TRANSITION FROM ASYLUM SUPPORT TO MAINSTREAM BENEFITS

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When an individual's asylum application is successful, their asylum support payments will stop. They will, instead, be entitled to seek employment and apply for mainstream benefits. This document summarises the process to be followed during this transition

1. You are entitled to apply for benefit 42 days in advance of your asylum support ending
2. To start the process the applicant should complete an online application form for Universal Credit. This guide helps with that process: Refugee guide to claiming Universal Credit and other benefits
3. Once the applicant has made the claim, they need to wait for a phone call from the Universal Credit team to arrange an ID appointment. The appointment will be at Derby City Jobcentre at Derby City Council House, Corporation Street
4. At the new claim appointment, the applicant will need to provide three forms of ID as follows: one form of primary evidence (e-visa or passport); and two forms of secondary evidence (including bank statements, tenancy agreement, home office documents)
5. A fast-track Habitual Residency Test (HRT) is possible for all refugees and will result in the decision being completed at the same appointment by the work coach. However, this is only possible if a BRP/Biometric Residence Permit has been presented
6. If a e-visa has not been presented then the applicant will be asked to attend an additional appointment called a Habitual Residency Test (HRT). This is to satisfy that you have been resident in the UK for the past three months. This may also require supporting evidence such as Home Office asylum support documentation, passport, bank statements, school letters, wage slips, tenancy agreement etc. All documentation will then be sent to the Decision Maker for a decision. Although there is no defined timescale the decision will always be completed before the first payment due date. Universal Credit payments are made by calendar month in arrears
7. The Home Office now include the national insurance number on e-visas for refugees
8. Once the HRT decision has been approved the claimant may ask for a same-day advance payment. This is repayable and the claimant decides on both the advance amount (there will be a maximum amount) and the repayment option (maximum of 12 months)
9. The applicant needs to obtain a basic current bank account. If the applicant has no bank account then the Jobcentre can apply for a Payment Exception Service (PES). The applicant should ask the Jobcentre about this
10. This general guide for new refugees – Welcome a guide for new refugees – may also be helpful during the process described above

Please send any updates to this summary sheet to newarrivalsalliance@communityactionderby.org.uk