## **Domestic Abuse Support** **available through DWP**

**Appointments can be in private rooms**

## **Informing the DWP about the domestic abuse to receive extra support**

Anyone requiring support can request to have an appointment with a work coach in a private room.

For those leaving an abusive relationship, a work coach can support with how to report the change.

The ex-partner will not have access to any information about the individual’s claim.

They can also get a rapid advance of up to 100% of your expected Universal Credit monthly entitlement.

**13 week pause to work related activity**

## **Jobseeker’s Allowance (JSA) and Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)**

Victims of domestic abuse can have a break from job seeking and work preparation requirements for up to 13 weeks to give them the time needed to stabilise their life.

**Universal Credit Easements**

## **Universal Credit - Work-related requirements**

Victims of domestic abuse claiming Universal Credit, do not need to take on any work-related requirements for 13 weeks within 6 months of the incident.

The 13-week break starts on the date the Work Coach at Jobcentre Plus is informed and the break can be extended to 26 weeks if the main carer of a child up to 16 years of age.

If more time after the 13 or 26-week break is required, for reasons directly or indirectly related to the domestic abuse incident, please encourage the customer to discuss with their Work Coach.

**Child in Distress**

### **Child distress –**

For the main carer of a child up to 16 years of age, who is in considerable distress due to domestic abuse, the customer can have a temporary break from work-related requirements.

For example, if there is significant disruption to the normal childcare responsibilities and there is a need to provide additional care and support.

**Housing Element on Universal Credit**

### **Housing Element -**

There is special provision for the housing element of Universal Credit to be paid for up to 12 months if a customer is temporarily absent from their home through fear of domestic abuse and intend to return home.

If they have to temporarily stay in alternative accommodation but intend to return to your former home, they may be able to receive the housing element of Universal Credit for both the former permanent home and the temporary alternative accommodation.

A customer informed their Work Coach that they had fled their home due to domestic abuse to a new rented address, they wanted to return to their home as their children were settled however at the time it was not safe to do so. Customer was still liable to pay the rent on their home and on their new temporary address.

The decision was made that housing element was payable for both addresses until it was safe for the customer and her children to return home.

**Split Payments**

**Alternative Payment Arrangements**

When Universal Credit is claimed by a couple and there is fear of domestic abuse, they may need to manage their money differently and can apply for an Alternative Payment Arrangement.

This is where the Universal Credit payments are split and paid into 2 bank accounts instead of one, with the majority of the payment going to the person who is meeting the primary needs of the family.

**Special Circumstances**

**Families with more than 2 children**

Universal Credit does not usually pay any additional amount for a third or subsequent child born on or after 6 April 2017, unless special circumstances apply –

the child was conceived as a result of a non-consensual sexual act (including rape) or was conceived at or around a time the other biological parent of the child was abusive, and they were subject to control or coercion.

We recognise that the handling of this exception is extremely sensitive. However, it is especially important to have this exception in place to support those in this position.

Further details available here…..

[Help available from the Department for Work and Pensions for people who are victims of domestic violence and abuse - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-violence-and-abuse-help-from-dwp/help-available-from-the-department-for-work-and-pensions-for-people-who-are-victims-of-domestic-violence-and-abuse#universal-credit)