
EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Order)

These Regulations provide for further measures in response to the present outbreak of coronavirus disease in Northern Ireland.

Under regulation 2, modifications to the amount of the standard allowance in universal credit for the 2020-21 tax year, which essentially increases the underlying rates by £86.67 per assessment period, are continued. The modification will last for a further six months and take account of any up-rating order that takes effect during the period for which the modification is in force. The temporary amounts will not apply for the purposes of calculating transitional protection in relation to a claimant who has moved to universal credit under Part 4 (managed migration) of the Universal Credit (Transitional Provisions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016 (S.R. 2016 No. 226) as amended by the Universal Credit (Managed Migration and Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulation (Northern Ireland) 2019 (S.R. 2019 No. 152). Similarly, the temporary amounts will also not apply for the purposes of calculating transitional protection as a result of being a former Severe Disability Premium recipient who has naturally migrated to UC.

These Regulations also amend the provision by which regulation 2 of the Social Security (Coronavirus) (Further Measures) (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2020 (S.R. 2020 No. 53) (“the Further Measures Regulations”) is due to expire on 30th April 2021. Regulation 2 of the Further Measures Regulations provides a discretion for the Department of Communities to apply a number of measures in relation to the minimum income floor, which applies to self-employed claimants in universal credit. Following a review by the Department of the operation of that regulation, it will now expire on 31st July 2021.

A full impact assessment has not been produced for this instrument as no, or no significant, impact on the private, public or voluntary sectors is foreseen.

These Regulations make in relation to Northern Ireland only, provision corresponding to provision contained in Regulations made by the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in relation to Great Britain and accordingly, by virtue of Section 149(3) of, and paragraph 10 of schedule 5 to, the Social Security Administration (Northern Ireland) 1998 (c.8), are not subject to the requirement of section 149(2) of that Act for prior reference to the Social Security Advisory Committee.