**Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and other disability benefits**

**Email from national DWP to advisers 15.5.20**

“You will be aware that we have been making a number of temporary changes in PIP to ensure we continue to provide the support that people need and allow safe access to our services.  Things have been moving quickly as we have responded to the challenges of Covid-19.  We thought it might be helpful to summarise a few key changes that have been made as a result of the crisis.

* New claims continue to be processed.
* We have extended the deadline to return the PIP2 to three months.
* Change of circumstances continue to be processed.  If someone has a change in their needs, they should notify us immediately so that we can ensure that they have the correct level of award.
* All face-to-face assessments have been suspended.  Where possible and in line with usual processes, a paper-based assessment will be undertaken.  If needed, a telephone-based assessment will be conducted. Both providers have been conducting telephone assessments for the last few weeks.
* It is now possible for individuals to receive and return the PIP2 form electronically after the initial call to the Department.  Supporting evidence can also be submitted electronically, at the same time as the PIP2.
* All awards that are coming up for a review soon will be automatically extended. Payments will continue and we will be in touch about a review in due course.
* For anyone who is currently claiming Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and who has been invited to claim PIP, no action is needed now.  DLA payments will continue and we will be in touch in the future to discuss the claim to PIP.

Finally, we are particularly keen to gather any feedback on the telephone-based assessments to understand how it is working in practice. Next week we plan to send you a short, informal survey asking for your views.  It would be immensely helpful if you’re able to share any insight with us please.”

[Clarification by minister](https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2020-05-11/debates/B0120E81-4DBF-4ACD-AF05-B634AA997B09/Access-To-WorkCosts#contribution-F02642B6-B1EA-47E2-B8E3-ACFB0CE4A009)

Question:

*On 4 May, the Secretary of State assured the House that the Government would provide an automatic extension of PIP awards that are due to expire during the coronavirus virus pandemic. Can the Minister confirm that this extension applies to all claimants, including those who received an award following an appeal?*

Answer:

*‘There was an issue for those on fixed-term, short awards, but we have now addressed that, and those claimants will continue to get an automatic six months’ extension if it is due in the next three months.’*