Department for Work & Pensions Procedures ▸ Change - Benefit Status/Details

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Change - Benefit Status/Details

The purpose of this process is to update and modify the paying parent's benefit details/circumstances, this action will be undertaken by the caseworker with ownership of the case.

In most cases the system will automatically update the benefit information from the Customer Information System (CIS). However there will be circumstances where a caseworker will be required to modify the 2012 system manually.

A change of circumstances (CofC) is when a client or third party notifies us that a client's details have changed and need to be updated on our system. This change can be initiated by the paying parent starting a benefit claim, ending a benefit claim or when a claim has changed e.g. paying parent has changed from Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)/Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) to Income Support (IS).

CIS notifies the Child Maintenance Group (CMG) of changes to a benefit award and sends an automatic transaction to CMS 2012. CIS notifies the CMG of changes to the following benefits:

- Income Support (IS)
- Job Seeker's Allowance – Income Based (JSA IB)
- Employment Support Allowance – Income Related (ESA IR)
- Incapacity Benefit (IB)
- Job Seeker's Allowance – Contributory (JSA C)
- Employment Support Allowance – Contributory (ESA C)
- State Pension (SP)
- Pension Credit (PC)
- Severe Disablement Allowance (SDA)
- Carer's Allowance (CA)
- Maternity Allowance (MA)
- Bereavement Benefit (BB)
    - Bereavment Allowance
    - Widows Benefit
    - Widowed Parent's Allowance
    - Widowed Mothers Allowance

CIS will not notify CMG of changes to the following benefits:

- Universal Credit (UC)
- Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit (IIDB)
- Defence Business Services (DBS)
    - War Disablement Pension
    - War Pension
    - War Disablement Allowance
    - War Widows Pension
    - War Parent's Allowance
- Bereavement Support Payment(BSP)

ⓘ BSP will never be notified to CMG from CIS. BSP is not considered income.
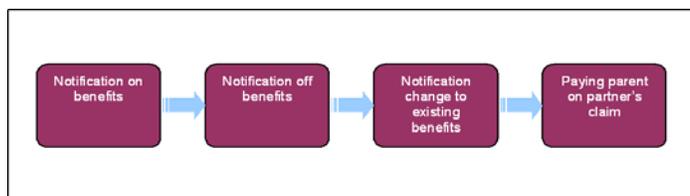
These lists are not exhaustive.

ⓘ Defence Business Services (DBS) was previously known as Service and Personnel Veterans Agency's SPVCIS sends the following information about the client's changes to the 2012 system:

- National insurance number (NINO)

- Date of birth

- Post code

- Benefit Type

- Start date of entitlement

- End date of entitlement

When a paying parent is in receipt of benefit their benefit record must reflect this. This ensures that the Child Maintenance Group (CMG) holds accurate income details at all times as this is used to calculate the maintenance assessment. It also affects the method of payment from (MOPF). When a paying parent is in receipt of a prescribed benefit and the case is collect and pay they must pay their maintenance by deduction from benefit (DFB).

Some guides have been developed. For information refer to **HMRC/CIS/Current Income** in the Fundamentals site in the Enhanced Support Model.

For more information refer to the Policy, Law and Decision Making Guidance

Always use the new terminology when speaking to clients. For more information refer to Terminology Changes.

This procedure uses the terms receiving parent and paying parent.

The receiving parent is the parent who receives or who is expected to receive child maintenance, known as the parent with care (PWC) or person with care (PeWC) on the system and in legislation. The paying parent is the parent who pays or who is expected to pay child maintenance, known as the non resident parent (NRP) on the system and in legislation.

Following an automatic recalculation and P2P, check whether the first payment is scheduled before the paying parent receives the

notification. If the first payment is scheduled before the paying parent has been notified, change the frequency of the MOPF and issue a new schedule. For more information refer to Change - Payment Frequency/Collection Date.

If a decision has been made to decline/reject a **Change Benefit Details** SR as evidence was not received within 14 days, but

evidence is then received within allowable time i.e. 30 days + 2 days for posting, from the date the decision to decline/reject the change was made, refer to Mandatory Reconsideration.

The following benefits are not assessable and can not be deducted from. An alternative benefit or income will need to be sourced.

These benefits should not be entered into the system.

- Attendance Allowance (AA)

- Disability Living Allowance (DLA)

- Personal Independence Payments (PIP)

Notification on benefits

If the Customer Information System (CIS) sends an on benefit notification to the 2012 system refer On Benefit process for further details.

1. Following inbound contact from a paying parent advising of a change to benefit status, update the record by following the On Benefit process.
2. When a paying parent informs CMG of a change in benefit status involving Universal Credit (UC) follow Universal Credit.

Notification off benefits

If the Customer Information System (CIS) sends an off benefit notifications to the 2012 system refer to Off Benefit for further details.

1. Following inbound contact from a paying parent advising of a change to benefit status, update the record by following the Off Benefit procedure.
2. When a paying parent informs CMG of a change in benefit status involving Universal Credit (UC) follow Universal Credit.

Change to existing benefits

⚠ Occasionally the **Change Benefit Details SR** will be generated erroneously due to a benefit relationship on CIS being incorrectly left open, refer to **Procedural Exceptions - Erroneous Change Benefit Details SR**

If identified that the paying parent is still in receipt of benefits but the details of the claim have changed, e.g. the paying parent changes award type from JSA IB to War Disablement Allowance, the benefit details will need to be changed to reflect the correct award and DFB will need to be set up from the updated benefit award.

When a paying parent goes from receiving contributions based ESA/JSA to Income based JSA/ESA or vice versa, CIS will not update this information in the 2012 system. The first notification will be when a payment has been missed. This will then act as a prompt to investigate the paying parent's benefit status and update the new details. For more information refer to DFB - Failure.

ⓘ If there is an incorrect benefit already held in the system end this prior to adding in the new benefit, refer to Off Benefit process. To add the new benefit details, refer to On Benefit.

1. When notification of a change in benefit status/details is received and there is no notification via the interface, create a change of circumstances service request (SR) by selecting the following values:

   - **Process** = **CofC**

   - **Area** = **Change Employment/Income**

   - **Sub Area** = **Change Benefit Details**

   - **Source** = **NRP**

2. In the **CofC More Info** tab enter the details of the paying parent in the **Subject Details** field and select **NRP** from the **Subject Type** dropdown. Set the SR **status** to **In Progress**. Record the effective date, this is the date the PP's entitlement to the prescribed benefit started, for more information on effective dates refer to Policy, Law and Decision Making Guidance ⚖

   ⓘ If more than one benefit needs to be added a new SR has to be created for each benefit.

3. Update the **Sub status** of the SR to **On Benefit Notification** and this will generate an activity plan to follow in order to update the benefit record.

4. Select **Go to Benefit Summary View**, select the benefit the paying parent is claiming from the dropdown, save the record. Check if we hold any benefit details for the paying parent:

   - If the details we hold match the details the paying parent has provided, close the SR. Update the **Resolution Code** to **CoC Rejected**, the **Status** to **Closed** and the **Sub Status** to **Complete**. No further action is required.

   - If the benefit is not displayed or there is no benefit record held, check the Common Enquiry Service (CES). Select the relevant benefit to update and select the **Modify** button to update the benefit record with the relevant information:

     - **Benefit Name**

     - **Benefit Code**

     - **Start Date**

     - **Benefit Office ID**

     - **Benefit Contact NINO (National Insurance Number)**

     - **Benefit Amount**

   ⓘ When a paying parent is in receipt of JSA Income Based and JSA Contributions (C) in equal amounts, this is classed as and recorded on the 2012 System as JSA C.

5. When the paying parent is in receipt of Industrial Injuries, contact the industrial injuries unit to get confirmation. Get the Industrial Injuries Office ID and contact number by selecting the **Interests History** tab on the **CIS Account Summary** screen. This displays all the open system/clerical interests on the customer's CIS account. Select the **Interested Parties** link next to the **Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit** (IIDB) interest and scroll to the bottom of the page. Details of the IIDB owning office, including the office ID and telephone number are displayed. Call the owning office and collect the following details:

   - **Benefit Amount**

   - **Start Date**

   - **Benefit Office ID**

6. When the paying parent is in receipt of an DBS benefit, contact the DBS to get benefit confirmation, and obtain the benefit amount and start date. The benefit information request is sent directly them using form **CMSF5575 (Request for an award breakdown)** via external post or attachment email as an attachment:

   DBS
   Veterans UK
   Payments Team
   R6311

FY5 3WP
Email: veterans-uk@defence.gsi.gov.uk

If emailing the request put the following text in the **Subject field: OFFICIAL - CMG 2012 Request for Benefit Details**. When five working days have passed check if a response has been received from DBS. If there is not a response, check your emails to make sure you sent it to the correct address. When the email was not issued to the correct address, or did not send, repeat form issue. If you have sent the e-mail to the correct address, wait a further 5 working days for a response.

i The DBS Benefit Office ID is 190005

i DBS have an agreed Service Level Agreement (SLA) of 14 days to respond to an information request.

7. When a paying parent's benefit changes to a benefit type where deductions will be made via a clerical interface e.g. UC, Bereavement Benefit, War Disablement Allowance, etc, check the paying parent benefit record to see if the previous benefit has been ended automatically. If it has not, update the record by following the Off Benefit process.

   i If there isn't a partner recorded on the claim, change the Sub Status to No Partner Details.

8. Update the **Status** of the SR to **Pending Approval** and **Sub Status** to **Pending Approval - TL**.

Team leader action

9. Open Approval inbox work item and self allocate the SR. Open the SR and consider the request, update the Approval work item **Comments** field with the reasons for the decision. Update **Status** field to either:

   ■ **Approved**

   ■ **Rejected**

10. Change the **Status** of the SR to **In Progress** and allocate it back to the caseworker.

Caseworker action

11. If the request has been:

   ■ **Approved** - change the **Sub Status** of the SR to **CofC Accept** and the **Resolution Code** to **CofC Accept.**

   ■ **Rejected** - read through the details of the SR, correct all outstanding errors and return it to the Team Leader for approval. If the Team Leader confirms the work item should be rejected, update the SR **Status** to **Closed** and the **Resolution Code** to **CofC Decline**.

12. The system will automatically generate a **Perform Calculation SR**, to complete refer to Calculation - Post Initial.

   i Where a Universal Credit award has been recorded and accepted for the paying parent, the **Perform Calculation SR** will not automatically generate. Instead, it must be manually generated as a child SR of the **Change Benefit Details SR**. The **Sub Area** will be **Change Client Data**.

13. If the **Perform Calculation SR** has used Historic or Current Income go to the **Procedural Exceptions** tab in Calculation – Post Initial to complete the **Perform Calculation Checks**.
   If the **Perform Calculation SR** has used Benefit Income, Estimation of Earnings or a Default Maintenance Decision (DMD) go to the **Procedural Exceptions** tab in Calculation – Non-HMRC to complete the **Perform Calculation Checks**.

14. If the system does not automatically generate a **Payment SR**, create an SR to set up a new DFB, refer to DFB - Set Up

   i When the paying parent is in receipt of more than one benefit, pension or allowance, you must decide which benefit to deduct from.

   i Where the DFB is to be manually cancelled or amended, a decision is required with regards to whether to send an 'End' transaction to JCP. For further information see DFB - Cancel in Procedural Exceptions.

15. Update the **Status** to **Closed** and the **Sub Status** to **Complete**.

16. When the case is updated, call the paying parent and the receiving parent to explain the action taken. Manage the receiving parent's expectations on when they will receive the next payment. Be aware there could be a disruption due to the change.

   i Arrears management will need to be considered for the period of missed payments.

   i The change benefit details process is the same for a paying parent in a partner's benefit claim.

Award not yet decided/sanctioned

If identified that the paying parent's benefit award has not been decided or has been sanctioned, e.g. DFB has ceased or identified in CES check, follow the below steps:

1. Issue letter **CMSL9664** to the paying parent to advise we are aware of the benefit claim and, if the award is granted, we will be making a DFB.

2. Call the paying parent:

   ■ Advise them the benefit claim has been updated on the system

- Advise them that deductions will be taken from their benefit

- Manage their expectations on timescales

- Ensure that the paying parent understands they must contact us with any future changes to their income e.g. if the benefit claim ends.

- Make every attempt to secure an alternative payment arrangement e.g card payment or direct debit.

3. Call the receiving parent and manage their expectations on what will happen next and the timescales involved. Be aware there could be a Child Maintenance payment disruption due to the change.

Retrospective Changes to Benefits

Where there is a retrospective change to benefit outstanding and the date is prior to the most recent Maintenance Calculation Change, this will need to be completed first, and then any other changes will need to be re-implemented. If this does not happen the system will only recognise the retrospective change and not the most recent change.

To prevent the case group moving segments whilst off benefit process is complete, set the Lock Assignment Flag. Select the box located within set up and assignment details within case view, this is only available when you are in the master case.

1. When a change to benefit is reported and this is identified as a retrospective change, refer to:

- The On Benefit process to update the paying parent's benefit details correctly.

- The Off Benefit process to end the paying parent's benefit details correctly

The order of completion will depend on the change which is being reported.

2. Once the retrospective change has been completed, re-implement the most recent Maintenance Calculation Change. If a case is identified with multiple retrospective changes, refer to **Procedural Exceptions - Multiple Retrospective Changes**.

Remove the Lock Assignment Flag by un-selecting the box located within set up and assignment details within case view, this is only available when you are in the master case.

Erroneous Change Benefit Details SR

This section details the steps required where occasionally the **Change Benefit Details SR** is generated erroneously due to a benefit relationship on CIS being left open incorrectly.

1. If an error is identified, confirm if this error has occurred. Check CIS/OPSTRAT to see if there is a partner held on the benefit record as the main benefit recipient.

2. Check the partner's benefit record on CIS/OPSTRAT to see if the paying parent is on the benefit award.

3. Where OPSTRAT confirms the paying parent is not part of the award, check the Relationships tab on CIS to see if the ex-partner is listed as a 'partner' with a start date but no end date.

4. If this is the case, ignore the rejection from JCP and send a **CIS500a** to CIS Frontline Services to remove the relationship between the paying parent and their ex-partner.

The relationship in CIS will sometimes be the receiving parent.

5. After the CIS500a has been issued, set a 'to do' activity for 1 week after issuing the form as a reminder to check CIS. After 1 week, check CIS to confirm the relationship has ended in the CIS Relationship tab. If it hasn't, the partner and benefit interest will be transmitted to CMS2012 again via the interface with CIS. Creating further erroneous Change Benefit Details SRs.

6. Once the relationship has ended in CIS, end the benefit via a manual **Change Benefit Details SR**. The effective date of the change needs to be the same date as the benefit start date previously recorded.

7. Create an appropriate **Change of Circumstances SR** to put the paying parent back onto the correct income source from the same effective date. For more information refer to On Benefit or Change - Income

Multiple retrospective changes

This section details the steps required where a benefit record is held and a change of circumstances needs to be recorded before the start date of the benefit claim. There may be multiple outstanding changes of circumstance SRs. For more information refer to the Policy, Law and Decision Making Guidance

As with all backdated changes of circumstances, consider whether the change is likely to create an overpayment on the case. An overpayment may occur when the paying parent's payments exceed their liability and the money has been paid out to the receiving parent.

1. Check that the outstanding changes are not revisions. If they are revisions, follow the business as usual revisions procedures.

2. Write out a timeline of all changes and their effective dates from the date that the last calculation was completed and:

- If there are multiple changes which do not include any on/off benefit changes, or any other changes that will affect the client's liability, continue with the procedure. For each individual change, the system letters can be issued to the client/s.

- If there are three or fewer changes and at least one of the changes will affect the client's liability (i.e. on/off benefit changes), call the client and using Lines to Take, explain they will receive several letters and then continue with the procedure. For each individual change, the system letters can be issued to the clients.

- If there are four or more changes and at least one of the changes will affect the client's liability (i.e. on/off benefit change), complete the changes but cancel all system letters. Complete clerical letter CMSL9683. Once letter CMSL9683 is complete, follow local scanning procedures to attach it to the case. For more information, refer to the Scanning - Local procedure.

3. Before completing any of the outstanding SRs, a **Change of Circumstances SR** must be manually raised to end the benefit record. This will end the DFB. Create a **Change of Circumstances SR** from the paying parent's contact record by selecting the following values:

   - **Process = CofC**

   - **Area = Change Employment/Income**

   - **Sub Area = Change Benefit Details**

   - **Source = NRP**

4. Set the **Status** of the SR to **In Progress** and complete all activities in the activity plan.

5. Select the **Benefit Summary view** button.

6. Select **Modify** and add an end date for the benefit. The benefit end date must be entered as today's date.

7. In the **Benefit End Reason** field, manually type **Retrospective change**. This action will also automatically end the DFB and a default standing order will be applied.

8. Set the SR **Status** to **Pending Approval** and the **Sub Status** to **Pending Approval – TL**.

Team Leader action

9. Open inbox work item and check the benefit start and end dates. Update the **TL Approved** and the **Comments box** with the reasons for the decision. Update inbox work item to either;

   - **Approved**

   - **Rejected**

Caseworker Action

10. Once the Team Leader has approved the SR, set the SR **Resolution Code** to **CoC Accept**.

11. Select the **Child SRs** tab and in the child **Perform Calculation SR** cancel all letters. Mark the **Status** as **Closed** and the **Sub Status** as **Complete**.

12. The outstanding change of circumstances SRs can now be completed in date order, following the corresponding procedure depending on the type of change. For example, Change - Employment Status for a change of employment. However, when completing the changes, ensure to take all of the following issues into consideration:

   - When obtaining income details for the periods where the paying parent has not been receiving benefits, consider calling the paying parent or the employer for verbal evidence. This will reduce the time taken to wait for evidence of income.

   - If there are multiple changes which require the DFB to be started or ended, they need to be completed over consecutive days due to CIS updating overnight.

   - When completing the outstanding changes of circumstance, consider the impact of the annual review. All changes of circumstances pre annual review can be carried out as usual with the exception of Change - Income and Change - Service Type to Collect and Pay where the arrears start date is earlier than the annual review date. Instructions on dealing with these changes are within the relevant procedures.

   - If any of the changes pre-date when charging was introduced, complete and print any letters manually. This is due to the system versions including charges, so would therefore be incorrect.

13. Check for any **Perform Calculation SRs**. If any exist, check if the change has been completed. If so, issue the letters and close the SR. Update the **Status** as **Closed** and the **Sub Status** as **Complete**.

14. Once all outstanding change of circumstances SRs have been completed, providing the paying parent still receives a benefit, the DFB needs to be set up again. Create a **Change of Circumstances SR** from the paying parent's contact record by selecting the following values:

   - **Process = CofC**

   - **Area = Change Employment/Income**

   - **Sub Area = Change Benefit Details**

15. Complete the **Source** and **Subject** details in the SR. Set the SR **Status** to **In Progress**. Select the **Benefit Summary view** and enter the paying parent's benefit details. The start date is the day after the retrospective change ends.

16. Refer for **TL approval**, complete **Step 8** to **Step 11**, then continue from **Step 17.**

17. Create a **Change of Circumstances SR** from the paying parent's contact record by selecting the following values:

   - **Process = CofC**

   - **Area = Change MOP**

   - **Sub Area = Change MOPF**

18. Enter the **Source** and **Subject** details. Enter the effective date as the date the benefit started again.

19. Once the new MOPF is set up, change the **Resolution Code** to **CoC Accepted**.

20. If a **Payments** SR does not generate, create the SR to set up the DFB. Complete the SR and continue to the DFB - Set Up procedure if the DFB has not set up automatically. Once the DFB has been set up, no further action is required. For a full list of benefits which CMG deduct from, refer to the Frequently Asked Questions tab of the DFB - Set Up procedure.

21. Update the **Change Benefit Details SR Status** to **Closed** and the **Sub Status** to **Complete**.

> When performing the calculation, check the paying parent's Payment Schedule to ensure it is correct.

CMSF2220 Universal Credit Information Request

Universal Credit enquiry form.

CMSF5575 - Request for an award breakdown

Defence Business Services (DBS) form to request benefit information for the following benefits:

- War Disablement Pension
- War Pension
- War Disablement Allowance
- War Widows Pension
- War Parent's Allowance

CMSL4092 Your child maintenance payments have changed

Notice of recalculation to the receiving parent following a change of circumstances.

Under the sub heading 'What this means for you':

If multiple changes of circumstances are reported by the client and more changes are to follow, use paragraph **TM_28591_E** 'Although we were told about more than one change to (paying parent's) circumstances at the same time, this letter shows how the change listed above affects your child maintenance payments.'

If multiple changes of circumstances are reported by the client and no more changes are to follow, use paragraph **TM_28592_E** 'We were told about more than one change to (paying parent's) circumstances at the same time. We have already written to you to tell you how other changes affect your child maintenance payments.'

CMSL9664 Important information about your child maintenance payments

Letter to the paying parent to advise that we are aware that they have made a claim to benefit and if the award is granted, we will be making deductions from their benefit.

All fields in this letter are system generated, no manual intervention is required.

BOM - Segments Summary

Calculation - Post Initial

Case Closure Overview

CES - View Benefit Info

Change - Employment Status

Change - Income

Change MOPF - Summary

Change - Service Type to Collect and Pay

Change - Payment Frequency/Collection Date

CIS - Get Benefit Award Information

Confirm Current Location

DFB - Cancel

DFB - Set Up

Existing Case - Add Paying Parent Partner

Fundamentals

Method Of Payment From - Set Up Initial

Off Benefit

On Benefit

Outbound Contact - Suppress

Terminology Changes

Universal Credit