

# WELFARE BENEFITS

Understanding the welfare benefit system is not easy as the range of available benefits, where to access them and whether you are entitled to them, is extremely complex. We will summarise below but not all benefits are listed although we have tried to include all the more usual ones. Almost all assume a low income and/or depend on your having worked and made National Insurance Contributions or you are suffering ill health.

## Available from the Department of Work and Pensions

**Disability benefits** - contact the Benefits Enquiry Line on 0800 882200.  
[www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)

For people of working age needing to claim benefits call Jobcentre Plus on 0800 055 6688.  
[www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk)

**Social Fund** - Crisis Loans only 0800 032 8349. Text Phone 0800 032 8363.  
 All other budgeting loans and grants 0845 608 8616. Text Phone 0845 608 8570.

## Available from the Pension Service

**Pension Credit** - for people over 60 on a low income.  
[www.thepensionsservice.gov.uk](http://www.thepensionsservice.gov.uk)

## Available from Plymouth City Council

**Housing Benefit** - help to pay your rent for those on low incomes.  
 Visit the Civic Centre every weekday except Wednesday from 8.30 a.m. - 5 p.m. and on Wednesdays from 9.45 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Tel: 01752 304889

**Council Tax Benefit** - help to pay your council tax for those on low incomes.  
 Visit the Civic Centre every weekday from 8.30 a.m. - 5.00 p.m.

Tel: 01752 668000

**Educational Maintenance Allowance** (*for children in the sixth forms*) - as for Council Tax above.

**Help with free school meals** - for those claiming Income Support. As for Council Tax above.

## Available from the Community Legal Service

**Legal Advice** - for those on low incomes.

Tel: 0845 345 4345 (between 9 a.m. - 6.30 p.m.)  
[www.communitylegaladvice.org.uk](http://www.communitylegaladvice.org.uk)

## Available from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs

**Working Tax Credit** - for those working more than 30 hours (*or 16 in some circumstances*) but on low incomes.

**Child Tax Credit** - for those with a child who may or may not be working. Amount will vary depending on income.

Telephone HMRC Tax Credits Helpline on 0845 300 3900  
www.hmrc.gov.uk

## Help with health costs

Free prescriptions, dental treatment and check ups, eyesight tests, vouchers for glasses and contact lenses, travel to hospital.  
www.ppa.org.uk

## Available from Citizens Advice

For advice on all of the above visit [www.adviceguide.org.uk](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk)

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Advice agencies in Plymouth where you can get further help which is free.

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## Plymouth C.A.B.

Offer a 'drop-in' service for all benefits advice every weekday between 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Tel: 0870 126 4011  
Email: [advice@plymouthcab.org.uk](mailto:advice@plymouthcab.org.uk)

They also offer Legal Help for welfare benefits for those on low incomes.

## Routeways Family Information Service

For advice on benefits for children and families, e.g. Statutory Maternity Pay, Maternity Allowance, Child Benefit, Child Tax Credit and Child Trust Funds.

Tel: 0800 783 4259  
Email: [info@familyinfoservice.co.uk](mailto:info@familyinfoservice.co.uk)  
www.routecentre.co.uk

## Disability Information & Advice Centre (DIAC)

For advice on all disability benefits including Statutory Sick Pay, Incapacity Benefit, Disability Living Allowance and Carers Allowance.

Tel: 01752 201065 / 201766  
Fax: 01752 202214  
Text: 01752 201766  
Email: [diac@plymouthguild.org.uk](mailto:diac@plymouthguild.org.uk)

## Age Concern

For advice on retirement pensions, pension credits, winter fuel payments, cold weather payments (when very cold).

Tel: 01752 665624