



East Renfrewshire Citizens

Advice Bureau Weekly Update

05/03/2021

Social Policy Case Study

The client moved from an EU country to the UK with her partner 5 years ago, in that time they have had two children who were both born in the UK. The couple derived a right to claim Universal Credit (UC) due to the boyfriend's status as a 'worker'. The client approached HTC for support after she separated from her boyfriend and was refused UC because she did not satisfy the Habitual Residency Test. Although living in the UK for five years the client's stay had not been continuous, so she did not have a permanent right to reside; nor did the client have a right to claim UC as a carer, her children are also not yet school aged. Despite this the client had assumed she would be entitled to UC because she had been awarded pre-settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme. However, in 2019 the UK Government introduced legislation which explicitly stated pre-settled status was not a qualifying right of residence for means-tested benefits. This legislation was successfully challenged by CPAG in the Court of Appeal in December 2020, but the Government has since appealed this decision and the case will be heard by the Supreme Court in May 2021. Due to this on-going appeal the DWP does not have to apply the decision of the Court of Appeal, effectively pausing the benefit appeal process for claimants who have been refused benefits due to the exclusion of pre-settled status as a right to reside. The 2019 legislation and on-going court process have had a profound impact on the client being assisted by HTC; her only income is child benefit (around £40/week) forcing her to rely on food banks for daily necessities, moreover, she has accrued over £1000 in rent arrears and is facing eviction proceedings.

ERCAB continue to support this client and help her stay in her home and feed her family, raising this as a social policy issue.

Coronavirus Self-Employed & Small Limited Company Help

The Self-Employment Income Support Scheme will be open to 100,000s of people who were previously excluded from help when the fourth grant launches in April.

The Government has announced an extension to the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS), saying it will now provide support until September, with a fourth and fifth grant.

The fourth SEISS grant will now be worth a maximum of 80% of three months' worth of trading profits, capped at £7,500. Applications for the fourth SEISS grant will open in late April until 31 May. For more information on this, please visit; <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/self-employment-income-support-scheme-grant-extension/self-employment-income-support-scheme-grant-extension>

ERCAB AGM

Our AGM, which was held on Tuesday via Zoom, was a great success, well attended and great feedback! See comments below:

Cllr Annette Ireland: *"Thanks for weekly newsletter which I've found to be really helpful, particularly for getting information out to local residents."*

Rt. Hon Kirsten Oswald MP: *"Thanks to everyone; I know the volume and quality of work carried out by everyone at the bureau and the huge need (caused by Covid) over and above the need already there. Very grateful to the innovative and consummate professionals at the local bureau."*

Cllr Colm Merrick: *"£4.1 million in client financial gain is worth noting. Congratulations are given often to nurses and police officers so just want to thank you for the positive impact on the lives of local people. It's not just the quantity but quality of advice too. Recovery next year will be another challenge..."*

Brian Dunigan, ERC: *"Some great work going on and fantastic to see CAB thriving and supporting our residents. It's important to appreciate that all monies raised by ERCAB is spent locally."*

Many thanks to those who were able to attend.

EU Nationals Settlement Scheme

The Home Office has confirmed that funding for our EU Nationals Settlement Scheme will continue from 1st April until 30th September 2021. This is in order to maintain momentum and continues to provide support for EU citizens yet to apply which will close on 30 June 2021.

The EU Settlement Scheme is designed to offer EU, non-EU and Swiss Citizens living in the UK before the end of the transition period the opportunity to protect their residency in the UK after the transition period has ended.

For advice on immigration issues, contact our EU settlement Scheme Adviser, Cara, on **07500 972862**.

Please feel free to distribute the contact details for our advisers provided on our Facebook page. Clients can also get in contact with the bureau via:

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