

# Universal Credit: support if you are dependent on drugs and/or alcohol

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## What is Universal Credit?

Universal Credit is a new benefit that supports people who are on a low income or out of work, and helps ensure that you are better off in work than on benefits.

Universal Credit will give you the support you need to prepare for work, move into work, or earn more. In return for this support, it is your responsibility to find work or increase your earnings.

Universal Credit is being introduced in stages. It is available to single people, couples and families in some areas of the country. It is being rolled out to single claimants nationally from February 2015.

See the [list of jobcentre areas where Universal Credit is available](#) and the [local authorities and jobcentre areas that will begin delivering Universal Credit over the coming months](#).

Whether you can claim it will depend on where you live and your personal circumstances. To find out if you can make a claim, and for the latest information, visit [www.gov.uk/universalcredit](http://www.gov.uk/universalcredit).

## Your Claimant Commitment if you are dependent on drugs and/or alcohol

Dependency on drugs and/or alcohol can act as a major barrier to finding work.

If you have a drug and/or alcohol dependency, Universal Credit allows you time and space to engage with treatment to support your recovery – we call this structured treatment.

When you claim Universal Credit you will have to accept a Claimant Commitment. This is a record of the responsibilities you have accepted in return for receiving Universal Credit and the consequences of not meeting them.

If you are dependent on drugs and/or alcohol and you decide to tell your work coach, they will do all they can to support you.

You will not be forced by your work coach into receiving treatment.

## Universal Credit: support if you are dependent on drugs and/or alcohol

If you are receiving treatment to support your drug and/or alcohol dependency, and tell us about it, this can be reflected in your Claimant Commitment.

This may mean that you are not required to look or prepare for work up to six months from the start of your treatment, so that you can focus on tackling your dependency on drugs and/or alcohol.

Your work coach will need to confirm with your treatment provider that you are actively taking part in treatment. This will be followed up each month to check the situation has not changed.

If you are still receiving treatment after six months you will need to talk to your work coach about what this means for you.

Depending on your circumstances it may be that treatment activities can still be taken into account in your Claimant Commitment, but this is only if your work coach agrees that this is the best approach to help you meet your employment goals.

If you are not in treatment or you do not tell your work coach that you are already receiving treatment, you will be required to look or prepare for work on a full time basis.

This leaflet is no longer current.  
You can find up to date information on GOV.UK

For more information visit [www.gov.uk/universalcredit](https://www.gov.uk/universalcredit) or the [Universal Credit toolkit](#).