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Please tell us thi  
if you get in touc

Bolton Benefit Centre  
Pittman Way  
Preston  
PR11 2AH

Phone 0845 6088531  
TEXTPHONE for the deaf/hard of  
hearing ONLY 0845 6088551

Date 03/05/2011

THE BENEFIT YOU RECEIVE IS CHANGING

You currently receive Incapacity Benefit, Severe Disablement Allowance, or Income Support on the grounds of illness or disability. We are phasing out these benefits. This letter explains how this will affect you and what you need to do.

We need to assess you for Employment and Support Allowance. This is a new benefit that helps people with an illness or disability move into work and provides people with the support they need.

Please take time to read the Further Information section included with this letter, which will help to answer your questions and will tell you more about the changes we are making to your benefits.

WHAT WE ARE GOING TO DO

We will telephone you soon to talk about how this change will affect you and to answer any questions you have. We will ask you some questions to confirm your identity. After the call, we will send you a questionnaire to complete with details of your illness or disability. This questionnaire is called Limited Capability for Work.

The number we will call you on is [REDACTED]. If you haven't heard from us within two weeks of the date of this letter, or if the number we have for you is not correct, please call us on the number above between Monday and Friday, from 8.00am to 6.00pm. This is a local rate call. If you have speech or hearing difficulties you can contact us using a textphone on the number above.

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#### WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

Once you receive it, please complete and return the questionnaire as soon as possible. IF YOU DON'T, YOUR BENEFIT MAY BE AFFECTED. It is important that you provide full details of your illness or disability on the form. After we have received your questionnaire we will contact you and tell you what you need to do next. You may need to attend a Work Capability Assessment and more details about this are included in the Further Information section of this letter.

If you need further advice on how to complete the questionnaire you can contact Jobcentre Plus, or your local welfare rights service such as Citizens Advice Bureau.

#### KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH YOU

We will keep in touch with you to let you know what is happening. If you have any concerns about these changes please tell us when we speak to you.

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## FURTHER INFORMATION

### WHAT IS CHANGING?

Employment and Support Allowance is replacing Incapacity Benefit, Income Support paid on the grounds of illness or disability and Severe Disablement Allowance.

### WHY IS IT CHANGING?

Employment and Support Allowance is a new way of helping people with an illness or disability move into work. The Government wants everyone who has an illness or disability to have this opportunity.

### DOES THIS CHANGE AFFECT EVERYONE?

Yes, but at different times. Customers will be considered and assessed for Employment and Support Allowance between 2010 and 2014. We are writing to you because you are affected now.

### HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

To decide if you are entitled to Employment and Support Allowance we need to assess and understand how your illness or disability affects the amount and type of work you could do.

We will send you a questionnaire to complete and we use the information you provide to decide if you need to attend a Work Capability Assessment. It is important that you attend this assessment if you are asked to, or your benefit may be affected. We then decide if you are entitled to Employment and Support Allowance.

### WHAT HAPPENS AT A WORK CAPABILITY ASSESSMENT?

A health care professional will assess you and advise Jobcentre Plus how your illness or disability affects you in your everyday life. We will contact you by telephone to arrange the appointment and will also send you a letter with the appointment details and directions to the medical examination centre.

### WHAT HAPPENS IF I AM ENTITLED TO EMPLOYMENT AND SUPPORT ALLOWANCE?

No one migrating from their existing benefit to Employment and Support Allowance will see a reduction in the level of their benefit entitlement at the point of change. You may be required to attend a work-focused health-related assessment and work-focused interviews. It is important that you attend these appointments or your benefit may be affected.

### WHAT IS A WORK-FOCUSED HEALTH RELATED ASSESSMENT?

A health care professional will ask you how you feel your illness or disability could be managed to enable you to return to work, and to understand better what help you may need to start work.

### WHAT IS A WORK-FOCUSED INTERVIEW?

This is a face-to-face interview with a job adviser. The purpose is to help you identify work you could do and the steps you could take to find work.

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**WHAT HAPPENS IF I AM NOT ENTITLED TO EMPLOYMENT AND SUPPORT ALLOWANCE?**  
We will call you to discuss what your benefit options are including how to challenge our decision if you think it is wrong. You may be entitled to Jobseekers Allowance, Income Support for other reasons or Pension Credit. The minimum age from which you can get Pension Credit is rising in stages from April 2010 from age 60 to 65. We will get in touch with you to discuss what your benefit options are at the appropriate time.

**WHAT IF I HAVE CHILDREN?**

Employment and Support Allowance does not include payment for children. If you currently get extra money in your Income Support for a child or children, we will send your details to HM Revenue and Customs and you will be assessed for Child Tax Credit. You do not need to make a claim. You will continue to be paid benefit for your child or children until you start receiving Child Tax Credit.

**WHAT IS CHILD TAX CREDIT?**

Child Tax Credit is a payment from the Government to support people bringing up children. To claim Child Tax Credit you must have the main responsibility for a child or young person. Also, any extra help you get (such as free school meals, Healthy Start and free prescriptions) will carry on if you receive Child Tax Credit.

**WHERE CAN I GET FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT TAX CREDITS?**

If you have any questions about Child Tax Credit, or tax credits in general, please have your National Insurance number available and phone the tax credits helpline 0845 300 3900 or textphone 0845 300 3909. They are open from 8.00am to 8.00pm, seven days a week. Or go to [www.hmrc.gov.uk/taxcredits](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/taxcredits).

**WHERE CAN I GET FURTHER INFORMATION?**

You can get information from our website [www.direct.gov.uk/benefits](http://www.direct.gov.uk/benefits). You can also get further advice from Jobcentre Plus or alternatively your local welfare rights service, such as Citizens Advice Bureau. Should you require special arrangements such as Braille, large text, audio or information in other languages, please tell us when we call you.