 April 2020).

Even though General Register Offices remain closed for now, parents can still claim Child Benefit without having to register their child's birth first to ensure that they do not miss out.

First time parents will need to fill in [Child Benefit Claim form CH2 found online](#) and send it to the Child Benefit Office. If they haven't registered the birth because of COVID-19, they should add a note with their claim to let us know.

If they already claim Child Benefit, they can complete the form or add their new-born's details over the phone on 0300 200 3100. They will need their National Insurance number or Child Benefit number.

Child Benefit claims can be backdated by up to 3 months.

This announcement is timely as Child Benefit payments increased from 6 April to a weekly rate of £21.05 for the first child and £13.95 for each additional child. Child Benefit is paid into a parent's bank account, usually every 4 weeks.

Only one person can claim Child Benefit for a child. For couples with one partner not working or paying National Insurance contributions (NICs), making the claim in their name will help protect their State Pension.

Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Jesse Norman, said:

We need people to stay at home in order to protect the NHS and save lives. Today's change means new parents won't miss out financially and can keep their families safe.

The government will do whatever it takes to support people and the NHS during this outbreak, and HMRC is working around the clock to help families and businesses across the UK.

Angela MacDonald, Director General for Customer Services at HMRC, said:

It's really important that new parents remember to register for Child Benefit, even during these unprecedented times.

The increase in Child Benefit is a boost for family budgets but

there's more to claiming than the payments. We're encouraging people to claim so they don't miss out on National Insurance credits that help protect their State Pension. It also helps children to get their National Insurance number automatically at 16.

HMRC is reminding High Income Child Benefit Charge customers of the importance of claiming Child Benefit, even if they choose to opt out of receiving monetary benefits.

The tax charge applies to anyone with an income over £50,000 who claims Child Benefit or whose partner claims it. Even if you do have to pay the tax charge, you could still be better off by claiming Child Benefit – the tax is 1% of Child Benefit for each £100 of income over £50,000.

You can use the Child Benefit tax calculator to work out how much you may have to pay, or you can opt out of receiving Child Benefit payments altogether when you complete the form, so you won't have to pay the charge but will still protect your State Pension.

Further information

If you're responsible for a child and have not yet claimed, complete and return [Child Benefit claim form CH2](#).

The annual Child Benefit geographical statistics were published on 26 March 2020. The [latest statistics can be accessed on GOV.UK](#).

The [new payment amounts from the 6 April are available online](#)

[Non-Executive Director appointed to Gov Facility Services Limited](#)

- 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.

Extra support for schools and parents to help cope with coronavirus

The Government is to make extra funding available for schools to cover the unique challenges and financial costs of the coronavirus outbreak.

While teachers, pupils and parents would normally be beginning the Easter break, the coronavirus pandemic means that where possible, schools will continue to care for vulnerable children and those of critical workers.

The money will cover unforeseen additional costs including for cleaning and keeping schools open over Easter.

Today, the Government has also published a list of [high-quality resources](#) that parents and schools can consider to support education at home.

The list includes a wide range of resources for all ages that schools can consider using as part of their planned curriculum and will be updated over time. Schools have already been drawing on existing resources and tools they are familiar with to support children to continue learning at home and should continue to do so.

This follows the BBC announcing that they are working with experts to create a package of education materials for TV and online to support learning at home.

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

Schools across the country are going above and beyond to support children during this hugely challenging period.

We must support them every step of the way, which is why we are making extra funding available, on top of existing budgets, to any school facing unavoidable costs incurred due to the coronavirus crisis.

We are also ensuring parents and schools are able to access high-quality resources to support children to continue learning while they stay at home to protect the NHS and save lives.

The Government has also confirmed today that it will extend financial support to children eligible for free schools meals who are not attending school during the Easter holidays.

While many schools already have local arrangements in place, this funding means that schools which do not will be able to order vouchers for families through the national scheme or, where they have alternative arrangements in place, be reimbursed for additional costs.

The additional funding for schools will be available on top of core funding allocations that will be paid as normal to schools for the 2020-21 financial year.

It will cover specific costs incurred as a result of the coronavirus outbreak, where schools are unable to meet these from their existing resources. The specific costs schools can claim for are:

- Additional cleaning required due to confirmed or suspected coronavirus cases;
- Increased premises related costs needed to keep schools open during holidays; and
- Support for free school meals for eligible children who are not attending school, where those costs are not covered by the national voucher scheme.

The Department's guidance on additional funding for schools is available [here](#).

Construction products merger raises competition concerns

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Access to online counter terrorism training made easier for home users

As the ACT (Action Counters Terrorism) Awareness e-Learning course marks its second anniversary, police are launching an updated version, with the latest advice from security experts and a simplified registration system so anyone wanting to take part can help keep the UK safe.

Over 400,000 people have taken part in the award-winning programme since its

launch in April 2018, together completing nearly 2.5 million modules. Nine out of ten participants said they would recommend the package.

It takes just 45 minutes to work through the six sections and can be done on a personal or work computer, laptop or tablet – all in one session or one module at a time.

The course has prompted interest from police forces across the globe. It explains how to spot the signs of suspicious behaviour and what to do to help yourself, others and the emergency responders if an attack should take place.

Senior National Coordinator for Protective Security, Deputy Assistant Commissioner Lucy D’Orsi says:

This is really useful training that anyone can do and access at any time. It’s an opportunity for you to play your part in protecting the national security of the UK.

I know these are difficult and unprecedented times. During COVID-19 CT Policing continues and we would ask that you help us by being a CT Citizen and undertaking this training.

As we saw just this weekend, with a suspected terrorist stabbing attack in France leaving two dead and five injured, we all need to remain aware of the threat.

Whilst many people are spending more time working online from home, I’m asking if you could find time and take just 45 minutes to complete the course.

Version 2 of ACT Awareness e-Learning, which is a collaboration between police and security experts from Marks and Spencer and e-learning specialist Highfield, is available [here](#).

Companies can register on behalf of all employees and share the login details with their staff.

Those already registered will be sent the link to Version 2 automatically in the near future.