

Exceptional Case - Information Gathering

Initially there may be a small number of cases that cannot be set up or supported on the 2012 system. These include:

- Type one cases cannot be started on CMS2012 as a case participant has no national insurance number (NINO) or child reference number (CRN)
- Type two cases are initially on CMS2012 but an incident has prevented progression of the case

The application process; gathering and verifying information, parentage process, issuing relevant letters, maintenance calculation and payment process are managed offline.

All information previously recorded on CMS2012 should be used with caution and confirmed with the relevant party where possible.

Complaints, including appeals against decisions, parliamentary contacts and subject access requests are dealt with, as far as possible, via usual business processes.

Before completing a new application, check that the application fee has been processed. If not, refer to the procedure for [Application - Fees](#) for further guidance and select the Charging button to open the worksheet.

This procedure shows caseworkers from the exceptional case handling team (ECHT) how to record and store exceptional case details and to take these forward to the calculation process.

ECHT caseworkers use the information gathering tool to set up and record the details of exceptional cases and to update and amend these cases following a change of circumstances.

Changes of circumstances that occurred prior to the case being made exceptional are available, as read only on the system. Only changes that occur after the case is made exceptional are recorded on the tool. Details of changes of circumstances that would affect the assessment are transferred and carried out on the calculation tool e.g. qualifying child ceases full time education. For further information refer to [Exceptional Case - Assessment](#).

The ECHT caseworkers use the off system letters link [2012 scheme letter](#), [Exceptional Case - Letters \(Outbound\)](#) and the relevant procedure to identify and issue the correct notification. Record the CMSL number and date letter issued on the letters field of the application template.

The gathering information stage remains the same but the details are recorded and updated on the Information Gathering tool. The Information Gathering tool template is designed to largely mirror 2012 system data requirements. The information gathered here is always transferred onto the ECH Case Management Tracker tool. Caseworkers use this tool to record and monitor case updates and team leaders use this tracker to monitor case progression.

This work is completed by caseworkers from the exceptional case handling team.

The ECHT have security cleared caseworkers who manage sensitive cases. Sensitive case details are recorded on the relevant tool but must be locally printed and deleted. Clerical files are stored in a lockable storage area.



When speaking to clients always use the new terminology. 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.

Exceptional case handling template - gathering information



Before completing a new application, check the 199 - 2003 Scheme systems to confirm that the application fee has been processed. Contact the client where possible to confirm this. If the fee has not been paid, refer to the procedure for [Application - Fees](#) for further guidance

To initially set up an exceptional case, gather information from the system case however this should be treated with caution. Contact the relevant parties to confirm case details where possible, advise clients to attach the ECH number to any inbound correspondence. Exceptional case handling team (ECHT) caseworkers use the information gathering tool to set up and record the details of an exceptional case and to update and amend these cases following a change of circumstances. Gather all income and calculation details from the completed calculation tool. This tool must be printed as the separate tools cannot be opened at the same time.



Selecting **save and exit** on the information gathering tool saves a copy in your my documents folder. Only save the information gathering tool once all the necessary information is recorded to avoid duplication. Once the file is saved the details cannot be amended. Rename the file using the following details; ECH number and receiving parent name, move the file to the correct ECH folder and delete the copy from your my documents folder.



The ECHT have security cleared caseworkers who manage sensitive cases. Sensitive case details are recorded on the relevant tool but must be locally printed and deleted. Only clerical files are stored in a lockable area.



Once the details have been recorded on the information gathering tool transfer the data onto the ECH Case Management Tracker tool located in the Exceptional case handling team shared folder. The tracker tool may be used by caseworkers to record and monitor their workload including recording complaints and payments received. Team leaders may use the tracker to monitor payments and enforcement action etc including reviewing cases for reload. All the fields on the tracker are self explanatory.

- Once a case is received by the ECHT, confirm a new client folder has been set up in the [ECH shared folder](#). This folder is titled with the paying parent name and Exceptional case handling number and is used to store future sub folders created including change of circumstances. These sub folders must be titled:
 - paying parent name (containing anything relating to the paying parent e.g. inbound/outbound letters)
 - the receiving parent name (containing anything relating to the receiving parent e.g. documentation of telephone calls. For cases with more than one receiving parent, set up a new sub-folder)
 - case folders (containing anything pertaining to the case e.g. information gathering tool, calculation tool)
 - complaints folder (set up to store all information relating to a complaint)
 - appeals folder (set up to store all information relating to appeals)

Team leaders access the spreadsheet in the ECH folder to allocate the next ECH number.

- Templates are found in the ECH shared folder titled, **Exceptional Case Handling Tool**. Open the tool to display the main menu, select the **Main Menu** to view 11 sub-headings. Drill down into each of the following sub-headings:
 - ECH Details
 - Charging
 - Applicant Information
 - Other Party Information
 - Client Representatives (this field displays in red if a client rep exists)
 - NRP Employment Details
 - Change Of Circumstances
 - Assessment Details
 - Complaints/Escalated Enquiries
 - Contact
 - Record a Death
 - Case Summary Information

When selected, each of the sub-headings opens up a new screen. A final tab can be selected to **Exit** and save.



Record the qualifying children (QC) on the applicant and other party sections in the same order.

3. For Type one cases not started on 2012 system; gather all case details from the applications team, ask for copies of information the client has already provided and contact the client direct if any information gaps exist. For Type two cases previously held on the 2012 system; gather all information including all inbound correspondence and case notes. The incident and problem number must be recorded.
4. Open the relevant section of the template and enter the case details. The type of applicant e.g. receiving parent, paying parent, person with care (PeWC), or child in Scotland (CiS) applicant, determines which section of the tool is to be completed.



For more information on effective dates and gathering information refer to [Application - paying parent](#), [Application - receiving parent](#), [Application - Child in Scotland](#) and [Gather Paying Parent Information](#).

5. For application stage all parties must be verified offline as no link is available to the automated interfaces. Client National Insurance number (NINO) and child reference number (CRN) (where applicable), date of birth (DOB), and name and address details may be verified via the Customer Information System (CIS) browser or the Credit Reference Agency (CRA) found on the intranet. For more information refer to [Identify The Non Applicant](#) or the relevant application procedure in related items. Where the party's identity cannot be verified by CIS or the CRA, follow the Policy, Law and Decision Making Guidance 

ECH Details

6. Record the following:
 - Problem number (last five digits)
 - Incident number
 - ECH reference
 - Paying parent SCIN (scheme client identification number)
 - Receiving parent SCIN

Applicant information



All application and effective date fields must be left blank and the details entered in the notes field. In a benefit household confirm whether there are two paying parent's, if so, where one paying parent is to be handled exceptionally then the other paying parent must also be handled exceptionally. For information refer to [CES - View Benefit Info](#) and [Exceptional case - Gateway](#).

7. The yellow fields on the information gathering template indicate mandatory fields. The application tool template is a series of self explanatory fields and drop down menus. Those fields that may need further explanation include:
 - **Application Receipt Date** - record the date the application was originally received in the notes field
 - **Application Start Date** - record the date the application started (may be same as above) in the notes field
 - **Application Type** - Select the applicant e.g. receiving parent, PeWC, CiS
 - **Applicant Channel** - Select whether contact is written or by telephone
 - **Case Number** - case reference numbers have the format 9 hyphen and 8 digits e.g. 9-12345678 (person reference numbers have the format ECH and 6 digits e.g. ECH123456). These numbers are located in the ECH shared folder and are controlled and issued by the ECH team leader
 - **Case Status** - Select from the following dropdown menu;
 - **Active** - The case is being progressed
 - **Inactive** - See inactive status reasons on separate drop down

- **Closed** - Self explanatory
- **Transferred to 2012 CMS** - Re-loaded onto 2012 CMS
- **Inactive status reason**
 - Applicant applied for NINO CMS
 - Pending C-scheme verify (Decision to progress case offline ongoing)
 - Awaiting court order expiry (Court order must be 12 months old or more Child Maintenance Group (CMG) to override and progress case)
 - NRP underage
 - 1st cycle - Pending other party NINO (Trace action ongoing, see Identify and locate NINO)
- **Potentially Violent (PV)** - For more information refer to [Unacceptable Behaviour](#)
- **Is Applicant Habitually Resident?** - Applicant must be living, or deemed as living in the United Kingdom (UK)
- **Is Applicant in HM Armed Forces?** - Record yes or no using the drop down
- **Is Applicant on Active Duty?** - For more information refer to [DER - Self Selected - Set Up](#) or [Active Duty Flag](#)
- **Security** - Set up new client security questions or confirm those held are accurate and current before recording
 -  Confirm that all data in the Applicant Security Question fields is entered correctly. The excel, information gathering tool automatically updates the next cell with the previous entry.
- **Diversity** - Record any language preferences, special requirements (e.g sight, hearing/speech impediment), ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation
- **Court orders** - For more information refer to [Application - paying parent](#), [Application - receiving parent](#) or [Application - Child in Scotland](#)
- **Shared care** - For more information refer to [Shared Care Dispute At Application](#) or [Change - Shared Care of QC](#)
- **Can application progress?** - Confirm sufficient information is provided to trace participants/child benefit is in payment/court order in place more than 12 months. A 1993 Scheme/2003 Scheme look up will also need to be completed, see [step 17](#).
- **Notice of application issue date** - record this date (provisional calculation issue date) in the case decision **Notes** field
- **Effective date** - record this date (two days after the provisional calculation issue date) in the case decision **Notes** field
- **Payment information** - Self explanatory fields. Available methods of payment from (MOPF) are; Standing Order (SO), maintenance direct and deduction from benefits (DfB). (Verify bank details using bank wizard). For more information refer to [Method Of Payment From - Set Up Initial](#) or [Method Of Payment To - Set Up Initial](#)
 -  A paying parent who has multiple receiving parents can only have one bank account on the 2012 system. Card payments can be processed, use the **Worldpay** icon on your desktop to take credit/debit card payments. For further information refer to [Credit/Debit Card - One Off Payment](#).
- **Is NRP an NRP on CSCS/CS2 or CCD?** - Self explanatory
- **Was reactive transition initiated?** - 1993 Scheme/2003 Scheme lookup already begun and in progress, case currently on 2012 system. Contact SPOC to complete 1993 Scheme/2003 Scheme lookup. For more information refer to [Manual Handling - 1993 Scheme/2003 Scheme Look Up Contingency Summary](#) and [C3 Transition Overview](#).
- **Income** (go to [step 23](#)) - For more information refer to [Calculation - Non HMRC](#).
- **NRP partner details (only if benefit household)** - For more information refer to [CES - View Benefit Info](#)
- **Relevant Other Child/Child In Family Based Arrangement** - Record any ROC or CIFBA details in these fields

Use the **Applicant Decisions/Notes** section to record the CMS Reference ID (provided at gateway stage). This number will need to be added to the **Notes** section on the 2012 system when the case is reloaded.

Other party information section

8. Most of the information in this section is the same as the application section except for:

- **Original application response due date** - For application only, the date the application correspondence was due to be returned
- **Does other party wish to pursue maintenance** - Only for paying parent application refer to [Application - paying parent](#)
- **Has response time been extended?** - Response to correspondence issued
- **Does other party accept parentage?**
- **Parentage decision** - Select from the drop down menu. Refer to business as usual process for completion, no details are logged on the system. Set a manual BF date to ensure timescales are maintained and record all decisions on the notes section. For more information refer to [Parentage Dispute - Log](#) or [Parentage Dispute - Record Outcome](#)
- **Qualifying child first name** - Record the first and middle names in this field

Client representative section

9. All fields in this section are self explanatory.

NRP employment details

10. All fields in this section are self explanatory.

Change of circumstances section

11. Change of circumstances (CofC) may occur at any point in the lifecycle of the case and are recorded from the drop down menus and Notes fields. Once the information gathering tool details have been saved they can not be amended. To record a change of circumstances open a new tool, record the new details in the relevant sections and save the template (see second info bullet point at start of details section). Open a new sheet for each new CofC. Complete the following drop down menus:

- **Date CoC reported** - Self explanatory
- **Reported to (Name)** - the name of the caseworker dealing with the CofC
- **Reported to (Staff Number)** - Staff number of the above caseworker
- **Change of Circumstances Category** - Select from the drop down menu e.g. income details, personal information, carer role, child status
- **Change Instigator** - the party/system reporting the change e.g. paying parent, Employer, CMS2012
- **Change Type** - Whether this is a change of circs, Central Appeals Unit or HMCTS revision, withdrawn Appeal, closure or a dispute (select the option from the drop down list)
- **Change Value** - details of the change e.g. Employment Status, Shared Care, personal Details
- **Next Action Due Date** - date any follow-up action is required e.g. contacting employer to verify information
- **Effective Date of Change** - Self explanatory
- **Change Outcome** - Self explanatory
- **Date Completed** - Self explanatory
- **Change Description summary** - Freetext notes field

Assessment details section

12. Six sub-headings as follows:

- **Type** - Self explanatory
- **Calculation date**
- **Effective date**
- **£££** - Assessment amount
- **Adjudicating officer** - Caseworker to record full name of adjudicating officer
- **Sort by latest tab** - When selected, assessment history is displayed with the latest calculation at the top of the list

Complaints/Escalated Enquiries



Prior to opening the Complaints/Escalated enquiries section go to the Case Summary Information section of the Information Gathering tool. Record a basic description of the current complaint and read all notes regarding previous complaints this ensures any historic issues are identified and avoids a repeat of any problems.

13. Various sections regarding complaints, disputes, appeals or judicial reviews. A subject access request (SAR) is also recorded in this section. For further information on SARS refer to [Subject Access Request](#). For further information on complaints handling refer to [Complaints overview](#).



Save each individual complaint before adding a new one - to do this exit the complaints tab and re-select it from the main menu and add the next complaint.

- **Complaints** - Record the date the complaint was received and closed, use the drop down fields to record complaint stage and type
 - **Disputes** - Record the dates the dispute was received, when the next action is due and the date the dispute was closed
 - **Appeals** - Record whether the appeal is ongoing, and if not, the date the appeal was closed
 - **Judicial Review** - As per appeals
 - **SAR Request** - As per appeals
14. E-mail a copy of the complaint to the complaints team. The complaints team will manage the complaint and any contact with the client at the appropriate complaint stage (e.g. review). For further information refer to Complaints Overview.
15. The complaints team will contact the ECHT for all information required to resolve the complaint. Once the complaint has been cleared, the complaints caseworker will e-mail copies of all contact with the client to the ECHT. Update the Information Gathering tool with the actions taken to resolve and close the complaint, and then record the actions on the ECH Case Management Tracker.

Contact section

16. When issuing letters, follow the [Letters Outbound - Contingency Summary](#). Eight sub-headings are displayed in the main **Inbound/Outbound Contact (All Clients)** section for selection as follows:
- **Inbound or Outbound** - Self explanatory
 - **Letter code** (If Appropriate) - Relevant letters are found in the relevant procedure, each letter has a CMSL code which is recorded here. If contact is by telephone, record 'telephone' here
 - **Recipient/ reason for issue** - Free Text field to input reason notification was issued
 - **Sent/Received date**
 - **Party** - the client the letter was sent to/received from
 - **Response due date** - Date response should be returned
 - **Response received** - Self explanatory
 - **Actual response date** - Date response actually received

Record a death section

17. When recording a QC death ensure the QC entered in the **Deceased Party 1** field corresponds with the QC recorded in the applicant information section e.g. the QC in the **Applicant information** section is recorded as **Qualifying Child 2**, the **Deceased Party Role** below must be 'QC2.' There are seven sub-headings to complete for each deceased party:
- **Deceased Party Role**
 - **Date of Death**
 - **Date Notified of Death**
 - **Death Confirmed**
 - **Confirmation Source - e.g. CIS**
 - **Change of Circs Reference** - this is the corresponding line number of the change reported in the **Change of Circumstances** section e.g. if this is the fourth change of circumstances, this will be line eight of the excel spreadsheet in the change of circumstances tab
 - **Change of Circs Action Complete?** - Self explanatory

Case summary information screen

18. Information pre-populated from previous screens except for case decisions/notes which includes:
- **Decisions/ notes** - Free text section to enter case details not included on other sections
 - **User name**
 - **Date**



Select the **Main Menu** tab at any point to return to the eight sub-headings screen. Save the template when completed. If a CofC occurs, select a new, blank template. Historical data is stored in the archive folder.

Enter the case reference number of any case that needs to be paused on the exceptional case handling tracker tool spreadsheet. This is to avoid case duplication.

19. Contact the client to advise them the case is transferred to the ECHT. Explain the process will follow the same rules as system cases and provide the exceptional process contact information.



Note that sensitive case details are entered onto the template but locally printed, all electronic information deleted, and stored in a secure in-house location. The offline tools are designed with specific user 'ID, time and date' stamps, and provide an audit trail of all users of the template.

1993 Scheme/2003 Scheme lookup - transition



This is recorded within the applicant information section but can be completed at any point in the information gathering stage. It is addressed separately due to the amount of detail necessary and is only applicable for new applications or CofC when adding new case participants.

20. A 1993 Scheme/2003 Scheme lookup is carried out to determine if any of the case participants exist on 1993/2003 scheme. In certain circumstances it is not possible to progress a case due to reactive transition. Reactive transition brings any receiving parents associated with the paying parent in the new application, from the 1993/2003 scheme system to the 2012 scheme. Contact the 1993 Scheme/2003 Scheme SPOC to carry out the look ups and provide details of all case participants. Record the date on the application template **Notes** field and set a **Pause** of three days on Outlook.
21. After three days, contact the SPOC to confirm the look up has been completed. For further information refer to [Manual Handling - 1993 Scheme/2003 Scheme Look Up \(Applicant\)](#), [Manual Handling - 1993 Scheme/2003 Scheme Look Up \(paying parent\)](#), [Manual Handling - 1993 Scheme/2003 Scheme Look Up \(paying parent Partner\)](#). The SPOC will advise if reactive transition should be triggered and the expected date for transition/application effective date. As a result of the information received there are three possible outcomes:
- The 2012 scheme application can continue as there is no trace of the applicant or any of the case participants on 1993/2003 scheme systems

- The application can continue but should be paused to allow time for any receiving parents with ongoing maintenance identified on 1993/2003 scheme system associated with the paying parent named in the new application to be added to the 2012 scheme casegroup. In these cases the 1993 Scheme/2003 Scheme SPOC will obtain the required minimum case data as per [Manual Handling - Transition Case Data Capture Summary](#) and will provide you with the minimum required data on the associated 1993/2003 scheme cases to allow you to progress with the application.
- The application cannot continue as the receiving parent and paying parent have an existing casegroup on 1993/2003 scheme systems which is either still open, or closed less than 13 weeks ago. If this applies the case must be closed and letter CMSL0070 issued.

22. Record the following linked case information on the **Notes** field clerical case solution (CCS):

- Each receiving parent name
- Receiving parent person reference number
- Scheme CS2, CSCS, 2012 CMS
- Disputes
- Status

Applicants Decisions/Notes

23. Where special correspondence has been requested or is in place record the details on the Decisions/Notes field. Include the following:

- Parliamentary correspondent/complaint/independent case examiner/PHSO/court documents/judicial review/date of request/date reply issued to request

For more information refer to [PHSO](#), [ICE](#), [Judicial Review](#) or [MP Enquiries](#).

24. Record the contact activity in the **Decision/Notes** fields as follows:

- Details of conversation including; decisions made, resolutions
- Name and staff number of person entering details
- Date of contact

Employment details



All income information is calculated using the 2012 scheme calculator. For more information refer to [Exceptional Case - Assessment](#)

25. Record the following employment details in the **NRP Employment Details** tab:

- Full name of paying parent
- Any special requirements or language preferences paying parent may have
- Employer name and address
- Employer telephone number(s), fax number and employment end date
- Employee payroll number, payroll contact name and address
- Payroll contact numbers and fax number
- Employee pay frequency
- Payroll cut off date (for a deduction from earnings order)

Other Party Information

26. Record the following income information in the Method of payment from/Income section:

- paying parent gross historic taxable income amount (annual figure prior to deductions)

- Historic income tax year
- Current income (annual) - weekly income is recorded in the notes field
- Current income date
- Notional Income

The following information is gathered from CES (For more information refer to [CES - View Benefit Info](#)):

- Benefit type
- Benefit recipient NINO
- Benefit amount
- Benefit office



If benefits are in payment and the case is a type 2 exceptional case check if deductions are already being made - if this is the case no further actions are required. If no deductions are being made and the benefit in payment is flat rate income based Jobseekers' Allowance (JSA IB), Income Support (IS) or income related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA IR) complete and issue a CIS500a to the owning benefit office to record an interest with CIS. This will allow benefit deductions to be completed and paid out via the **Payment - Non Standard** procedure. When completing the CIS500a, record the interest type as **Child Maintenance (NRPMC)** interest.

If the deduction is not flat rate JSA (IB), Income Support and ESA (IR), and for all other benefits regardless of the amount of deduction, issue CMSL2014 to the owning benefit office. Complete the Letters section to record the form issued. For further information on registering an interest with CIS, refer to [CIS Interest - Exceptions Process](#).

27. Print off appropriate notice of letters and issue to all parties. Refer to the relevant procedure in related items for specific letter reference numbers and [Exceptional Case - Letters \(Outbound\)](#) for information on issuing correspondence. Record the letters issued in the **Letter Issued** section.
28. The assessment is completed by caseworkers from the ECHT using the **Offline Calculation Tool** found on the intranet. For guidance in carrying out this process refer to [Exceptional Case - Assessment](#).
29. The schedule is worked out and recorded by caseworkers from the ECHT using the payments and receipts template found on the intranet.
30. Select **Main Menu** at any point to view the opening screen with the 11 sub-headings. From this screen, users select **Exit** & save, the template is automatically saved in my documents with the title **Contingency Exception Solution** and the latest version number. Rename the file and save in the central ECH folder available solely for use by the ECHT. Rename the file using the following:
 - **Staff number of user**
 - **Tool name (e.g. information gathering)**
 - **Client name**
 - **Todays date**
 - **Next version number in the sequence**

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- **Next version number in the sequence**

Store each file in the ECH folder, once saved successfully, delete the file from the my documents folder.

31. Within each client folder a sub folder is created to store information, these folders include:
 - Application/data gathering template
 - Assessment template
 - Receipts/ payments template
 - Inbound/ outbound correspondence

- Archives - create a new template for each change of circumstances, previous versions are saved and stored in the archive folder

[CIS500a Amendment to benefit details](#)

Form to update customer information system (CIS) with benefit information

[CMSLF2014 Request for deduction of child maintenance](#)

Form issued to the benefit owning office to request deductions from the paying parent's benefit

[Content Editor \[1\]](#)

[Application - Fees](#)

[Active Duty Flag](#)

[Application - Child in Scotland](#)

[Application - paying parent](#)

[Application - receiving parent](#)

[C3 Transition Overview](#)

[Calculation - Non HMRC](#)

[CES - View Benefit Info](#)

[Change - Shared Care of QC](#)

[CIS Interest - Exceptions Process](#)

[DER - Self Selected - Set Up](#)

[ECH shared folder](#)

[Exceptional Case - Allocation & Payment](#)

[Exceptional Case - Assessment](#)

[Exceptional Case - Gateway](#)

[Exceptional Case - Letters \(Outbound\)](#)

[Exceptional Case - Overview](#)

[Gather Paying Parent Information](#)

[ICE](#)

[Identify The Non Applicant](#)

[Judicial Review](#)

[Letters Outbound - Contingency Summary](#)

[Manual Handling - 1993/2003 Scheme Look Up \(Applicant\)](#)

[Manual Handling - 1993/2003 Scheme Look Up Contingency summary](#)

[Manual Handling - 1993/2003 Scheme Look Up \(paying parent\)](#)

[Manual Handling - 1993/2003 Scheme Look Up \(paying parent Partner\)](#)

[Manual Handling - Transition Case Data Capture Summary](#)

[Method Of Payment From - Set Up Initial](#)

[Method Of Payment To - Set Up Initial](#)

[MP Enquiries](#)

[Parentage Dispute - Log](#)

[Parentage Dispute - Record Outcome](#)

[Payment - Non Standard](#)

[PHSO](#)

[Shared Care Dispute At Application](#)

[Subject Access Request](#)

[Unacceptable Customer Behaviour](#)

[Terminology Changes](#)

[Transition \(Reactive\) - Invoke](#)