



East Renfrewshire Citizens

Advice Bureau Weekly Update

14/05/2021

Good News Story – PIP

Our client has been unable to work since 2012, following a car accident where he had sustained trauma to his lower back. He has since suffered from anxiety and depression and expressed suicidal thoughts. He had applied for Personal Independence Payment (PIP) for a second time and had been declined. He scored ZERO points for both the Daily Living and Mobility components of PIP. He was previously supported to Appeal stage by another organization and this had been unsuccessful. He was extremely daunted and anxious at the thought of pursuing this again. He approached ERCAB for help.

Through conversation and contact with the client, we established trust and a rapport. ERCAB supported our client to Mandatory Reconsideration (MR- 1st stage appeal) and engaged him with specialist mental health support. Although the MR was unsuccessful, we encouraged our client to proceed to Appeal stage, with our support. With targeted evidence and careful preparation, we proceeded to support our client to First Tier Tribunal. This took place by video call due to the current COVID-19 restrictions and we attended to represent our client.

Our Appeal was successful and our client was awarded PIP for 3 years. He received a lump sum in excess of **£4k** in backdated payments and an award of **£240** four-weekly, going forward. This has made a huge impact on his life both financially and emotionally, finally feeling that his voice had been heard and his illness and disabilities acknowledged.

For help with appeals, please contact the bureau on **0141 881 2032**.

Free Will Writing Service - AgeScotland

It is important to ensure that your financial affairs are in order and a key part of this is having an up-to-date Will. If you're over 50 and living in Scotland you may benefit from AgeScotland free Will writing offer.

AgeScotland work in partnership with a group of Scottish law firms dedicated to providing legal services to older people in a caring and sensitive way. You can make a new Will or amend your existing Will for free with Solicitors for Older People Scotland in three easy steps.

Solicitors for Older People Scotland continue to support clients during lockdown with services being conducted via telephone and video meetings where possible. If you have any questions, please just get in touch.

For more information on this, please visit; <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/scotland/services/support-legal/free-will-writing-service/> or if you would like help applying/additional advice, please contact the bureau on **0141 881 2032**.

EU Settlement Scheme

There are now less than 50 days to go until the deadline of 30 June 2021 for applications to be made to the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS).

All EU, EEA and Swiss citizens and their family members who were resident in the UK by 31 December 2020, should apply without delay so they can continue to work, study, and access free healthcare and benefits in the UK after 30 June 2021.

If an EU, EEA or Swiss citizen and their family members have lived in the UK for many years or have a permanent residence document or EEA Biometric Residence Card (BRC), they still need to apply to the EUSS (or apply for British Citizenship) by 30 June 2021 to continue to live and work in the UK.

Eligible close family members living overseas can apply to join an EU, EEA or Swiss family member who started living in the UK by 31 December 2020. They can apply to come to the UK at any point.

ERCAB remains committed to supporting EU Nationals with their applications to the Settlement Scheme. For advice on making an application, please contact us on **0141 881 2032**.

Fuel Vouchers

ERCAB still has some funding left to help clients with their gas and electricity. The funding from ERC Humanitarian fund, aims to target clients who have struggled through this pandemic with their fuel bills and to help members of our East Renfrewshire community who are on benefits, furlough or who have struggled to make ends meet during these troubled times. ERCAB continue to help clients who are in fuel debt. Our Fuel advisers have the facility to undertake benefit checks, income maximization, and better off calculations. They can make monthly payments to clients who have a direct debit and also weekly payments to clients who use a top up card and one off payments to help reduce fuel debt. This scheme has helped hundreds of East Renfrewshire residents in recent months. If you feel this funding will benefit you please contact ERCAB on **0141 881 2032** or email mark.parsons@eastrenfrewshirecab.casonline.org.uk.

Good News Story - Benefits

Clients' family approached ERCAB for support with a benefit check due to a deterioration in the client's health. The results of the benefit check confirmed the client was eligible to make a claim for Attendance Allowance and a referral was also made to occupational health. A benefits adviser met with the client's family who have Power of Attorney and completed the application with them. This form was then sent to the DWP along with evidence to support the claim. The client was successful with the application and was awarded the Higher Rate. Client's family were very grateful for the support received. Client Financial Gain with backdated payment awarded to the client **£5,105.85**