



PotteriesGold

April Uprating and Other News

This week, **benefits are uprated** for the **2021/2022** financial year.

Most benefits have increased by just **0.5%** so you may notice only a small increase in your income this week or month.

However, **State Pension** and **Pension Credit** have both increased by **about 2%**.

Whether you currently receive benefits or not, now is a good time of year to **check your benefit entitlement**. There is a good benefits calculator at [Turn2Us](#).

Online calculators are only as accurate as the information put into them, and cannot tell you about non-means-tested benefits, so you may need more advice.

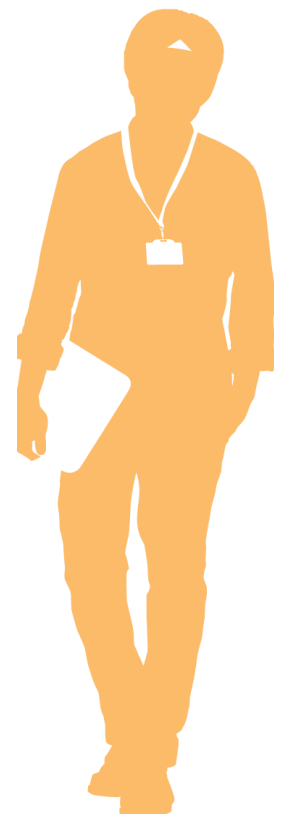
RETROSPECTIVE VERIFICATION

This time last year, the DWP had to process **1.3m new claims** within the first few weeks of the lockdown, while Jobcentres were closed. They therefore processed many of these claims **without checking identity**, housing costs, details of dependent children and other circumstances as they usually would.

The DWP are now carrying out what they call **retrospective verification** of these claims. If you made your claim last spring, you may be asked to **use your journal** or **visit the Jobcentre** to provide extra evidence to verify your claim.

If they cannot reach you after **3 attempts**, your claim may be **suspended** until contact is made, or even **closed down**.

Get in touch with our office on **0808 278 7876** if you need more help.





WORKING TAX CREDIT £500 PAYMENT

We've heard from one of our Community Champions that her **£500 Tax Credit payment** to compensate for the **end of the £20 uplift** arrived last week, so hopefully other people entitled will have received theirs too.

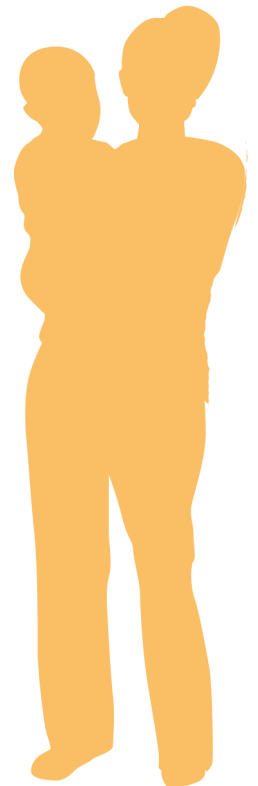
To get the £500 payment, you need to have been receiving Tax Credits on **2nd March 2021**, worked out using one or more **Working Tax Credit elements**. It does not matter if you receive Working Tax Credit or only be getting payments of Child Tax Credit.

Cheryll, who is a lone parent, works full-time and claims Tax Credits. Her Tax Credits are worked out including the **single parent element** and **30 hour element** for WTC, but her wages are high enough that she only receives payments of **Child Tax Credit**.

Cheryll will get the **£500 payment**, although her regular payments will be **lower this year** than last as the **£20 uplift** has ended.

Leanne receives **Income Support** as a carer for her partner, who is seriously disabled, and **Child Tax Credit** for their child.

Leanne **did not qualify for the £20 uplift**, because her Tax Credit award has **no Working Tax Credit elements**, so she will **not get a £500 lump sum payment**. Her Tax Credits are likely to be **slightly higher this year**, due to benefits being uprated.



Once you have **received your £500 payment**, compare what you get in Tax Credits to what you *could* get on **Universal Credit**, which will **keep the £20 uplift** for **another six months**. You are allowed to change to UC without having to repay your £500 payment so could get **both the lump sum** and a **higher rate of UC** for **almost six months**.

Remember that once you make a claim for UC, you cannot go back onto Tax Credits. If the normal UC rate is less than you get on your old benefits, you will probably be **worse off once the £20 uplift ends**. We advise that you **get full, detailed advice** about your own situation before swapping to UC.



Potteries Gold is a **Citizens Advice Staffordshire North & Stoke-on-Trent** project to help people in Stoke-on-Trent cope with changes to the benefit system

« **Online Benefit Talks for your community group** «
Specialist Benefit Advice «

« **Online Training and Workshops** « **Benefit Leaflets**
 « **The Potteries Gold Post** « **Volunteering** «

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