

Don't call us – we'll call you

Instead, a bolstered frontline team will proactively call claimants if they need to check any of the information provided as part of the claim, as well as messaging them on their online journal to confirm details.

The move is designed to take some of the worry and frustration out of submitting a claim, while speeding it up by putting an end to long call wait times.

The change is a response to the huge volume of calls to Universal Credit phone lines, which meant some people were faced with an engaged tone when calling or were left waiting for several hours.

Secretary of State for Work and Pensions Therese Coffey said:

We are doing whatever it takes to make claiming benefits as straightforward as possible during a time when we are receiving an unprecedented number of claims.

That's why no one making a new claim to Universal Credit needs to call us.

Once you've completed your online application, you can rest assured we have received your claim and we will call you if we need to check any of the information you've given us.

Since 16 March 2020, more than a million new claims for Universal Credit have been processed, and 10,000 staff are being redeployed to help on the frontline. A rapid recruitment drive has been launched for an additional 5,000 to aid the effort.

Already, DWP staff have been making proactive calls where they can see people haven't been able to get through.

Already working through weekends, the DWP team will continue to make calls over the Easter bank holiday weekend, helping people complete their online claims and making sure the safety net catches those who need help.

This change goes further, putting the emphasis on the department to follow up with claimants if more information is needed – although anyone who is unable to get online can still call the department as normal.

Appropriate measures to protect people from fraud have been put in place to safeguard the new process. DWP will never ask you for your bank details over the phone and people should never give out personal information unless they are sure it is DWP calling.

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 3267 5144

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