Department for Work & Pensions Procedures ▸ Off Benefit

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Off Benefit

This procedure details the steps to take a paying parent or their partner off benefit. Depending on the benefit the process could be fully automated or require caseworker intervention. Benefit records may also need to be manually updated for a number of reasons, for example the benefit awarded has not been automatically updated by the system, where Universal Credit is in payment, or an error is identified.

This procedure will be completed by the owning caseworkers at the time the change is identified.

CIS notifies the Child Maintenance Group (CMG) of an end benefit award and sends an automatic transaction to CMS 2012. CIS notifies the CMG of change 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)
    - Bereavement 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.

The above lists are not exhaustive.

Defence Business Services (DBS) was previously known as Service and Personnel Veterans Agency's (SPVA).

When a paying parent stops receiving benefit action is required to obtain income information and a new method of payment from.

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

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.

If an off benefit notification is received between the provisional and initial calculation refer to Calculation - Initial.

CIS can occasionally send an 'off benefit' notification with a future date as the benefit end date. Where this is the case, refer to **Future date effective dates** in the **Procedural Exceptions** tab.

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)

When a paying parent's benefit has ended, navigate to the paying parent contact screen and check the **Financial Accounts** tab to determine if there are any suspended residual arrears. If there are no suspended residual arrears continue with the Off Benefit procedure. If there are suspended residual arrears, refer to the **1993/2003 Residual Arrears - Off Benefit** procedural exception.

Off benefit notifications generated by CIS will automatically populate the SR **Effective Date** field. The date populated in this field will always be the date that the SR generated in the system, and does not affect the dates used in the calculation.

Automated Off Benefit - IS, JSA(IB), ESA(IB)

The system automatically ends the benefit, completes a perform calculation and creates issues a Promise to Pay schedule. This will be completed once the caseworker has set the resolution code in the **Change Benefit Details SR**. The system also ends the Deduction From Benefit, changes the MOPF to Default Standing Order and looks for the latest HMRC data for the following benefits:

- Income Support (IS)

- Job Seeker's Allowance – Income Based (JSA IB)
- Employment Support Allowance – Income Related (ESA IR)

As caseworker intervention is necessary, the **Change Benefit Details SR** is routed to the appropriate team according to the change category and change type. This interface ends at the production of the SR. The system will generate **Perform Calculation SR** and look for the latest HMRC data.

⚠ If the DFB was manually set up, the DFB must cancelled manually before completing **Perform Calculation** SR. Failure to do this will cause the SR to go error technical. Refer to DFB - Cancel.

If there is HMRC historic income refer to **Income Available**. If the system cannot locate historic income a **Perform Calculation** SR is generated with the **reason field** as **No Income Available**. Refer to **No Income Available**.

⚠ The **DEO Desire** flag must be set when setting a default standing order. Select the **Paying Parent More Info** tab and select the **Desire** flag. This allows CMS to monitor for information from HMRC which will allow a DEO to be set at a later date. Default Standing Orders should only be used as a temporary MOPF. Make every attempt to secure a new preferred MOPF as a matter of priority.

For more information on Default Standing Orders refer to Policy, Law and Decision Making Guidance ⚖

⚠ Any charges or Secretary of State arrears that were previously suspended need to be unsuspended when completing an Off Benefit change. For more information refer to Suspend/Unsuspend Liabilities.

ℹ Two days after the system has automatically ended the Deduction From Benefit and changed the MOPF to Default Standing Order, the following SR will automatically generate as a prompt to contact the paying parent and move them on to a preferred MOPF:

- **Process = Outbound Contact**

- **Area= Default SO Client Contact**

- **Sub Area = Default SO Client Contact**

When this SR generates, make contact with the paying parent within 3 days. Where contact is unsuccessful, set the prompt into a wait state and repeat until successful contact is made. If a preferred MOPF has already been set up, the **Default SO Client Contact** SR can be **Closed** and **Cancelled**.

Off Benefit - IB, JSA(C), ESA(C), SP, PC, SDA, CA, MA, BB

The system automatically ends the benefit, generates a perform calculation to look for the latest HMRC data for the following benefits:

- Incapacity Benefit (IB)

- Job Seeker's Allowance – Contributions (JSA C)

- Employment Support Allowance – Contributions (ESA C)

- State Pension (SP)

- Pension Credit (PC)

- Severe Disablement Allowance (SDA)

- Carer's Allowance (CA)

- Maternity Allowance (MA)

- Bereavement Benefit (BB)

This list is not exhaustive.

As caseworker intervention is necessary the **Change Benefit Details SR** is routed to the appropriate team according to the change category and change type. This interface ends at the production of the SR.

Caseworker action

1. Create a **Payment SR** to cancel the DFB refer to DFB - Cancel.

   ⓘ An automatic Payment SR will generate for Pension Credit.

2. The system will generate **Perform Calculation SR** and look for the latest HMRC data
   - If there is HMRC historic income refer to **Income Available**.
   - If the system cannot locate historic income a **Perform Calculation SR** is generated with the **reason field** as **No Income Available.** Refer to **No Income Available**.

⚠️ Any charges or Secretary of State arrears that were previously suspended need to be unsuspended when completing an Off Benefit change. For more information refer to Suspend/Unsuspend Liabilities.

⚠️ The **DEO Desire** flag must be set when setting a default standing order. Select the **Paying Parent More Info** tab and select the **Desire** flag. This allows CMS to monitor for information from HMRC which will allow a DEO to be set at a later date.

For more information on Default Standing Orders refer to Policy, Law and Decision Making Guidance ⚖️

Off Benefit Client/Third Party Notified-CIS Notified Benefits

ⓘ If a notification is received from a paying parent or a third party informing that the paying parent benefit has ended, check to see if we have already made or received the change, and if not, check CIS to see if the benefit has been ended. If the benefit has been ended and we have not received notification caseworkers should raise a manual SR. Caseworkers should not delay carrying out the change and at the same time they should raise an incident to investigate why the interface has failed. ~~advise that CMG will receive a notification of the change to benefit automatically from CIS if it is a CIS notified benefit. Record the details supplied~~ in the **Contact Notes** field

Universal Credit (UC)

When a paying parent has been in receipt of UC and they advise that their claim has ended, check this with the UC SPOC if the paying parent has no income or other benefit details to give.

1. Send **CMSF2220** as an attachment via email to the UC SPOC at: UNIVERSALCREDIT.SERVICECENTRE@DWP.GSI.GOV.UK Ensure that the subject field contains the following: **Restricted-UC-CMG-Information Request (2012).** In the body of the email ask UC to confirm the end date of the benefit.

2. Set the **Status** of the case to **Wait** for five working days.

   ⓘ When five working days have passed, the SR is ready to work on.

3. If there is not a response, this must be escalated to the CMG SPOC: **CMG Universal Credit SPOC**. Send an email with the original email attached, to: CMG Universal Credit SPOC, ensuring that the following is in the subject field: **RESTRICTED - No response received**. For more information on this exchange of correspondence, refer to Universal Credit.
4. UC SPOC confirms UC is no longer in payment, reinstate any additional income variations that may have been in place prior to the paying parent receiving UC.
5. Continue with the section **Off Benefit - Client/Third Party Notified** below to complete the change to take the client off Universal Credit.

Off Benefit Client/Third Party Notified-Non CIS Notified Benefits

1. 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**.

3. Record the **effective date**. This is the first day of non-benefit entitlement. For example benefit ends on 1st January, the effective date wold be 2nd January.

    (i) If more than one benefit needs to be ended a new SR has to be created for each benefit

    (i) If benefit notification is received between the provisional and initial application refer to Calculation - Initial.

4. Set the SR to **In Progress** and update the **Sub status** of the SR **Off Benefit Notification** and this will generate an activity plan to follow in order to update the benefit record.

5. Select **Go to Benefit Summary View** and check if we hold any benefit details for the paying parent. Select **Modify** in the benefit record and record benefit end date. This is the award end date which is also the last day of benefit entitlement.

    For example: CIS shows an award end date of 1st January 2016. The benefit record end date is 1st January 2016. The system will automatically add one day onto this date to perform a calculation with the correct effective date of 2nd January 2016.

    (i) If the details we hold to do not match the details the paying parent has provided or there is no benefit record held, check ~~the~~ CIS. ~~Common Enquiry Service (CES).~~ Where the DFB is to be manually cancelled, caseworkers should refer to DFB - Cancel in Procedural Exceptions, to determine ~~a decision is required with regards to~~ whether to send an 'End' transaction to JCP. ~~For further information see DFB - Cancel in Procedural Exceptions~~

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

    ### Team Leader action

7. Open inbox work item and self allocate the SR. Open the SR and consider the request, update the **TL Approved** and the **Comments box** with the reasons for the decision only if rejecting. Update inbox work item to either;

    - **Approved**

    - **Rejected**

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

    ### Caseworker action

9. If the request has been

    - **Approved** - change the **Sub Status** of the SR to **CoC Accept** and update 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 **COC Decline**.

10. Caseworkers should check the Child SRs for a Payments SR, if one hasnt generated they should create a **Payment SR** to cancel the DFB, refer to DFB - Cancel.

    ⚠ Any charges or Secretary of State arrears that were previously suspended need to be unsuspended when completing an Off Benefit change. For more information refer to Suspend/Unsuspend Liabilities.

11. The system will generate **Perform Calculation** SR and look for the latest HMRC data

    - If there is HMRC historic income refer to **Income Available**.

    - If the system cannot locate historic income a **Perform Calculation** SR is generated with the **reason field** as **No Income Available**. Refer to **No Income Available**.

Income Available

If the paying parent's or paying parent's partner's benefit has ended, the system will look for HMRC historic income. If there is HMRC historic income, complete the following steps:

(i) If the case is Direct Pay, there is no need to update a MOPF.

Caseworker action

1. 🕐 For Collect and pay cases call the paying parent to obtain a new preferred MOPF.

    ⚠ Default Standing Order should only be used as a temporary MOPF, make every attempt to secure a new preferred MOPF.

2. Create a **Payment SR** to set up the new MOPF and refer to relevant method of payment procedures.
3. Call the clients to advise them of the new calculation in line with ECC procedures.
4. Select the relevant calculation letters within the **Perform Calculation** child SR. Refer to Calculation - Post Initial for details of all the calculation letters.
5. Update the **Status** to **Closed** and the **Sub Status** to **Complete**.

⚠️ When the paying parent's benefit has ended and starts to pay a rate of child maintenance, any variations which were in place will be automatically reinstated.

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

No Income Available

⚠️ 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.

Where no current employment details are returned or the details returned are not up to date, set the Desire DEO/DEO flag. This can be found in the paying parents **More Info tab**. Select either **Mandatory** or **Self Selected**. The system will then automatically re-request employment information from HMRC every two weeks and new paying parent employers will trigger an SR for a caseworker to review.

Contact paying parent to obtain gross income data

Income Provided

1. When the 2012 system is unable to retrieve any income details from HMRC for the paying parent the system generated **Perform Calculation SR**. Reason field will populate with **No Income Available**. If this does not happen automatically, update the **Reason** field as **No Income Available**.
2. Update the SR **Status** to **In Progress** and save the record. Update the SR **Sub Status** to **Gather income from NRP**. An activity plan generates for you to follow.
3. 🕐 Call the paying parent to obtain gross income information and to verify employment/self employment details. <mark>Verbal evidence cannot be accepted</mark>. For more information on gathering current income, refer to the Policy, Law and Decision Making Guidance ⚖️.
4. As a Default Standing Order will be in place gather a new preferred MOPF:
   - Where income has been provided, replace the MOPF referring to the relevant method of payment procedures. Then add details obtained to the **Current Income** field within the **Perform Calculation SR**. Update the **Income Source** field by selecting the relevant option from the dropdown. Continue to **step 5.**

   - If the income has not been provided go to **No Income Provided.** Advise the paying parent we will perform a best evidence calculation based on an estimate of their current income which may involve using the estimation of earnings tool (EET), or impose a default maintenance decision (DMD) if this information is not provided. For more information refer to Estimation of Earnings Tool.
5. Select **Save** to record the details, then **Calculate Liability Amount** to perform the calculation.

   ℹ️ The system will populate the effective date, complete the calculation and generate promise to pay (P2P) and liability schedules. Outbound communication letters confirming the calculation amount and the schedule payment amounts and dates will be sent to both parents.

6. Update the SR **Status** to **Closed** and the **Sub Status** to **Complete.**

   ⚠️ If the liability schedule is created on or effective from the last day of a 31 day month, due to a display error a month may be missing on the liability schedule. Check the correspondence generated for the client, if the correspondence is also incorrect raise an incident. If the correspondence is correct there is no need to raise an incident.

7. ~~Use the **Change Benefit Details SR**~~ <mark>Raise a **Change Income** SR</mark> to record the income details in the **Income applet**. Make sure the effective date of the Change SR is the same as that within the Perform Calculation SR. For more information refer to Calculation - Non HMRC.

   ℹ️ ~~<mark>Where a Universal Credit award has been recorded for the paying parent, the 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**. For more information refer to Calculation – Post Initial.</mark>~~

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

   ℹ️ When the paying parent's benefit has ended and starts to pay a rate of child maintenance, any variations which were in place will be automatically reinstated.

   ⚠️ Remove the Lock Assignment Flag by un-selecting the box located within set up and assignment details within master case view.

No Income Provided

9. When the paying parent does not provide details or cannot be contacted, raise a **Change Income SR** to send CMSL4212 to the paying parent to request income details. For paying parent applications issue CMSL3406 to request proof of income, which will also set the effective date. Change the **Sub Status** of the SR to **Wait** and wait 14 days for a response.call the receiving parent and ask if they have any details.
   - If receiving parent provides details, verify with employer. Refer to Change-income to raise a **Change Income SR** and verify with Employer

- If receiving parent does not provides details, check the system for any Employer or Accountant contact details.

  If there are no Employer/Accountant details held raise a **Change Income SR** to request income details. For more information on change income refer to Change income.

  ⚠️ The **Change Income SR** should not be completed until the end of this process has been reached, it should only be raised at this point to allow the necessary letters to be sent. If the paying parent supplies income details, complete this process first before following Change – Income to complete the change to income calculation.

10.

- If the paying parent responds go to **Income Provided step 3**

- If the paying parent does not respond after 14 days consider making a best evidence income decision.

11. If HMRC income information cannot be obtained but the paying parent's income or occupation is known, then a **Best Evidence Decision** can be applied. For more information refer to Calculation - Non HMRC.

12. If HMRC income information cannot be obtained and the paying parent's income is unknown, then a **Default Maintenance Decision** (DMD) can be applied. For more information refer to Calculation - Non HMRC.

   ⚠️ Remove the Lock Assignment Flag by un-selecting the box located within set up and assignment details within master case view.

1993/2003 Residual Arrears - Off Benefit

1. If a paying parent's benefit has ended and it is identified that there are suspended residual arrears, create an **Action Missed Payment** SR with the following values:

   - **Process = Arrears**

   - **Area = Arrears Management**

   - **Sub Area = Action Missed Payment**

2. Update the **Reason Code** with **Automated Financial Transition**.

3. Change the **Status** of the SR to **Pending Assigment**.

   ℹ️ The Automated Financial Transition (AFT) Team will scan the system to identify all **Action Missed Payment** SRs with the AFT reason code. This team will make contact with the PP and hold a discussion to negotiate payment of the residual arrears.

4. Once the SR has been completed, go back to the start of this Instruction by returning to the Details tab. return to the Off Benefit Details tab.

Future Date Effective Dates

If the client is in receipt of benefits, occasionally CIS will send an 'off benefit' notification with a future date as the effective date. Although this is a valid scenario, CMS 2012 cannot cope with the future date. The benefit record is ended by the system, but the calculation does not recognise the future date and will therefore calculate the paying parent's liability as though there is a benefit still in place. This is because at the time of the calculation, the client is still receiving the benefit.

Usually the calculation will be automated so it is difficult to identify when this situation has occurred, and depending on how soon it is identified, the action to resolve the issue will differ.

Future end date identified before the Resolution Code has been selected

If a future end date is identified in the CoC SR from CIS before the Resolution Code has been changed to CoC Accepted, wait until the future effective date has passed and then continue the calculation as normal. The client's liability will then be correct.

Future end date identified after the Resolution Code has been selected

If the future date is discovered after the Resolution Code has already been selected in the CoC SR, wait until the future effective date has passed, this is beacuse the calculation will generate but it will be incorrect. After the future date has passed and create a manual calculation child SR with the following values:

- Process = Perform Calculation

- Area = Case Maintenance

- Sub Area = Change Client Data

1. Enter the **Calc Effective Date** as one day after the benefit end date. today's date.
2. Check that the **Calc End Date** field is populated correctly. This should be the next annual review date. If not this will need to be changed to the correct date.
3. Select CTRL S to save the record. Continue the calculation as normal. The client's liability will then be correct.
4. Select the **Calculate Liability Amount** button.

CMSF2220 Universal Credit Information Request

Universal Credit enquiry form.

CMSL4212 To paying parent gross weekly income evidence request

Letter to paying parent to provide further evidence of current income

Change - Benefit Status/Details

Calculation - Initial

Calculation - Post Initial

Calculation - Non HMRC

Change-income

DFB - Cancel

Estimation of Earnings Tool

On Benefit

Universal Credit