

Financial support and benefits for customers who are care experienced – Summary (April 2020)

Given the current COVID emergency and lockdown, customers who are care experienced are among the most vulnerable. The furlough of some providers has added further disruption so SDS teams need to know how best to advise these customers regarding emergency financial support.

The attached [resource from CELCIS](#) provides current general advice and guidance for care leavers on benefits. It also notes that further details on local authority support for care leavers is available as well as the Child Poverty Action Group advice line for advisers on benefits and tax credits.

In addition, **Who Cares? Scotland** have kindly provided a helpful summary on the topic:

- Care Experienced people are entitled to claim Universal Credit (UC) like anyone else, unless they are care leavers under 18. A ‘care leaver’ is a legal definition – it is a bit restrictive, as it means you have to have been looked after by your local authority on your 16th birthday. So you could have been in care all your childhood, but if you stopped at 15 and a half, you’re legally not a ‘care leaver’.
- 16/17 year old care leavers cannot claim UC.
- They should, however receive financial support from their local authority – and they should have a designated social worker or throughcare worker who leads on this.
- There are also some Care Experienced people under 21 who are on UC but still have some support from their local authority with rent.
- Who Cares? Scotland helpline are able to provide financial assistance for Care Experienced people across Scotland of any age. **Helpline numbers** on our [Twitter page \(Who Cares? Scotland\)](#).
- There is also the **Welfare Fund (Crisis Grant and Community Grant)** administered by each local authority – these have received an extra £45 million in funding and people can apply for a grant to help them out if they are struggling. The form is tricky to fill in and people often need help from a professional. **Use a search engine on any local authority and enter ‘welfare fund’ and their page for this will come up.** Scottish Government have their national page about this too.
- **Child Poverty Action Group** provide the best quality expertise on the subject of Care Experienced people and benefits and have great resources, amazing staff and a dedicated helpline for professionals. [Child Poverty Action Frontline Advice](#)
Advice Line 0141 552 0552
Monday to Thursday 10am - 4pm, Friday 10am - 12 noon
Email advice@cpagscotland.org.uk