



East Renfrewshire Citizens

Advice Bureau Weekly Update

25/02/2022

Good News Story – Universal Credit

Client came to ERCAB seeking assistance as they had recently been involved in a road accident, which, as a result meant they had been left with some serious health issues. The client's health issues were so significant that it made it impossible for the client to work.

The client is on Universal credit and was only found to have limited capability to work by the DWP. The client approached ERCAB as they wanted assistance in challenging this. ERCAB's Help to Claim (HTC) adviser assisted the client in completing a mandatory reconsideration. However, the DWP unfortunately did not change their original decision. The HTC adviser then lodged an appeal on behalf of the client and before it went to tribunal the DWP changed their decision to work in the client's favour. The client was found to have limited capability to work and work-related activity.

This assistance resulted in a backdated payment for the client of **£5154.45** and an on-going amount of **£343.63** added to their monthly universal credit for at least 18 months before it gets reviewed. This was a great relief to the client as they no longer had to look for employment when they are physically unable to work. The client now has peace of mind that they will not face any sanctions as their work related activity group has now been amended to reflect their current situation.

The client was incredibly grateful for the help they received from ERCAB. For assistance with Mandatory Reconsiderations and Appeals, please contact the office on **0141 881 2032** to speak to one of our experienced benefits advisers.

Job Start Payment

Have you been receiving certain benefits and have been offered a new job?

If you're aged 25 or under or have spent time in care, you could be eligible for the Job Start Payment. You can get a one-off payment of either:

- £252.50
- £404 – if you're the main carer of any children

For more information please visit;
<https://www.mygov.scot/job-start-payment/who-can-apply>

Case Study - Shopping Card Pilot/ Benefits/ Utilities

In March 2021, a client, who has received on-going benefit support from ERCAB for a number of years, reached out for assistance with completing a PIP review form. Support was provided by one of our welfare advisers; however, in September they received the decision of 'no points' meaning the award of Standard Rate Daily Living and Enhanced Rate Mobility had now ended.

Losing a vital 'Gateway' Benefit such as PIP has had a devastating impact on our client and husband as they have now lost their entitlement to; Carers Allowance, Income Support and Housing Benefit.

With no other source of income, the only suitable option was for them to make a joint Universal Credit claim (even with the 5 week wait before receiving first payment). Being on UC has provided the couple with a regular income, but unfortunately they are financially worse off as entitlement only covered Standard Allowance and Housing Element.

While the PIP award is being challenged (tribunal coming up later this month), we have been able to relieve some of their financial pressures by providing regular fuel and food assistance – currently totalling to an estimated **£500** client financial gain.

Having the Shopping Cards has made an incredible difference to this family as they have the freedom of going into a shop, browsing and picking up items of their choice, on a day that suits them.

Everyone at ERCAB will continue to support these clients in every way possible. If you are in a similar situation or need help, please do not hesitate to contact ERCAB on **0141 881 2032**.

Energy Bills Increasing

Energy prices rising mean it can be easy to feel powerless, however, ERCAB is here to help!

Call our Energy and Utilities adviser, Mark P on **0141 881 2032**.

Clients can also get in contact with the bureau via:

Email - ere-bureau@eastrenfrewshirecab.casonline.org.uk

You can also keep up to date with recent news from ERCAB via our social media platforms.

Facebook – **East Renfrewshire CAB** & Twitter **@EastAdvice**