

# About a doubt on your benefit award

## Notes sheet

jobcentreplus

Department for  
Work and Pensions

### **What will happen if there is a doubt on your benefit award?**

If there is a doubt on your benefit award, we will either

- keep paying your Jobseeker's Allowance, or
- stop paying your Jobseeker's Allowance

until we decide how the doubt affects your award.

The letter we sent you with these notes tells you what we will do.

If we stop paying your Jobseeker's Allowance, you may be able to still get some Jobseeker's Allowance under the hardship provision.

### **How long will it take to make the decision?**

We will make the decision as quickly as possible. If we need more information from you or your previous employer or training provider, it may take longer for us to decide. If your employer's or training provider's reply is likely to affect your award, we will send you a copy of their reply. This is so you have a chance to comment.

### **What happens if we decide that we can keep paying you Jobseeker's Allowance under the normal rules?**

If you kept signing declarations, we will pay you any Jobseeker's Allowance we owe you as soon as possible. If we paid you Jobseeker's Allowance under the hardship provision while we made our decision, we will take away that amount from Jobseeker's Allowance we owe you.

### **What happens if we decide that we can't pay you Jobseeker's Allowance under the normal rules?**

We will send you a letter giving you our reason and let you know how long we will not pay you for. During this period, you may be able to still get some Jobseeker's Allowance under the hardship provision.

### **What is a hardship payment?**

A hardship payment is a payment of income-based Jobseeker's Allowance to someone who does not qualify under the normal rules but would suffer if Jobseeker's Allowance is not paid.

Only people who would usually get income-based Jobseeker's Allowance can get a hardship payment.

If you usually get contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance you can still apply for a hardship payment by using claim form **JSA/ESA10JP**.

If you need more information about the normal rules for getting Jobseeker's Allowance contact your Jobcentre.

## What happens if I only get National Insurance credits?

If we decide that we cannot award you National Insurance Credits, we will send you a letter.

## What to do if you think this decision is wrong

If you think the decision is wrong, please get in touch with us by telephone or in writing, **within one month** of the date of the letter that tells you about our decision not to pay you benefit. If you do not contact us within one month of the date of this letter we may only be able to change the decision from the date you contact us.

Our telephone number and address are on the front page of this letter.

You can appeal against this decision, but you cannot appeal until we have looked at the decision again. We call this a **Mandatory Reconsideration**.

You, or someone who has the authority to act for you, can:

- ask us for an explanation of the decision, or
- ask for a written statement of reasons for the decision, if we have not already sent one
- ask us to look at the decision again, to see if it can be changed.  
There may be some facts you think we have overlooked, or you may have further information that affects the decision.

When we have looked at the decision again, we will send you a letter explaining what we have done. We call this a **Mandatory Reconsideration Notice**. This will include the information you need to be able to appeal.

## Joint claims for Jobseeker's Allowance

If you have made a joint claim for Jobseeker's Allowance you must share all this information with each other.