

Money Matters Update No 8

17/08/21

Low Income Pandemic Payment

The Scottish Government's £130 Low Income Pandemic Support Payment (LIPP) provides additional financial support:

- to households in receipt of Council Tax Reduction
- for agreed households who are exempt or have no liability for Council Tax

North Ayrshire Council have written to those who have been identified as qualifying for this payment.

Households are eligible to receive the payment if they satisfy one of the following criteria for at least one day during April 2021:

- households in receipt of Council Tax Reduction (CTR)
- exempt from Council Tax - all the occupants are under 18; all the occupants are care leavers; all the occupants are severely mentally impaired; the property is unoccupied because the resident has gone to someone else's home to provide care or the resident receives care elsewhere
- certain other households who have no Council Tax liability - these are households who are in temporary accommodation, including a refuge

Only one payment will be made to each eligible household.

You can apply for the payment to go to a bank account in your name or directly to your 2021/22 Council Tax account to reduce monthly instalments.

How to apply

To apply:

Money Matters Update No 8

17/08/21

1. Please complete the [Low Income Pandemic Payment application form](#).
2. Email a copy of your bank account statement to lipp@north-ayrshire.gov.uk, along with your name, address and your LIPP unique number.

You must submit your application before the cut off date of **10th September 2021**. Failure to do so will result in a credit being made to your Council Tax account, where you are liable.

Payment will be made by the end of October 2021 for eligible households.

Help and support

If you need any further information or assistance with the online form, please email lipphelp@north-ayrshire.gov.uk and provide your details for someone to contact you.

Claimants now being notified via their online accounts of the date of the last payment of their £20pw Universal Credit 'uplift'

Claimants are now being notified via their online accounts of the date of the last payment of their universal credit 'uplift'.

While notifications began to be issued on 23 July 2021, Work and Pensions Minister Will Quince told the Work and Pensions Select Committee earlier this month that they only advised claimants - '... of how much of their standard allowance is a result of the temporary uplift that has been provided in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.'

Money Matters Update No 8

17/08/21

There are reports now that further notifications are now being added to claimants' online accounts.

For example, a copy of a notification reads -

'You have been getting an extra £86.67 each month since 27 April 2020. This is a temporary increase because of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. This increase will end soon.

Your payment on 27 September 2021 will be the last time you receive this amount ...'

The notification then invites the claimant to 'get help with managing your money' via the DWP's [Help with debt and managing money](#) resource.

NB - While Mr Quince had also said that the entry in the claimant's online journal will trigger an alert via email or text, depending on their preferred method of communication, he'd added that 'we are not writing letters to claimants'.

The Post Office card account service is ending

The Post Office card account (POCa) service is coming to an end. Benefit claimants can phone the DWP Customer Service centre on 0800 085 7133 (opening hours are 8.30am to 4.00pm, Monday to Friday) to provide new account details for their benefit or State Pension payments.

All POCa users who are unable to provide a bank, building society or credit union account will be moved to the DWP voucher-based scheme called the Payment Exception service which provides access

Money Matters Update No 8

17/08/21

to payments via the PayPoint network. Payment Exception service payments can also be accessed via the Post Office network from the end of August 2021.

Benefit claimants will start to be moved to the Payment Exception service from the end of August 2021 if they haven't yet contacted DWP with new account details.

Applications for Free School Meals and Clothing Grant are now open

North Ayrshire Council provide free school meals and £120 (per child) for primary school children and £150 (per child) for secondary school children worth of school footwear and clothing to children whose parents are on certain benefits.

Can I get help with these costs?

We may be able to help you with these school costs if your child attends primary or secondary school and you receive 1 of the following:

- Income Support
- Income based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Any income related element of Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit only (with income under £16,105)

Money Matters Update No 8

17/08/21

- Both Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit (with an income up to £7,500)
 - Universal Credit where the monthly earned income does not exceed £625
 - support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Families will be eligible for a **Clothing Grant only** if in receipt of one of the following:
- Working Tax Credit and/or Child Tax Credit with an annual income of £16,105 or less
 - Universal Credit with monthly earned income of not more than £1342
 - Council Tax Reduction/Housing Benefit

Applications can be made online see link below or by contacting North Ayrshire Council on 01294 310000

[Footwear, clothing and free school meals \(north-ayrshire.gov.uk\)](http://north-ayrshire.gov.uk)

Best Start Grant School Age Payment

Applications can now be made to the Scottish Social Security Agency for this year's £252.50 School Age Payment.

To get a school age payment for a child you or your partner must be **responsible for a child whose date of birth is between 1 MARCH 2016 AND 28 FEBRUARY 2017.**

You must also be in receipt of a "qualifying benefit or be aged under 18".

Money Matters Update No 8

17/08/21

GETTING A 'QUALIFYING BENEFIT'

If you are 18 or over you'll get a school age payment if you or your partner get any of the following benefits:

- universal credit
- income support
- income-based jobseeker's allowance
- income-related employment and support allowance
- pension credit
- housing benefit
- child tax credit
- working tax credit

You can be entitled if you were getting universal credit within the last month, but it has now stopped.

If you are aged under 18 you can get a school age payment even if you are not on a qualifying benefit and no matter what income you have.

If you are aged 18 or 19 and someone else still gets benefits for looking after you, you can get a school age payment if the person who cares for you gets:

- child benefit
- child tax credit
- universal credit
- pension credit

You must still be included in their claim, for example as you are under 19 and still at school.

Money Matters Update No 8 17/08/21

Usually only one school age payment can be made for a child but this does not apply if you have become responsible for the child after someone else (who is not your partner) has received a payment. For example, you are caring for a child as a kinship carer and the child's parent has previously received a school-age payment

CLAIM AT THE RIGHT TIME

You can claim any time from 1 June 2021 up to 28 February 2022.

CLAIMING A SCHOOL AGE PAYMENT

To claim you can:

- phone Social Security Scotland on 0800 182 2222
- [claim online at mygov.scot](https://mygov.scot)
- [download a paper application form from mygov.scot](#).

If you disagree with the decision made by Social Security Scotland about your best start grant claim you can challenge this decision.

To get advice on what benefits may be available contact the Money Matters Advice Line on 01294 310456.

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