

Factsheet

For single parents in England and Wales April 2017

Freephone

0808 802 0925

Gingerbread Single Parent Helpline

Money during maternity, paternity and adoption

It can be complicated to work out your finances when you're having a baby or adopting a child. It's important to know if you are eligible for benefits and tax credits and when to claim them, so you don't miss out on money your family is entitled to. It's also important to know about maternity, paternity and adoption pay so you can plan your finances.

The information in this factsheet is intended as a guide. If you are under 25, caring for someone who is disabled or ill, or have a mortgage, the rules can be different. The information on adoptions only applies to adoptions within the UK. The information in this factsheet is correct as of April 2017. For more advice contact the Gingerbread Single Parent Helpline on 0808 802 0925. Calls are free.

Note: If you have recently come to the United Kingdom, have limited right to be here, or are from the European Union, you might not be able to claim the benefits set out in this factsheet. Get specialist advice from your local advice centre before making a claim. See page 12 for organisations that can help.

Universal credit is a new benefit system that will replace many of the current benefits and tax credits. Some families with children who are claiming benefits for the first time in selected jobcentres are now able to claim universal credit. For more information on universal credit and how it may affect your family you can visit the [Gingerbread](#) website.

Counting back from your expected week of childbirth

To work out whether you qualify for maternity benefits and when you can start to receive them, you need to know your expected week of childbirth. This is the week your baby is due.

For the purpose of calculating maternity benefits, weeks begin on a Sunday. Look on a calendar to find the Sunday before your due date and use this. If your baby is due on a Sunday then use your due date.

For example, if you want to work out when the 15th week before your expected week of childbirth starts, find the Sunday before your due date (unless your baby is due on a Sunday, in which case use the due date) and count back 15 weeks.

See the planner on page eight for help working out when you become entitled to maternity benefits and leave.

Money for you during maternity or adoption leave

Statutory maternity pay, statutory paternity pay, statutory shared parental pay and statutory adoption pay are paid by your employer.

They are usually paid in the same way as you would receive your wages or salary.

Statutory maternity pay

You qualify for statutory maternity pay if you are working and:

- Have been employed by the same employer for at least 26 weeks by the end of the 15th week before your expected week of childbirth. As this is around week 25 of your pregnancy, you must have started working for your current employer before you became pregnant

- Earn at least £113 a week on average. Your average earnings are worked out by looking at how much you were paid in the eight weeks (if paid weekly) or two months (if paid monthly) before the end of the 15th week before your expected week of childbirth (usually the 25th week of pregnancy).

How much will I receive?

Statutory maternity pay can be paid for up to 39 weeks and is paid at two different rates:

- The first six weeks are paid at 90 per cent of your average weekly earnings
- The remaining 33 weeks are paid either at a standard rate of £140.98 a week or 90 per cent of your average weekly earnings, whichever is lower.

You do not have to repay statutory maternity pay if you don't return to work.

When can I get statutory maternity pay?

You can get statutory maternity pay from:

- When you are 29 weeks pregnant
- The day after the first full day of absence if you go off work sick with a pregnancy-related illness in the four weeks before your due date
- The day your baby is born if this is before the date you planned to go on maternity leave.

If you don't qualify for statutory maternity pay, you could claim maternity allowance, employment and support allowance, or income support.

When your statutory maternity pay ends, you can claim income support if you don't return to work, or if you work fewer than 16 hours a week and your income is low enough to qualify. If you can't return to work due to ill health, you can claim employment and support allowance.

Statutory paternity pay

You can get statutory paternity pay from your employer if you are the child's father or the spouse or civil partner of your child's mother, and you expect to be caring for the child.

If you are a single father, or a separated spouse or civil partner of your child's mother, and you look after your child for all or most of the time, contact the Gingerbread Single Parent Helpline on 0808 802 0925 for further advice.

Do I qualify for statutory paternity pay?

The rules about whether you qualify are the same as for statutory maternity pay, except that to qualify for statutory paternity pay you must still be employed by the same employer up to the birth of your baby.

How much will I receive?

Statutory paternity pay is paid for up to two weeks at the standard rate of £140.98 a week, or 90 per cent of your average earnings if that is lower. You do not have to repay it if you do not return to work after paternity leave.

When can I get statutory paternity pay?

You can be paid on or following the child's birth. Your paternity leave must be completed within eight weeks of the actual date of birth, eight weeks after the expected date of birth if your baby is born early, or within eight weeks of placement for adoption.

You must give your employer notice of when you intend to take leave at least 28 days before your paternity pay is due to start, or if you are adopting, within seven days of being told that you have been matched with a child.

If you are looking after your child by yourself because your partner has died, there are different rules, and you may be able to take an additional amount of parental leave and pay. As the rules are complicated please call the Gingerbread Single Parent Helpline for more information.

Statutory shared parental pay

If you are the father or the spouse or civil partner of the mother of a child born on or after 5 April 2015 and you expect to be caring for the child the majority of the time, you may be able to get statutory shared parental pay. This is where your child's other parent can end her maternity pay or in some cases maternity leave early, so that the other parent can claim some parental pay too. The same applies to adoptive parents, who can share adoption leave and statutory adoption pay.

The rules on this are complicated so please call the Gingerbread Single Parent Helpline for more information.

Statutory adoption pay

Do I qualify for statutory adoption pay?

To qualify for this, you have to satisfy similar conditions as for statutory maternity pay except you must:

- Have been continuously employed by the same employer for at least 26 weeks up to the week you were told that you had been matched with a child for adoption
- Have average weekly earnings of at least £113. Your average earnings are worked out by looking at how much you were paid in the eight weeks (if paid weekly) or two months (if paid monthly) before the week you were notified of the child's placement with you.

How much will I receive?

Statutory adoption pay can be paid for up to 39 weeks and is paid at two different rates:

- The first six weeks are paid at 90 per cent of your average weekly earnings
- The remaining 33 weeks are paid either at a standard rate of £140.98 a week or 90 per cent of your average weekly earnings, whichever is lower.
- If you don't qualify for statutory adoption pay, you could claim income support (see page five for the criteria for claiming income support). You may also be eligible for financial support from your local authority and/or the adoption agency.

You do not have to repay statutory adoption pay if you don't return to work.

When your statutory adoption pay ends, you can claim income support if you don't return to work and your child is under five years old. You can also claim income support if you work fewer than 16 hours a week and your income is low enough to qualify. See our factsheet [Claiming income support and other benefits](#).

You can claim jobseeker's allowance if your child is over five years old and you are looking for paid employment. See our factsheet [Claiming jobseeker's allowance](#).

If you can't return to work due to ill health, you can claim employment and support allowance. See page four for details.

When can I get statutory adoption pay?

Your statutory adoption leave and statutory adoption pay can start either from the date of your child's placement with you, or up to 14 days before the expected date of the placement. You must, where possible, give your employer at least 28 days' notice of when you want your pay to start.

Contractual maternity, paternity or adoption pay

This is any additional amount you receive from your employer on top of your statutory pay. Employers do not have to give you any extra pay during maternity, paternity or adoption leave but some choose to. Check your employment contract to see if this applies to you.

There may be conditions attached. For example, you could be asked to repay the extra money if you don't return to work after your leave.

Maternity allowance

If you don't qualify for statutory maternity pay, you could qualify for maternity allowance. You can claim this if you are self-employed, have only recently been employed, have changed your job during your pregnancy, or you don't earn enough to qualify for statutory maternity pay.

Do I qualify for maternity allowance?

To qualify you must:

- Have been employed for any 26 weeks (they do not have to be in a row) during the 66 weeks (one year and 14 weeks) immediately before your expected week of childbirth
- Have average weekly earnings of at least £30 per week. Your earnings can be averaged over any 13 week period. You can add together earnings from more than one job and you should choose the weeks in which you earned the most.
- There are different rules for self-employed women – call the Gingerbread Single Parent Helpline for more information.

How much will I receive?

Maternity allowance is paid for up to 39 weeks at a standard rate of £140.98 a week, or 90 per cent of your average earnings if that is lower.

When can I get maternity allowance?

If you're employed, your maternity allowance will be paid from the same date and for the same period as statutory maternity pay (see page two). If you're unemployed your maternity allowance begins when you're 29 weeks pregnant.

To ensure your maternity allowance is processed in time, claim this benefit once you are 26 weeks pregnant.

If you apply for maternity allowance but don't qualify, you can be considered for employment and support allowance without having to make a separate claim. You should ask for this to be looked at.

Can I still get maternity pay if my baby is stillborn or passes away?

You are entitled to maternity leave and statutory maternity pay or maternity allowance if your baby is stillborn after the end of the 24th week of pregnancy. This is calculated as being in or after the 16th week before the week your baby was due.

If your baby is born alive but does not survive, you continue to be entitled to full maternity leave and statutory maternity pay or maternity allowance, if you meet the qualifying conditions, regardless of how long your baby lived or when your baby was born.

Employment and support allowance

Do I qualify for employment and support allowance?

To qualify for employment and support allowance on pregnancy grounds you must not be entitled to statutory sick pay and:

- Be at least 34 weeks pregnant
- Or, have given birth less than two weeks ago
- Or, be unable to work because of your pregnancy
- Or, be pregnant and there would be a serious risk to your health or your baby's health if you worked
- Or, be entitled to maternity allowance and in the maternity allowance period. Whether you are entitled to employment and support allowance in this situation will depend on your circumstances. See 'How much will I receive' below for further details. You should ask for your claim for maternity allowance to also be treated as a claim for employment and support allowance.

You can claim employment and support allowance because you cannot work due to pregnancy regardless of whether or not you have a job. The claim on pregnancy grounds will end 2 weeks after your child is born if you do not have a long term health condition or disability. You will be able to claim another benefit such as income support instead.

If you have a long-term health problem or disability you can claim on the grounds of ill-health and the claim will continue after the birth of your child. For more information see the Gingerbread factsheet [Benefits and tax credits for ill-health or disability](#).

When can I get employment and support allowance?

You can apply at any time if you are unable to work due to a pregnancy-related illness or because it would cause a serious risk to your health or the health of your baby. If you claim before week 34 of your pregnancy you will have to attend a medical assessment as part of your claim.

You are automatically entitled to employment and support allowance when you are 34 weeks pregnant and up to two weeks after you have given birth. You won't need to attend a medical if you claim ESA during this period.

During these periods it's assumed that you can't work due to your pregnancy or having had a baby, and you don't have to attend a medical assessment.

When your employment and support allowance ends you could get another benefit, such as income support.

How much will I receive?

Employment and support allowance is paid at a basic rate of £73.10 a week during the assessment period, which is usually the first 13 weeks after you make your claim. After the assessment period how much you receive depends on which group you are placed in. If you are placed in the 'work related activity' group you will remain on the basic rate of £73.10 a week. If you are placed in the 'support' group you could receive £109.65 a week. If you are getting income related employment and support allowance, you could receive £125.05 a week. See our factsheet [Benefits for ill health or disability](#) for more information.

If you have a mortgage you may also get help with your mortgage interest payments included in income-related employment and support allowance. See page eight for further information.

Income-related employment and support allowance is reduced if you have savings or capital over £6,000. You are not entitled to income-related employment and support allowance if you have savings or capital over £16,000.

The rules about claiming both maternity allowance and employment support allowance are complicated. For more information and advice on when to claim, contact the Gingerbread Single Parent Helpline.

Income support

Do I qualify for income support?

You may qualify for income support if any of the following apply to you:

- If you are incapable of work because of your pregnancy
- When you are 29 weeks pregnant (or your baby is due in 11 weeks or less)
- After the birth of your child if you don't qualify for statutory maternity pay or maternity allowance
- You are on unpaid maternity or adoption leave
- After your statutory maternity pay, maternity allowance or statutory adoption pay has stopped
- If you only receive a small amount of statutory maternity or adoption pay or maternity allowance, or if you are entitled to help with your mortgage interest payments. However, this will depend on whether you are also entitled to working tax credit during your maternity period and how much you get. See page six for further information. If you're adopting a child of any age you can claim income support during the period between your child's placement with you and the final adoption order if you don't qualify for statutory adoption pay, or if it's a small amount, or has ended. If your child is over five and you have been granted a final adoption order you can claim other benefits such as jobseeker's allowance instead. If your child is under five then you can continue to claim income support after the final adoption order until they are five years old.

If you're claiming income support during your pregnancy, you need to inform Jobcentre Plus of the birth, as it's a change in your circumstances.

You can also claim income support after the birth of your baby if you don't work, or work fewer than 16 hours a week and your income is low. You can claim income support as a single parent until your youngest child is five and you will not be required to look for paid work during that time.

Income support is £73.10 a week. If you have a mortgage you may also get help with your mortgage interest payments added to your income support. See page eight for further information.

If you have other income such as statutory maternity pay this reduces the income support you are entitled to. Income support is also reduced if you have savings or capital over £6000. You are not entitled to income support if you have savings or capital over £16000.

If you are under 18, someone in the family is disabled, or you have a mortgage, there are different rules that may apply to you. Call the Gingerbread Single Parent Helpline for more information.

Income-based jobseeker's allowance

Do I qualify for jobseeker's allowance?

You can claim jobseeker's allowance if you're unemployed and you're less than 29 weeks pregnant. You claim income support from week 29.

Jobseeker's allowance is £73.10 a week.

To qualify for jobseeker's allowance you must be available for and actively seeking work.

If you're under 18, different rules apply to you. Contact the Gingerbread Single Parent Helpline for advice.

Tax credits

Tax credits are paid by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC). The amount you receive depends on your income and circumstances. Tax credits are made up of different amounts of money called elements. Having a baby or adopting a child may mean that you become entitled to tax credits for the first time, or that your current tax credits will change.

Child tax credit

You can claim this if you are responsible for a child or young person under the age of 16 or under the age of 20 if they are in full time non-advanced education or training (up to A-level or equivalent).

The amount you get depends on your income and circumstances. You can receive more child tax credit if your child has a disability.

Working tax credit

Working tax credit before and during maternity leave

If you were working before your maternity leave, you may qualify for working tax credit during the first 39 weeks of your leave. This is because you are still treated as if you are working your usual hours during this period.

You may qualify for working tax credit before your baby is born and before your maternity leave starts if you:

- Are 25 or over and working 30 or more hours a week
- Or, you already have a child and are working at least 16 hours a week
- Or, you have a disability and you are working at least 16 hours a week.

If you are not currently getting tax credits due to your usual salary being too high, you may qualify after all if your income will be lower this year due to your maternity leave.

If you're not entitled to working tax credit at the start of your maternity, adoption, paternity or shared parental leave, you could qualify after the birth of your baby or the date of the adoption placement. To qualify you must have been working immediately before your maternity, adoption, shared parental or paternity leave.

You can receive working tax credits during the first 39 weeks of your leave regardless of whether you plan to return to work. Working tax credit is paid in addition to statutory maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption pay, or maternity allowance.

Whether you qualify and how much you can get also depends on your income and circumstances.

Working tax credits after you return to work

If you return to work for 16 hours a week or more, you could qualify for working tax credit. This can include payments of up to 70 per cent of your childcare costs.

For more information see the Gingerbread factsheet [Benefits and tax credits if you work 16 or more hours a week](#).

Childcare costs during maternity leave

If you're already receiving working tax credits for childcare costs for another child, this will continue during the first 39 weeks of maternity or adoption leave. You can also claim help with the cost of any new childcare you use for another child or your new baby.

How do I claim tax credits?

You can download a claim form claim and manage your tax credits online, including to report changes to your circumstances, and to see how much and when you will be paid. This can be done through HMRC's [tax credits digital service](#) (www.gov.uk/manage-your-tax-credits).

Alternatively you can make a claim by calling the Tax Credit Helpline on 0345 300 3900. Contact them as soon as your circumstances change so that you don't miss out on money your family is entitled to.

Tax credits can be complex. If you are unsure, contact the Gingerbread Single Parent Helpline for advice on your situation.

Child benefit

Child benefit is £20.70 a week for your first child and £13.70 a week for each of your other children. To claim, contact the Child Benefit Helpline on 0300 200 3100.

If you earn £50,000 a year or more, the amount of your child benefit will be affected. See the information on the Gingerbread website – ['Child benefit high income rules'](#).

Sure Start maternity grant

This is a one-off payment of £500. To qualify, you must receive one of the following:

- Income support
- Income-based jobseeker's allowance
- Income-related employment and support allowance
- Working tax credit, but only if this includes the disability or severe disability element
- Universal credit
- Pension credit
- Child tax credit of more than £10.50 a week.

You can't claim if you are already responsible for other children under the age of 16 – unless you are expecting a multiple birth (twins, for example).

If you don't receive one of these benefits during your pregnancy, you could become entitled to a grant after your baby is born. Make sure you apply for tax credits straight away so that you can apply for the grant in time.

You can claim when you are 29 weeks pregnant until three months after the birth. If you're adopting a baby, you must claim within three months of the adoption and your child should be under 12 months old when you claim.

You can get a claim form from your midwife, doctor or health visitor, or download a copy from www.gov.uk. A health professional must sign it to confirm that you have received advice about your own and your baby's health.

Help with health costs

Free prescriptions and dental treatment

These are available during your pregnancy and for 12 months after you have given birth. You can get an exemption certificate by completing a form available from your GP, midwife or health visitor. You may continue to qualify after your child is 12 months old, depending on your income and circumstances.

Healthy Start

If you qualify, you can get vouchers that can be exchanged for vitamins, cow's milk or infant formula, fruit and vegetables.

Do I qualify for Healthy Start vouchers?

You can qualify if you are:

- At least 10 weeks pregnant and under the age of 18
- Over 18, at least 10 weeks pregnant and/or have a child under four and claiming:
 - Income support
 - Income-based jobseeker's allowance
 - Income-related employment and support allowance
- Child tax credit, but not working tax credit, and your income is less than £16,190.
- Universal credit with a family take home pay of £408 or less per month

How do I claim Healthy Start vouchers?

You can request a claim form by calling the helpline on 0345 607 6823. An online claim form is available on the website – www.healthystart.nhs.uk.

Help with housing costs

Rent

If you pay rent you may be entitled to housing benefit, which is paid by your local council. To claim contact your local council – you can find the number online at www.gov.uk.

The amount you receive depends on what income and savings you have. If you are entitled to housing benefit it will cover all or some of your rent, depending on your circumstances. You can claim housing benefit whether or not you are in paid employment.

In certain areas housing benefit is being phased out and you might be told to apply for universal credit instead. More information about universal credit is available at <http://universalcreditinfo.net>

Council tax

Your local council will run a council tax reduction scheme. Each council will have their own criteria. If you're on a low income, you could be entitled to help with your council tax.

Check with your local council to see if you're eligible.

If you're the only adult in your property you should get a 25 per cent discount on your bill. This applies regardless of your income.

Help with mortgage interest

If you're claiming income support, income-based jobseeker's allowance, or income-related employment and support allowance, you may get help with your mortgage interest payments. Universal credit can also include a payment towards your mortgage, depending on your circumstances.

The rules for help with mortgage interest are complicated. For more information on your situation and advice on when to claim, contact the Gingerbread Single Parent Helpline.

Problems during maternity, paternity or adoption

If you have problems claiming any of the benefits listed in this factsheet, or you disagree with your employer about what you are entitled to, contact Gingerbread's Single Parent Helpline for more information.

The organisations Working Families and Maternity Action can advise you on your rights at work while you are pregnant and on returning to work after maternity leave, for example, if you are having problems at work or are not sure about entitlement to take leave, attend medical or antenatal appointments or are thinking of returning to work part-time. See page 12 for their contact details.

Key dates: what to do and when during pregnancy and maternity

Use the planner below to check what you need to do and when. It contains key dates such as when to tell your employer about your pregnancy, when to claim benefits and tax credits and when you may take maternity or adoption leave.

You can add in your own important dates such as scans or midwife appointments.

For the purpose of calculating entitlement to maternity leave and benefits, weeks start on a Sunday.

Use a calendar to find the Sunday at the beginning of your expected week of childbirth, then work backwards to fill in the dates for the start of other important weeks. If your baby is due on a Sunday, use your due date.

For example:

- Beth's baby is due on Thursday 12 November, so her expected week of childbirth starts on Sunday 8 November.
- Sunita's baby is due on Sunday 8 November, so her expected week of childbirth also starts on Sunday 8 November.

Date planner

Sunday	1 week	Sunday	2 weeks
Check whether you qualify for working tax credit (page 6). Even if your usual salary is too high to qualify, you may qualify if your income this year will be lower due to your maternity leave.			
Sunday	3 weeks	Sunday	4 weeks
Sunday	5 weeks	Sunday	6 weeks
Sunday	7 weeks	Sunday	8 weeks
Sunday	9 weeks	Sunday	10 weeks
		Claim Healthy Start vouchers if you are under 18 or if you are meet one of the other conditions set out on page seven	

Sunday	11 weeks	Sunday	12 weeks
Sunday	13 weeks	Sunday	14 weeks
Sunday	15 weeks	Sunday	16 weeks
Sunday	17 weeks	Sunday	18 weeks
Sunday	19 weeks	Sunday	20 weeks
Sunday	21 weeks	Sunday	22 weeks
Sunday	23 weeks	Sunday	24 weeks
Sunday	25 weeks	Sunday	26 weeks
<p>This is the 15th week before your expected week of childbirth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To qualify for statutory maternity pay you must have worked for your current employer continuously for 26 weeks up to and including this week ■ You should give your employer written notice of your intention to take maternity leave by this date if you have not already done so. Tell them when you want your maternity leave to start. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ If you are eligible for maternity allowance, you can contact Jobcentre Plus to make a claim from the 26th week of your pregnancy. You cannot receive the money until you are at least 29 weeks pregnant. 	
Sunday	27 weeks	Sunday	28 weeks

Sunday	29 weeks	Sunday	30 weeks
<p>This is the 11th week before your expected week of childbirth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ This is the earliest date you can start your maternity leave ■ This is the earliest date you can receive statutory maternity pay or maternity allowance ■ If you are unemployed and eligible for maternity allowance, your payments will start from this date ■ If you are unemployed and not eligible for maternity benefits, you can claim income support from this date. If you start to get income support you can also claim Healthy Start Vouchers if you didn't qualify before. ■ This is the earliest date you can claim the Sure Start maternity grant. 			
Sunday	31 weeks	Sunday	32 weeks
Sunday	33 weeks	Sunday	34 weeks
		<p>This is the sixth week before your expected week of childbirth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ You can claim employment and support allowance because you are pregnant from this date. You must not be entitled to any other maternity benefits. 	
Sunday	35 weeks	Sunday	36 weeks
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ If you are ill because of your pregnancy and off work, your employer can start your maternity leave from this date ■ Remember to give your employer 28 days' notice of your intention to claim statutory maternity pay, if you have not already done so. 	
Sunday	37 weeks	Sunday	38 weeks
Sunday	39 weeks	Sunday	40 weeks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To be eligible for maternity allowance you must have been employed for at least 26 weeks during the previous 66 weeks (one year and 14 weeks) up to and including the 39th week of your pregnancy. 		Your expected week of childbirth.	
Baby is one week old		Baby is two weeks old	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Once you have registered your child's birth you can claim child benefit and child tax credit, and possibly working tax credit. ■ If you are not already in receipt of Healthy Start vouchers, you can make a claim if you start to receive child tax credit - but not working tax credit- and your income is less than £16,190 ■ If you are already receiving tax credits, tell HMRC straight away about your change in circumstances. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ If you have claimed employment and support allowance because you are pregnant (and not because you have a long -term health problem or disability) it will stop two weeks after your baby is born. You may be able to get another benefit. Call the Gingerbread Single Parent Helpline for advice. 	
Baby is three months old			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ If you are eligible to receive a Sure Start maternity grant, you must have claimed before your baby is three months old. 			

Further help and information

Gingerbread Single Parent Helpline

Freephone 0808 802 0925

www.gingerbread.org.uk

Provides free, confidential advice for single parents. No matter the challenge – around your finances, contact arrangements or help you could receive – our trained advisers are here with tailored advice that works for you.

One Parent Families Scotland Lone Parent Helpline

0808 801 0323

www.opfs.org.uk

Run by our partner organisation, One Parent Families Scotland, the Lone Parent Helpline provides free, confidential advice and information for single parents in Scotland.

Child Maintenance Options

0800 988 0988

<http://www.cmoptions.org>

Information about making arrangements for child maintenance.

Citizens Advice

www.citizensadvice.org.uk

England: 03444 111 444

Wales: 03444 77 20 20

Information and advice on a wide range of issues including benefits and tax credits.

Jobcentre Plus

0345 6088610 Maternity Allowance enquiries

0345 608 8553 Textphone

0800 055 6688 Jobcentre Plus claim line

www.gov.uk

Child Benefit Helpline

0300 200 3100

www.hmrc.gov.uk/childbenefit

Information on child benefit and how to claim.

Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC)

www.oisc.gov.uk

For information on organisations/solicitors that give immigration advice.

Tax Credit Helpline

0345 300 3900

<https://www.gov.uk/qualify-tax-credits>

Information about tax credits and to request claim forms.

Working Families

0300 012 0312

<https://www.workingfamilies.org.uk>

Provides advice and information about employment rights for working parents, including rights during maternity and adoption.

Maternity Action

0845 600 8533

<https://www.maternityaction.org.uk>

Provides expert advice and information about rights and entitlements during pregnancy, maternity leave and when you return to work.

More from Gingerbread

The following related Gingerbread factsheets are available:

- > [Claiming income support](#)
- > [Benefits and tax credits if you work 16 hours a week or more](#)
- > [Tax credits when your circumstances change](#)
- > [Housing options for single parents](#)

Download them from our [website](#) or call 0207 428 5400 to request them

Become a Gingerbread member

Membership is available to single parents in England and Wales. Join a community of thousands of single parents who benefit from the mutual support, free advice and information provided by Gingerbread. You can also meet other single parents at one of our local support groups.

Visit our [website](#), call 0800 018 4318 or email membership@gingerbread.org.uk

Gingerbread

Single parents, equal families

Gingerbread, the charity for single parent families, is registered in England and Wales as a company limited by guarantee, no. 402748, and a registered charity, no. 230750. The Gingerbread Single Parent Helpline is supported by the Department for Education, HMRC, The Big Lottery and other funders and is accredited by the Helplines Partnership.

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