

Dear Treasury Select Committee

In light of the Committee's call for evidence into whether there are further areas which would benefit from financial support to tackle the Covid-19 crisis, please find below recommendations from Citizens Advice.

As you'll be aware, everyone is at a higher risk of having their incomes temporarily disrupted as a consequence of either the need to self-isolate or the wider economic shocks to our economy. Certain groups of people, such as those in low paid employment, the self-employed, people in receipt of universal credit and those in debt are in particular need of protection during this crisis.

In order to protect these people and ensure they can cover the bare essentials, our modelling shows that people will need to receive a **Crisis Minimum Income** of £180 a week. This can be achieved by:

- Setting **Statutory Sick Pay** at £180 per week, ensuring that any employee who is off sick receives the Crisis Minimum Income, and extending it to people on low incomes.
- **Extending SSP** to people who have been recently laid off, are taking unpaid dependents' leave or are socially distancing following government advice.
- Setting the **Universal Credit core element** at £180 a week, so that people who are not eligible for SSP or who have lost their job through the crisis, have the same amount to live on.
- Making similar adjustments to core allowances for **legacy benefits**, such as income support, Job Seekers' Allowance and contributory Employment and Support Allowances.

In addition, this should be coupled with wider action to ensure the social resilience of individuals and families more generally. The Government should introduce emergency measures to:

- **Extend the Cold Weather Payment** to provide support for self-isolating households paying higher energy bills in receipt of Universal Credit or legacy benefits.

You can find two papers for submission below, and a further blog:

- [Crisis Minimum Income](#)
- [Helping people through the Covid-19 pandemic](#)
- [Blog: The government announced unprecedented economic measures to tackle coronavirus. But there are still questions to be answered:](#)

If you would like any further information, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Best wishes

Alex

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Alex Clarke
Campaigns and Public Affairs Officer
[Citizens Advice](#)