



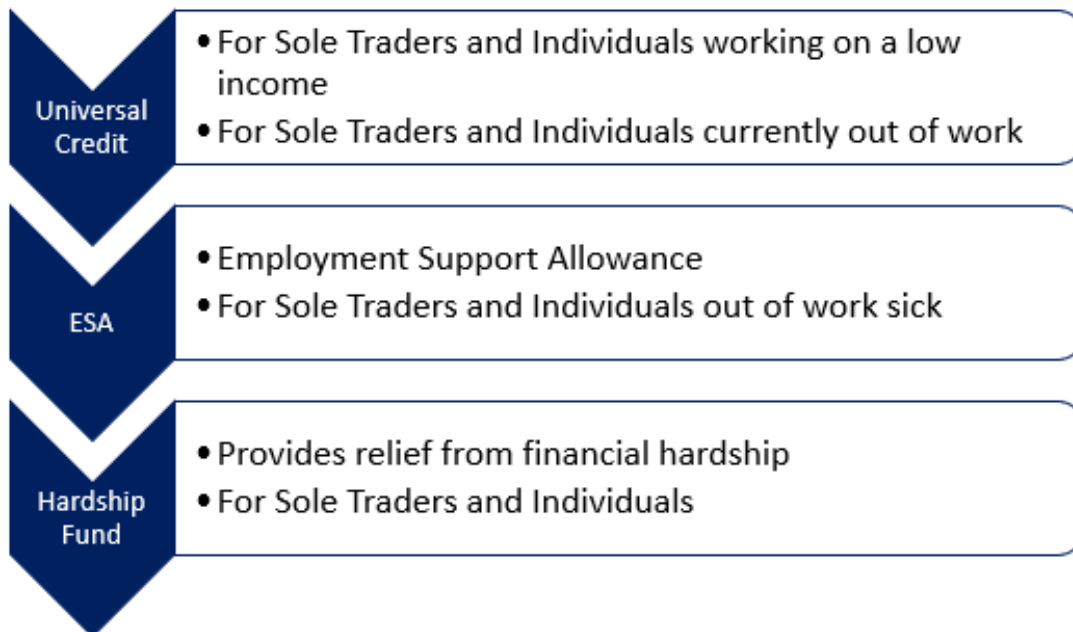
# **Covid-19**

# **Self-Employed**

# Support for self-employed workers and individuals during the Covid-19 Crisis

If you're not eligible for Statutory Sick Pay because you're self-employed or earn below the Lower Earnings Limit of £118 a week, the government is making it easier to claim for Universal Credit or Contributory Employment and Support Allowance during the Covid-19 crisis.

## Reliefs Available:



# Universal Credit

The Universal Credit Minimum Income Floor will be temporarily relaxed for those who have Covid-19 or are self-isolating in line with government advice. You'll be able to claim Universal Credit and get advance payments upfront with no requirement to go to a Job Centre if you're advised to self-isolate.

## How do I get this support?

- Check if you're eligible
- Create an account and make a claim
- Attend your interview
- Apply for an advance on your first payment
- Get your first payment
- Follow your agreement and report any changes

## Eligibility:

- you're on a low income or out of work
- you're 18 or over (there are some exceptions if you're 16 to 17)
- you're under State Pension age (or your partner is)
- you and your partner have £16,000 or less in savings between you
- you live in the UK

## What you'll get:

Your circumstances	Monthly standard allowance
Single and under 25	£251.77
Single and 25 or over	£317.82
In a couple and you're both under 25	£395.20 (for you both)
In a couple and either of you are 25 or over	£498.89 (for you both)

## Extra amounts:

You may get more money on top of your standard allowance if you're eligible.

## If you have children:

If you have 1 or 2 children, you'll get an extra amount for each child.

If you have 3 or more children, you'll get an extra amount for at least 2 children. You can only get an extra amount for more children if any of the following are true:

- your children were born before 6 April 2017
- you were already claiming for 3 or more children before 6 April 2017
- other exceptions apply

You'll get an extra amount for any disabled or severely disabled child - no matter how many children you have or when they were born.

How much you'll get	Extra monthly amount
For your first child	£277.08 (born before 6 April 2017) £231.67 (born on or after 6 April 2017)
For your second child and any other eligible children	£231.67 per child
If you have a disabled or severely disabled child	£126.11 or £392.08
If you need help with childcare costs	up to 85% of your costs (up to £646.35 for one child and £1,108.04 for 2 or more children)

## If you have a disability or health condition:

How much you'll get	Extra monthly amount
If you have limited capability for work and work-related activity	£336.20
If you have limited capability for work and you started your health-related Universal Credit or Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) claim before 3 April 2017	£126.11

## If you care for a severely disabled person:

How much you'll get	Extra monthly amount
If you provide care for at least 35 hours a week for a severely disabled person who receives a disability-related benefit	£160.20

## The work allowance:

You can earn a certain amount before your Universal Credit is reduced if you or your partner are either:

- responsible for a child or young person
- living with a disability or health condition that affects your ability to work

This is called a 'work allowance'. Your work allowance is lower if you get help with housing costs.

Your circumstances	Monthly work allowance
You get help with housing costs	£287
You do not get help with housing costs	£503

## Example:

You have a **child** and **get money for housing costs** in your Universal Credit payment. You're working and earn **£500** during your assessment period.

Your **work allowance is £287**. This means you can earn £287 without any money being deducted.

For every £1 of the remaining £213 you get, 63p is taken from your Universal Credit payment. **So £213 x £0.63 = £134.19.**

This means **you earn £500 and £134.19 is deducted** from your Universal Credit.

# Employment and Support Allowance

If you're eligible, and ill or self-isolating due to coronavirus, you'll be able to claim Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) of £73.10 a week, from day one of your sickness rather than the usual day eight. You need to be over 25 to receive ESA.

## COVID-19:

There is temporary removal of the seven waiting days if you are making a New Style ESA claim. If you need to self-isolate, you will be treated as being ill and do not need to go to a GP.

## How do I get this support?

- **Check if you're eligible**
- **Attend your appointment**
- **Get your first payment**
- **Fill in and send the ESA50 form**
- **Attend your work capability Assessment**
- **Get a decision on how much you'll get**

## Eligibility:

You can apply for Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) if you're under State Pension age and you have a disability or health condition that affects how much you can work.

You can apply whether you're in or out of work. There are conditions to working while claiming ESA.

## You cannot get ESA at the same time as:

- Statutory Sick Pay
- Statutory Maternity Pay
- Jobseeker's Allowance

## 'New style' ESA

Most new claims are for 'new style' ESA.

To get 'new style' ESA you need to have both:

- worked as an employee or been self-employed
- paid enough National Insurance contributions in the last 2 to 3 years - National Insurance credits also count

## You cannot get 'new style' ESA if you:

- get the severe disability premium, or are entitled to it
- got or were entitled to the severe disability premium in the last month, and you're still eligible for it

You cannot get 'new style' ESA if you're getting Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) from an employer. You can apply for 'new style' ESA up to 3 months before your SSP ends. You'll start getting 'new style' ESA as soon as your SSP ends.

## 'New-style' ESA and Universal Credit

You could get Universal Credit at the same time or instead of 'new style' ESA. Universal Credit can help with, for example, your housing and childcare costs.

## What you can get:

You'll be placed into one of 2 groups if you're entitled to ESA. If you're able to get back into work, you'll be put into the work-related activity group. Otherwise, you'll be put into the support group. **Your ESA will be paid every 2 weeks.**

You'll get:

- up to £73.10 a week if you're in the work-related activity group
- up to £111.65 a week if you're in the support group

## While your claim is being assessed:

You'll normally get the 'assessment rate' for 13 weeks while your claim is being assessed.

This will be:

- up to £57.90 a week if you're aged under 25
- up to £73.10 a week if you're aged 25 or over

If it takes longer than 13 weeks to assess your claim, you'll continue getting the 'assessment rate' until you get a decision. Your ESA will be backdated if you're owed any money after 13 weeks.

## Working while you claim:

- You can usually work up to 16 hours a week and earn up to £131.50 a week while you claim ESA.

## When you can work more than 16 hours a week:

- You can work more than 16 hours a week if the work is either voluntary or 'supported permitted work'.

## Supported permitted work:

The work must be either:

- supervised by someone from a local council or voluntary organisation who arranges work for disabled people
- part of a treatment programme under medical supervision
- You can still earn no more than £131.50 a week.

## **£500 million Hardship Fund**

Local authorities will have access to a new £500 million Hardship Fund so they can support economically vulnerable people and households. It's aimed at providing more council tax relief through measures like the existing Local Council Tax Support schemes.

### **How do I get this support?**

The government website says the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) will provide more in