
EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Regulations)

These Regulations amend the Social Security (Information-sharing in relation to Welfare Services etc.) Regulations 2012 (“the principal Regulations”) to allow the Secretary of State to share information relating to universal credit or welfare services with local authorities, citizens advice bureaux, credit unions, social landlords and relevant registered charities, and to allow those bodies to use and share that information for prescribed purposes.

Regulation 2 of the principal Regulations contains interpretation provisions. Regulation 2(2) of these Regulations amends regulation 2 of the principal Regulations to add new definitions for “universal credit claimant”, and “universal support initiative”. The definition of “social landlord” is amended to provide for cases involving universal credit.

Section 131(1) of the Welfare Reform Act 2012 allows the Secretary of State (or a person providing services to the Secretary of State) to supply relevant information relating to certain social security benefits or welfare services (described in section 131(12)) to a “qualifying person”. Regulation 5 of the principal Regulations prescribes the purposes for which such information may be supplied. Regulation 2(3) of these Regulations inserts new sub-paragraphs into regulation 5 of the principal Regulations to allow the Secretary of State to supply information confirming that a universal credit claimant has made a claim for or has an award of universal credit to social landlords, to enable those landlords to determine whether those persons need help to manage their financial affairs. Another new sub-paragraph allows the Secretary of State to supply relevant information in circumstances where universal credit claimants have been identified by the Secretary of State or a universal support provider (that is, one of the bodies listed in the new regulation 10(1)(e) inserted into the principal Regulations) as requiring advice, assistance or support under a universal support initiative. This information can be supplied to those providers so that they can provide such advice, assistance or support and monitor and evaluate such advice, assistance or support.

Section 131(3) of the Welfare Reform Act 2012 allows a qualifying person who holds relevant information for a prescribed purpose relating to, amongst other things, welfare services, to use the information for another prescribed purpose relating to welfare services, or to supply it to another qualifying person for use in relation to the same or another prescribed purpose. Regulation 6 of the principal Regulations prescribes the purposes for which relevant information must be held by a qualifying person in order for them to be able to use or supply it for purposes prescribed in regulations 7 to 9B of the principal Regulations. Regulation 4 of these Regulations amends regulation 6 of the principal Regulations to specify a new “holding” purpose to capture relevant information held by universal support providers as part of a universal support initiative.

A new regulation 9C is inserted into the principal Regulations to outline new purposes for which the qualifying persons may use or supply information. These are purposes connected with providing advice, assistance or support under a universal support initiative, or in relation to the monitoring and evaluation of such advice, assistance or support.

“Qualifying person” is defined in section 131(11) of the Welfare Reform Act 2012, and includes a local authority or an authority which administers housing benefit (or their service providers or persons exercising functions on their behalf) and other persons who may be prescribed. Regulation 6 of these Regulations amends regulation 10 of the principal Regulations to prescribe that local authorities, citizens advice bureaux, credit unions, social landlords and relevant registered charities are qualifying persons for the new purposes that are being added to regulations 5, 6, 9C, 16 and 17 by these Regulations.

Status: *This is the original version (as it was originally made). This item of legislation is currently only available in its original format.*

Section 131(2) of the Welfare Reform Act 2012 allows a qualifying person who holds relevant information for a prescribed purpose relating to welfare services to supply that information to the Secretary of State for a prescribed purpose relating to a relevant social security benefit. Regulation 7 of these Regulations amends regulation 16 of the principal Regulations to allow the bodies listed in the new regulation 10(1)(e) to supply information which is held by them for the purposes of providing advice, assistance or support under a universal support initiative, or for the purposes of monitoring and evaluating that initiative, to the Secretary of State. Regulation 17 of the principal Regulations is amended to permit this information to be shared for the purpose of providing advice, assistance or support to a universal credit claimant under a universal support initiative and monitoring and evaluating such advice, assistance or support.

An impact assessment has not been produced for this instrument as no negative impact on the private or voluntary sectors is foreseen.