

DWP Appeals Process

Horsham Matters Resource Guide

What Is an Appeal?

If you disagree with a benefit decision, you can challenge it through an appeal. Before a full appeal, you must first request a Mandatory Reconsideration (MR). This allows the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to review the decision.

You need to request an MR within one month of the date on your decision letter. If more than one month has passed, you can still apply for a late MR within 13 months of the decision date, but you will need to explain why your request is late.

While you are challenging a decision, you can continue to receive the benefit you were originally awarded until the outcome of your MR or appeal is decided.

Step 1 - Mandatory Reconsideration (MR)

An MR is the first stage of an appeal. Ask for an MR within one month of the date on your decision letter or request support with completing a late MR. When you request an MR, the DWP reviews the original decision and may:

- **Uphold the decision** (no change)
- **Increase your award**
- **Reduce or stop your award** if they believe your circumstances have changed or the original decision was incorrect

It's important to provide clear evidence and explain your situation fully when asking for a Mandatory Reconsideration.

How to request it:

- You can download a CRMR1 form online:
<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/696f75507e827090d02d422b/crmr1.pdf> Complete the form online then print. Send it to the address on the decision letter.
- You can ask by phone. You will need to call the number provided on your decision letter.
- You can write a letter, and post to the address on the decision letter.

- With a Universal Credit (UC) decision, you can request an MR via your online Journal.

Make sure you include:

- Your full name
- Your National Insurance number
- What decision you disagree with
- Why you disagree
- Include any new evidence that the decision-maker has not seen and that you want them to consider.

You can send additional evidence - medical letters, support letters, daily diaries, etc. This helps strengthen your case. Ensure you put your name and National Insurance number on the top of each page of evidence you send.

Step 2 - What Happens Next?

After you request an MR, a different decision-maker will review your original decision. They will look at all the evidence you have provided and may contact you if they need more information. Once the review is complete, you will receive, in writing, two copies of a Mandatory Reconsideration Notice (MRN) with the outcome.

Step 3 - Going to Tribunal (If You Still Disagree)

If you still disagree after the MR, you can appeal against the decision. Appeals are decided by the Social Security and Child Support Tribunal who are supported by HM Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS). The tribunal is impartial and independent of government. The tribunal will listen to both sides before making a decision.

You must do this within one month of the MRN date. You can appeal within 13 months of the MRN with a good reason, and you will need to explain why you have submitted it in late.

How to Appeal

Appealing a benefit decision is free. When you submit your appeal, you must include a copy of your Mandatory Reconsideration Notice (MRN) along with any new supporting evidence. You will also need to decide whether you want to attend the tribunal hearing

in person to explain your appeal. If you do not attend, the tribunal will make a decision based only on your appeal form and the evidence you have submitted.

You can appoint someone as a representative to help with your appeal. A representative can submit your appeal, help prepare your evidence, act on your behalf, and give advice. This could be a friend, family member, or another person you trust.

- You can submit an appeal online: <https://www.gov.uk/appeal-benefit-decision/submit-appeal>
- Or download a SSCS1 form https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6841555de550203c8209cd75/SSCS1_0821.pdf You will need to post the form to: HMCTS Benefit Appeals, PO Box 12626, Harlow, CM20 9QF

Important Tips for Appeals

✓ **Get help from an adviser**

Speak to one of our Outreach Advisors at Horsham Matters for advice or signposting support.

✓ **Keep everything in writing**

Letters, emails, receipts, reports. Keep copies of everything you send.

✓ **Give as much detail as possible**

Explain clearly how your condition affects your daily life. A diary can help.

✓ **New evidence can change the outcome**

You can submit reports, medical records, therapist letters, or statements from carers.

What Happens After the Tribunal?

Once the Tribunal has reviewed your appeal, they can make one of several decisions:

- **Uphold the original decision** - This means the tribunal agrees with the DWP, and the benefit decision stays the same.
- **Change the decision in your favour** - The tribunal may increase your benefit, award a higher rate, or approve a claim that was previously refused.
- **Send it back to the DWP to reconsider** - The tribunal can ask the DWP to review the decision again, taking the tribunal's comments into account.

If you still disagree after the Tribunal, there are further legal options, such as appealing to the Upper Tribunal. These processes are more complex and usually require legal advice or representation. It is recommended to seek support from a welfare rights adviser or solicitor if you want to take your appeal further.

How Long Does the Process Take?

Mandatory Reconsideration (MR):

- The DWP usually reviews your MR within 4–12 weeks, but times can vary depending on how complex your case is.
- They are required to respond within a reasonable time, so you should receive a written decision (the MRN) once the review is complete.

Tribunal Hearing:

- If you appeal to a tribunal, it can take several months for a hearing to be scheduled.
- The length of time depends on tribunal availability and the complexity of your case.

Remember: If you need help with the appeals process, speak with a member of our support team at Horsham Matters for a referral to an advisor.

Call or WhatsApp: 0300 124 0204

Email: support@horshammatters.org.uk

Helpful Links:

Horsham Matters – Support: <https://www.horsham-matters.org.uk/get-help-now/>

More details on appeals – GOV UK: [SSCS1A - How to appeal against a decision made by the Department for Work and Pensions](#)

DWP appeal a benefit decision, step by step: <https://www.gov.uk/challenge-appeal-benefit-decision>

Horsham District Council (HDC), Council Tax Support: <https://www.horsham.gov.uk/council-tax-and-benefits/council-tax/council-tax-support-discounts-and-exemptions>

WSCC Household Support: <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/leisure-recreation-and-community/household-support-fund/>

Age UK, Horsham: <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/westsussexbrightonhove/activities-and-events/horsham-district/>

Carers Support West Sussex: <https://www.carerssupport.org.uk/>

Prevention Assessment Team: <https://www.sussexcommunity.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/services/prevention-assessment-team>