

## Universal Credit advances: what you need to know

If you claim Universal Credit you can get an advance payment to help you with emergency costs or while you wait for your payments to start. You can also ask for an advance if your circumstances have changed and you expect your Universal Credit payments to increase.

There are two types of advance payments:

- 1) **A new claim advance** - if you are making a new claim to Universal Credit
- 2) **A budget advance** - if you are already claiming Universal Credit and need help paying a one-off cost like replacing a broken appliance or funeral costs.

### How to apply

You can apply for an advance payment online through your Universal Credit journal or by speaking to your Work Coach (currently this is done by calling the Universal Credit helpline).

Normally you have to apply for an advance after your first Universal Credit interview but this is not the case during the coronavirus outbreak.

### How much to ask for

For a new claim advance, you can ask for up to 100% of the money you will expect to receive from Universal Credit each month. If you do not need the full amount, you can ask for less and then request the rest at a later date if it does not last you until your first payment.

It is important to think carefully about the amount of money you will need before your payments start. Unlike the old-style benefits, in Universal Credit you must pay your rent to your landlord directly. This means you need to factor in any rent payments, other households bills and the money you'll need for food and transport during this time - normally five weeks.

For a budget advance, the smallest amount you can borrow is £100. The maximum amount depends on your household type - it is £348 for a single person, £465 for a couple and £812 if you have children.

### Repaying an advance

It's important that you know an advance payment is a loan that you will need to repay. Normally you will receive smaller Universal Credit payments for the first 12 months to repay a new claim advance. If you stop receiving Universal Credit, you will then have to repay in another way.

[Find out more about new claim advances here](#)

[Find out more about budgeting advances here](#)