

### Always follow these rules when applying for benefits:

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#### DO:

- Claim as soon as possible. The sooner you apply, the sooner you'll get your money. Some benefits can be backdated but others can't.
- Hand over your form in person if possible and ask for a receipt.
- Keep photocopies of all the forms and supporting information you send in.
- Keep a note of the name of anyone you speak to about your benefit claim, the date you spoke to them and what they said.
- Take someone with you to any interviews.
- Take your national insurance number with you, as well as proof of your identity (such as a birth certificate or passport) and proof of your income (such as your benefit book or wage slips) when you apply for benefits.
- Provide as much information to back up your claim as you possibly can.
- Visit [Turn2us](https://www.turn2us.org.uk) to get an idea of what benefits you might be eligible for.

#### DON'T:

- Give up because the forms look long and complicated. Get advice and help.
- Lie about anything on the form – you could be prosecuted.
- Be embarrassed about including personal information on your application form. If you have a disability, for example, be sure to explain the real impact it has.
- Assume that your claim is being processed if you haven't heard anything back yet. Ring the DWP, Jobcentre or council office to check what is happening.
- Forget to apply for an interim payment if it takes a long time for your claim to be processed.
- Go on a spending spree if you are overpaid benefits. In most cases you will have to pay the money back – deductions can be made from your future benefits if you don't have any other income.

## Further advice

Send us an email at

<https://sheltercymru.org.uk/email-advice/>

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Information contained in this checklist is correct at the time of publication. Please check details before use.

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