



Department for
Work and Pensions

ESA Return Room TB002
Tyne View Park
Benton
Newcastle Upon Tyne
NE98 1BA

Possible changes to your Employment and Support Allowance

The government wants to change how long Employment and Support Allowance can be paid for some people. The change has not been approved by parliament yet, but if this happens it will become law by spring 2012.

This proposal is in the Welfare Reform Bill which is currently going through parliament. Changes may be made during the process, which is expected to be completed by the end of 2011.

We're writing to you because, if the change becomes law, it could affect your benefit. You currently get contribution-based Employment and Support Allowance, and you're in the work-related activity group. The government want to limit how long you could get this, to a maximum of 12 months.

You do not need to do anything now.

If this change affects you, we will write to you again and tell you what you need to do. We will tell you what other help you may be able to get.

To find out more about this proposed change please read the further information section at the end of this letter. You can also visit www.direct.gov.uk/benefits or ring the number at the top of this letter. Lines are open Monday to Friday, from 8.00am to 6.00pm. If you have speech or hearing difficulties and use textphone, ring the text phone number at the top of this letter.

You are entitled to support now to help you prepare for returning to work or to find a job. This includes advice about local support to help you manage your health condition and voluntary access to the Work Programme. You can get further information using the Directgov website or telephone the number at the top of this letter.



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Further Information

Why are you writing to me now ?

We want to keep you updated on the government's plans and reassure you we will keep you informed of any changes that may affect your benefit.

What is contribution-based Employment and Support Allowance ?

People receive contribution-based Employment and Support Allowance if they have limited capability for work and have paid enough National Insurance contributions. It is different to Income Related Employment and Support Allowance which is paid to people depending on their income and savings.

What is the Work Related Activity Group ?

If you are in the Work Related Activity Group, it has been decided that work may not be appropriate for you now, but with support you can prepare for work in the future.

How will this proposed change affect my benefit ?

If this becomes law, people receiving contribution-based Employment and Support Allowance in the Work Related Activity Group will have the time they can receive this benefit limited to 12 months. People who have already received contribution-based Employment and Support Allowance for 12 months or more will have their benefit stopped as soon as the change is introduced. The 12 months will begin from the first day you were paid contribution-based Employment and Support Allowance.

If this change happens, you may be entitled to Income Related Employment and Support Allowance. You will not have to make a new claim, but we may have to ask you for more information. We will write to you before your benefit ends to tell you what to do to be considered for this.

What should I do now ?

You do not need to do anything to continue receiving your current benefits. We will write to you again if the proposals will affect your benefit and tell you what you need to do.

When will I find out for definite what is going to happen to my benefit ?

If parliament agree to this change we will write to you again before your contribution-based Employment and Support Allowance ends to tell you what you need to do.

The earliest this change can become law is April 2012. If the government's plans change we will write to you again.



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