

Written evidence submitted by Families Need Fathers (MRS0508)

1. Families Need Fathers - *because both parents matter* (FNF)

FNF is a registered UK charity, founded in 1974, providing information and support on shared parenting following family breakdown. FNF is NOT a fathers' rights group, but support the best interests of children through mature and collaborative parenting.

FNF receive approximately 35,000 consultations a year to our Helpline and local branches and through our website which has over six hundred thousand page views per year.

2. Reason for FNF responding to this call for evidence

2.1. Almost half of divorces involve children under sixteen¹ and it seems likely that the ratio is at least as high for unmarried parents. Mothers make up 86% of lone parents². The Office for National Statistics (ONS) and Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) classify a separated parent with less than half of care overnight stays with them as a 'lone' or 'single' parent or 'Parents with Care'. The converse of this is that 86% of separated men who are parents are classified as 'single adults' or 'Non Resident Parents' (NRPs) regardless of whether their children don't stay with them at all or stay for 182 nights a year (almost half).

2.2. Our charity mostly represents men who are fathers (although a small, but significant proportion of our service users are mothers and grandparents).

2.3. We understand that the Covid-19 pandemic will have had adverse effects on hundreds of thousands of parents regardless of gender and that single parents will specific difficulties to adjust to, particularly if they lose their jobs and/or relied on Child Maintenance to maintain their living standards. Inevitably, these consequences will disproportionately affect single parent women and the minority of men who are classified as single parents. Other organisations, such as Gingerbread, are better placed than we are to represent the difficulties that the coronavirus has created for them.

2.4. Our service users are predominantly separated men who are fathers and they are the focus of this submission in response to the Committee's call for evidence.

3. How have people, with specific protected characteristics, been affected by the illness or the response to it?

3.1. Since the 'lockdown' towards the end of March, 17% of calls to our national Helpline have been specifically related to the coronavirus and the impact they have experienced as fathers.

3.2. The main areas of concern for separated fathers have been:

- the breakdown children's parenting time with their fathers
- the responses to this by the Government and Family Justice system
- loss of income to support themselves and their children when staying with them
- unaffordability of Child Maintenance assessments that are insufficiently responsive to decreases of income
- lack of domestic abuse support for men, especially those with children

3.3. FNF share these views and are additionally concerned that:

Children will lose out on Child Maintenance support as, low-income paying parents, hoping to return to economic activity, will find that for them work does not pay.

The problem is caused by Universal Credit being 'blind' to Child Maintenance and the interaction of these making the incentive to work, that is the underpinning of Universal Credit, breaking down.

4. The breakdown of children's parenting relationships with their fathers

4.1. The single biggest group of our service users affected by the coronavirus pandemic are those who had working arrangements to see their children that have now broken down. In most cases these are situations where arrangements were fragile because of post-separation frustrations, upset or hostility by one or both parties towards the other. However, in most of these cases the arrangements were working well enough, whether agreed privately or with the support of Family Courts.

4.2. For most of this group of callers the Covid-19 crisis has provided ex-partners with an excuse to stop all contact. The reasons being given include self-isolation, concern for other members of the family or mistrust of ex-partners to effectively self-isolate themselves. Some of those concerns may well be genuine and justifiable. Sadly, the majority appear not to be. Indicators of this include:

- not restoring contact once two week isolation periods are over
- failing to commit to restoring prior arrangements following self-isolation
- not offering time to be made-up
- not offering remote methods of maintain contact with children
- undermining child-parent relationships with ex partners

Examples we have come across have included a mother, just prior to full 'lockdown' telling a father that their son was unable to visit him because he had symptoms of Covid-19 and was in self-isolation. However, when the father contacted the school it turned out that the child was there.

Other examples reported to us have included claims of protection of elderly relatives,

who turn out not to be staying with the family and of pre-teen children with hitherto good relationships with their dads suddenly being reported to not wish to speak to them about anything, etc.

A particularly unpleasant form of harm to children and non-resident parents that we have been hearing about is where the main carer has told children that Covid-19 makes it dangerous for them to see their other parent (mostly dads). Pre-teen children are vulnerable to such messages from their day-to-day carers. Many then translate (or worse, are told) that the fact that the father is trying to get in touch with them during Covid-19 means that he does not love them and/or unsafe for them to be with - even on the phone or on remote media.

- 4.3. Families Need Fathers have provided [guidance](#)³ to parents intended to support them in resolving matters out-of-court, between themselves whenever possible or through remote mediation.

However, it is clear to us that in many cases this is not going to be enough.

- 4.4. Michael Gove MP, on behalf of the Government, initially gave incorrect advice on national television to separated parents. He stated "you should not be moving children from home to home"⁴. Later he corrected this on Twitter. However, anecdotal feedback suggests that this error hindered the situation for children whose parents' relationships are fragile and who sought to exploit the confusion.
- 4.5. Subsequent [guidance from The President of the Family Division](#)⁵ and The Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass) went some way to redress this⁶, but did not receive sufficient media exposure. It also fell short of offering solutions that would be on a child-appropriate timescale i.e. the vague hope of judges responding negatively to parents who subsequently might be found to have exploited the situation.

However, parents are deeply worried as very few cases (sub 1%) where parents apply for enforcement action in relation to broken court orders result in such action being taken⁷.

- 4.6. Initial feedback to us on the working of Family Courts during the coronavirus lockdown suggests that in family child arrangement disputes are being negatively impacted. Whilst some remote hearings are going ahead and the arrangements are even suiting some litigants better than going to court, more people are reporting difficulties and what they consider injustices, for example, in judges being able to determine where the truth lies without being able to look at parties in the eye.
- 4.7. Furthermore, we are increasingly hearing of allegations of abuse being made to obtain Non-Molestation Orders (NMOs) when mediation has failed and fathers have made applications to Family Courts. Covid-19 is being used as a reason for making ex-parte applications and are then being granted without even an ex-parte hearing to determine the merit of the application. Court papers were served on the father in one case by WhatsApp instead of personal service by a process server.

Sir James Munby's practice direction of 18th January 2017 is being breached as the

return hearings are not being held within 14 days of the NMO being granted. In one recent case the return hearing has been listed in 6 weeks time.

Our experience is that such delays contribute to the destruction of child-parent relationships and serve to substantially escalate family conflict.

- 4.8. We appreciate that Family Courts are trying hard to maintain court hearings remotely. The President of the Family Division has called for a survey of experience of the working of remote courts⁸. The results of that are not yet available. Our anecdotal feedback is that some are working well and even more convenient for some parents. However, more complex cases requiring trials are being postponed indefinitely. We are hearing that simple cases are also experiencing undue delays with parties held waiting all day to be contacted only to find out at the end of the day that the hearing had been cancelled. HMCT data already states that Children Act proceedings are taking ON AVERAGE 28 weeks. These figures are themselves an underestimate as they count returning cases, even within weeks or months, as new. These are unacceptable delays to resolving family arrangements for children. If the anecdotal feedback is to prove to be correct, those delays are likely to be significantly longer and wholly unacceptable to pre-teenage children.
- 4.9. We estimate that many thousands of children are having their relationships with their dads (in particular) disrupted or destroyed as a direct result of the Covid-19 lockdown. Similarly, it is too early to quantify with any accuracy the degree of damage to children's relationships as a result of additional delays in the family justice system. The time it takes to bring a Children Act, Child Arrangements It seems likely that the figures it will affect in excess of 10,000 children in the first few months of social-isolation restrictions as under normal circumstances some two thousand children a week are affected by applications to Family Courts in England and Wales.
- 4.10. Without further steps to support 'non-resident' parents, mostly men and their children, it is highly likely that many thousands of children will suffer the permanent loss of loving, good fathers in their lives. Fatherlessness is already associated with poor welfare outcomes for children including their involvement in crime. The UK already has particularly high levels of fatherlessness and without urgent intervention to address this the position is set to get worse.

5. What needs to change to improve Child Arrangements for fathers

- 5.1. The Government need to amplify public messaging about the importance to children having parenting time with both parents, irrespective of the coronavirus lockdown.
- 5.2. Delays in bringing cases to court must be cut. The police and Local Authorities must be able to resource carrying out safeguarding checks within a few days and not 6-8 weeks as is the norm currently.
- 5.3. Unless safeguarding checks can be completed in days rather than weeks, they should be dropped completely where there is no allegation of abuse.

- 5.4. Allegations of abuse, must be urgently assessed for their veracity and significance to Child Arrangements.
- 5.5. If further investigations need to be carried out into allegations, an assessment needs to be made about whether the nature of the allegations are such as to stop all contact with a parent.
- 5.6. Interim decisions may involve supervision or support through Child Contact Centres. Whilst their services have had to be curtailed during Covid-19, they do continue to offer direct and indirect contact support.
- 5.7. Some of the new funding that is currently being arranged for domestic abuse charities, must be channelled to support Child Contact Centres – they are charitably run and provide a vital service. That service is more vital now than ever if children’s relationships with (mainly) their fathers are not to be destroyed. Delays make it far more likely that they will be.
- 5.8. Family Courts must develop new ways of working – with urgent triage hearings to make interim decisions about Child Arrangements within days or weeks and not months.
- 5.9. Where there are no risk factors, during lockdown, whilst many dads are furloughed or have lost their jobs, courts must be prepared to take steps to transfer residence at least on an interim basis where Orders are not complied with.
- 5.10. Steps should be taken to make it far easier for Family Courts to impose meaningful sanctions for non-compliance with Orders, without a requirement of proving Contempt of Court. We note that injunctive civil Non-Molestation Orders are used to protect parties at risk of abuse and their breach is a criminal offence that is punishable by a fine and/or imprisonment e.g. if a person contacts someone that they were ordered not to. We do not seek to imprison parents, but the system of sanctions that is currently in place simply does not work and is not being used. The Covid-19 pandemic is making it easier for children and dads to be abused through the undermining of these vital relationships.
- 5.11. Non-Molestation return hearings where allegations are contested must be resourced as the delays pose a serious risk of harm to children.

6. Effect of income loss and unemployment on fathers

- 6.1. Approximately a million and a half people have signed onto Universal Credit since the coronavirus lockdown in March this year. It seems likely that this figure will grow significantly in the coming months. Our focus is on whether Universal Credit (UC) and the response to the Covid-19 crisis meets its objectives for separated parents, particular ‘non-resident parents’ (NRPs) most of whom continue to be involved in parenting their children.

A key concern is that the workings of Child Maintenance and Universal Credit will undermine attempts to get parents who support their children financially back to work, to the detriment of the children.

Other organisations are better placed than we are to represent the needs of the ‘Parent With Care’ (PWC). The experience of NRPs are often under-represented. These parents also share varying degrees of caring as well as financial responsibilities for their children, however, they also need to survive themselves.

6.2. The Government has made a number of welcome steps during the early phases of this crisis. These have been shared with us by the Minister, Baroness Stedman-Scott:

- **12 week change of income period now 2 weeks** – temporary reduction in time period for considering change in CM liability if incomes changes. We do not know how long this will last, and have told our service users not to delay if they have experienced income reductions of over 25%.
- **Change of income** – in the ‘short-term’ CMS will accept verbal evidence of changes of income.
- **Priority to those who have lost jobs** – CMS will prioritise cases where parents have lost their jobs over over income reductions.

These steps are important, but we and our service users remain unclear on the impact on many aspects e.g. self-employment.

Furthermore, delays of DWP reviewing the failure of UC to address adverse interactions with statutory Child Maintenance payments means that paying parents are increasingly placed in unacceptable poverty, unaffordable CM demands and, in turn, driving family conflict which can be irreversible and harmful.

6.3. The failure of UC to take account of statutory Child Maintenance payments have left tens of thousands of paying parents in serious poverty. It means that marginal ‘tax rates’ taking into account CM are often 87% to 108% (depending on the number of supported children) resulting in a situations where work costs instead of paying. Parents fall into debt, CM arrears and deeper poverty.

Note: Many PWCs are classed as poor as the sometimes substantial CM payments they receive are not classed as an income for the purpose of such statistics.

The Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) 2019 report⁹ identified the need for reform of UC in relation to its interactions with Child Maintenance.

The Executive Summary of the CSJ report states:

‘The scale of this problem should not be underestimated. The income distribution of the 1,128,400 paying parents indicates that around 57 per cent have a net income of under £9,500 - an income level at which they may still be receiving UC. Therefore, once UC is fully rolled out, 638,900 paying parents could be caught up in this interaction.’

Of course this estimate was prior to Covid-19. A key concern must be that, when the economy begins to recover and when unemployed people seek to find new jobs, often

at lower rates of pay than they had before this crisis, they will find that they are better off not working than working unless the UC interaction with CM is addressed.

- 6.4. The key objective of UC was to simplify the benefits system to encourage people to work¹⁰, to ensure that work would always pay, whilst providing a safety net from unacceptable poverty. The intention is, to quote the GOV.UK website, that ‘Universal Credit payments will reduce gradually as you earn more – for every £1 you earn your payment reduces by 63p’¹¹. The website also offers links to online benefits calculators that, for separated paying parents, do not reflect their realities.

As CM is a statutory requirement and UC does not factor it in, it badly fails to meet the objectives for low-income separated parents and their children.

Similar findings were made in an October 2019 report by the [Social Security Advisory Committee](#) (SSAC), a statutory Government advisory body.¹²

- 6.5. In a survey of over 800 FNF service users in 2016, 17% of respondents said they opted out of work as they could not afford to live whilst paying CM. UC was meant to resolve, but has not done so.

“Total mental breakdown. I will never work again”

“I left mainstream employment to take back control!”

“[they] took more than I could afford to pay and forced me to stop working”

(several)

Example

A paying parent with income of £12,500 per annum, or £240 a week; £224 after deductions¹³ who has two children would need to pay £38.40 a week¹⁴ Child Maintenance. If they rent a single room it would cost them, on average, £138 a week¹⁵, with commuting costs of £34¹⁶ a week, leaving £48 a week or £6.80 a day to live on, buy food, clothes, phone costs, pay for visits to children, etc.

- 6.6. We increasingly hear from service users who are self-employed on low-incomes and/or part of the so-called ‘gig economy’ without regular incomes. CMS assessments are based on historic pay (even two or more years in arrears when HMRC have outstanding matters to resolve). These cannot be changed during the course of a year.
- 6.7. Whilst the Government have announced that they will in the short-term accept self-certified evidence of changes of income, it is not clear whether that applies to self-employed individuals or whether the 25% threshold for changes would be applied. In any case FNF consider a 10% would be more appropriate, particularly for those on low incomes.
- 6.8. We have received correspondence from the Minister, Baroness Stedman-Scott in relation to our requests for clarification of what is happening during this period. We have shared key points with 10,000 of our service users. However, many questions remain unanswered, especially in relation to affordability of CM assessments for those on low incomes and in relation to self-employed parents.

- 6.9. Several points above highlight the failure of benefits system to cover the essential living costs of ‘non-resident’ parents.
- 6.10. Thresholds above which standard percentages are applied to paying parents’ earnings were designed to ensure that they could cover their own costs of living. These thresholds have not been reviewed for inflation since 1998. There is an urgent need to review the interaction between benefits and CM to ensure that assessments are not impossible to pay.
- 6.11. Families Need Fathers have raised concerns about affordability of Child Maintenance assessments under UC with the DWP and Government many times in recent years. In January 2018 DWP¹⁷ accepted that the figures upon which we base our views were correct, and that there was a significant issue that needed to be investigated prior to roll-out. The Covid-19 lockdown has meant that the rollout is now happening very fast and the need to address this anomaly is now more urgent than ever.
- 6.12. When parents fail to pay CM on-time and in-full (too often as a consequence of incorrect or unrealistic assessments), CMS put them in their ‘collect’ scheme i.e. taking the CM directly out of their pay or benefits. This incurs a surcharge of 20%, thus putting this vulnerable group into deeper debt.
- 6.13. DWP have carried out work to evaluate the proportion of UC claimants who pay CM through the collect scheme and who have arrears, however, this data has not been shared publicly and we were not permitted to retain it. We strongly recommend that this Committee considers asking for this data as a contribution to this call for evidence.
- 6.14. Low-income separated parents often experience particular hardship, as their incomes must support two homes. Often whilst experiencing emotional trauma. DWP classifies separated parents as ‘single parents’ or ‘single adults’. As a result UC is calculated to support the ‘single parent’ or ‘Parent With Care’ (PWC), but not the ‘single adult’ who may well be providing overnight care to their children for between 52 and 182 nights a year. A parent whose children spend over 50% of nights with them is defined as a PWC. A parent whose children spend 49% of their time with that parent must still, contribute 3/7ths of the assessed CM to the ‘PWC’. This is nothing short of absurd as elementary arithmetic shows. The CMS calculations need to be reviewed along with UC to support shared parenting arrangements. Unless this is addressed, Covid-19 will add to hardship of low-income parents and increase family conflict at a challenging time.
- 6.15. It is worth noting that men are also rarely recipients of standard Child Benefits even if they care for their children for half of the time after separation. DWP does not share this benefit between parents and this contributes further to undermining their opportunity to share care after family separation.
- 6.16. A large proportion of parents share care. DWP currently classifies the parent with over 50% of care time as a ‘single parent’ and treats the other as a ‘single adult’. It does not take into account housing costs for parents who share parental care after

separation for 1 to 3.5 nights a week. This was a further key finding of the SSAC report last year that the coronavirus situation brings into sharp focus.

Recommendation 3(a) of the SSAC report states:

‘The housing element of Universal Credit should enable young parents, under 35 years, who are sharing care and paying child maintenance, to have their children to stay overnight’.

The SSAC report identified that almost 40% had their children to stay regularly. We are certain that many more children would be enjoying and benefiting from shared care if their parents had support with their housing costs.

Either parent can lose their job. During lockdown parents are permitted to continue to share care of their children. Either parent may need housing support to protect their children’s best interests.

- 6.17. Similarly the Government should take into account any disability allowances for both caring parents as well as for disabled children living in two homes

The transitional protection for Severe Disability Payments (SDP) should, for similar reasons, be extended to include both parents. Currently, if a couple claiming income related Employment Support Allowance and in receipt of the couple rate of SDP decide to separate, only the lead claimant in receipt of SDP will be eligible. It will be at a single rate and they will receive transitional protection when they eventually move onto UC. The other partner will automatically move onto Universal Credit and because they never claimed SDP, will not be able to claim the single person’s rate of SDP or get transitional protection.

7. What can be done about unaffordable Child Maintenance assessments?

We are calling on the Government to:

1. Immediately suspend liability for CM payment and arrears payment requirements from those now on Universal Credit or legacy benefits.
2. If the benefits system is resulting in children living in poverty, that needs to be addressed. However, it is not possible for parents who are out of work or on incomes that barely enable them to survive for themselves to meet the gap, even less so if the benefits system and CM results in them having less money if they increase their earned income.
3. Change the income reduction for re-assessment from 25% to, say 10%. Many people will have experienced reductions of income of 20%, but be expected to pay the same rate of CM. Regardless of Covid-19 this threshold is causing financial hardship to many low-income paying parents.
4. Reform Universal Credit to take into account statutory Child Maintenance payments. The principle underpinning UC is that ‘work should always pay’, however, this omission means that for separated paying parents this is not the case and hundreds of thousands of these parents are pushed into deep poverty as recognised in the

recommended by the Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) and the Social Security Advisory Committee (SSAC).

5. Currently CM assessments of self-employed parents are based on historic (often quite old and out of date) accounts. It remains unclear whether this basis of assessment will be changed. The majority of these people were on low incomes already. Many are part of the 'gig-economy'. It is not clear their self-declared income reductions will affect CM assessments straight away. As many will not have prepared annual accounts yet for 2019-20, there will be great scope for errors.
6. Given the above difficulties, DWP must suspend sending of letters threatening action without first assessing affordability of those assessments. Many parents will have loans that, even if offered 'payment holidays' will need to be repaid. These costs must be taken into account through affordability assessments once the immediate crisis eases.
7. Until detailed affordability assessments are made, paying parents must not be transferred to the 'Pay and Collect' scheme for anyone experiencing difficulties as a result of recent changes in earnings, similar to the ban on landlords evicting tenants. Parents, whether paying or receiving CM need to be able to survive themselves as well as contributing to their children's financial security.
8. The 20% surcharge for paying parents and 4% for receiving parents during this time should be waived for parents on low or highly variable incomes. Most parents in the Pay and Collect scheme have been on Universal Credit or legacy benefits rather than high net-worth individuals evading CM. Most have simply found the assessments to be unaffordable. As millions of parents lose their jobs and suffer serious income losses, the number who will struggle to make unaffordable CM payments will grow. The total number affected is likely to be in the range of 1 to 2 million (plus the children involved).
9. CMS must reflect existing court orders for assessing CM payments to discourage breaking of such orders, unless a parent applies for a variation of the order. Any changes in CM assessments should reflect what the subsequent order states, backdating to the date of the application.
10. Where parents share care through private arrangements, CMS should take into account evidence of the parties, other than court orders, where there are disagreements as to the time children spend in each home. Currently CMS only accept evidence of family court orders and refer people to court in these situations. Courts are not the best place to resolve such issues at the best of times and certainly not during the pandemic and lockdown period.
11. We are hearing everyday during the current crisis of parents who are, with good or ill-intent, undermining child-parent relationships by not following official guidance on shared parenting. Current CM arrangements act to undermine shared parenting as the non-compliant parent is effectively 'rewarded' with increased CM when they fail to comply with orders, usually based solely on the word of the main carer alone.

Unless arrangements are varied by mutual agreement or a parent applies for variation of an Order, CMS should honour the ordered arrangement for at least a 12 months.

8. General Observation on Child Maintenance

- 8.1. In relation to points already raised, we draw this Committee's attention to the fact that receiving parents experience a measure of financial 'protection' in as far as they receive child related benefits, housing support, etc. These are reviewed regularly and unaffected by CM (or spousal maintenance) payments regardless of whether these are £0 or £1,000 a week. CM is not reviewed for affordability.
- 8.2. When the state asks parents to make statutory payments of money that they simply do not have and cannot then pay it creates conflict with ex-partners. This often contributes to acrimony and the often irretrievable breakdown of shared parenting arrangements.
- 8.3. It also drives parents to despair and sometimes suicide. Nobody should be obliged to do something that is impossible for them. Parents must be able to support themselves if they are to support their children too.
- 8.4. DWP have been looking into this problem for years, they appear to have adopted a position of seeking more evidence of unaffordable CM assessments. We think the Covid-19 epidemic makes it even more urgent for DWP to demonstrate that assessments are affordable and that they take urgent action to rectify this big problem.

9. Domestic Abuse

There are many domestic abuse organisations championing the issues of women and girls during the current crisis. There are fewer and less well-resourced organisations focused on supporting men. The nature of abuse that men experience is far less well documented or researched than that of women. Yet, Government statistics show that 695,000 (35%) of domestic abuse victims are men¹⁸.

The issues of living in abusive situations are as important for a woman trapped in such a relationship as a man. That message is not coming across.

The Government needs to ensure that Ministers amplify this message. By focusing a disproportionate level of messaging in relation to victims who are women, a hostile culture and environment are created towards male victims. They feel unsupported. Men are already less likely than women to report abuse for reasons related to stigma, however, this is amplified by the weight of both messaging and actual support offered.

New financial support in relation to domestic under the coronavirus lockdown must be apportioned more fairly to help gain a better understanding of men's support needs and then to deliver them. A high proportion of our service users do not trust many of the biggest providers of domestic abuse services because of their disproportionate focus on women victims and differing services offered to them.

Most men who come to us who are victims of domestic abuse are not even aware that there are refuges for them. Partly this is because there is little communication of such services, but also because there are so few men-only beds. None in London for example.

Fathers which children need to have somewhere to escape with them if they are the victims of abuse and to feel confident that their situations are taken every bit as seriously. Other charities, such as Mankind Initiative are better placed than we are to provide further evidence for this.

End Note

The Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in many dads having more time on their hands to care for their children. Many are doing so. However, for separated parents, too many factors identified above conspire to undermine the opportunity offered to the detriment of children, fathers AND mothers too.

Some of what we recommend above is not new. The coronavirus situation brings these problems into sharp focus. It must not be used to kick the problem into the long grass, but act as a spur to urgently solve the difficulties posed.

July 2020

Endnotes

¹ ONS, England and Wales 2012

² ONS, [Families and households in the UK: 2019](#)

³ Families Need Fathers - [Navigating child arrangements amid COVID-19 concerns](#) – April 2020

⁴ Michael Gove interview on Good Morning Britain – 24th March 2020

⁵ [Coronavirus Crisis: Guidance on Compliance with Family Court Child Arrangement Orders](#) – The Rt. Hon. Sir Andrew McFarlane – 24 March 2020

⁶ Cafcass - [COVID-19 guidance for children and families](#)

⁷ MoJ – [Family Court Statistics Quarterly: July to September 2019](#)

⁸ Sir Andrew McFarlane - [Two-week rapid consultation on remote hearings in the Family Court](#) – 14th April 2020

⁹ The Hidden Parent Poverty Trap: Child Maintenance and Universal Credit – March 2019

<https://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/library/the-hidden-parent-poverty-trap-child-maintenance-and-universal-credit>

¹⁰ DWP Policy Paper 2010-2015 government policy: welfare reform

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2010-to-2015-government-policy-welfare-reform/2010-to-2015-government-policy-welfare-reform#appendix-1-government-policy-on-universal-credit-an-introduction>

¹¹ GOV.UK (currently) <https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit/how-your-earnings-affect-your-payments>

¹² SSAC Occasional Paper 22: Separated parents and the social security system – 22 October 2019

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ssac-occasional-paper-22-separated-parents-and-the-social-security-system>

¹³ Calculated using <https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/tax-calculator/>

¹⁴ Government Child Maintenance Calculator <https://www.gov.uk/calculate-your-child-maintenance>

¹⁵ <https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/uk-news/average-cost-rent-room-increased-16562407>

¹⁶ Total Jobs: <https://www.totaljobs.com/insidejob/uk-commuters-will-spend-over-135000-by-the-time-they-retire/>

¹⁷ Meeting between FNF and DWP 24th January 2018.

¹⁸ ONS - [Domestic abuse: findings from the Crime Survey for England and Wales: year ending March 2018](#)