

Guidance for Approved third Parties when completing NCC1 Form – Support for child conceived without your consent

NOTE: The NCC1 NI Form is only to be used for backdated requests pre-6 April 2026

Overview

From 6 April 2017 to 5 April 2026 families were usually only able to claim support through Universal Credit for up to two children – this was known as the 2-child policy.

For the purposes of this form, by “child” we mean anyone aged under 16, or a young person aged under 20 who is enrolled on, accepted or started full-time non-advanced education, such as A-levels, or approved training before they turned 19.

There may also have been support for other children if they were born before 6 April 2017 or if an exception applies.

In recognition that some claimants are not able to make choices about the number of children in their family, there were exceptions for certain groups and circumstances - these are detailed at [nidirect\(external link opens in a new window / tab\)](#).

Child conceived without consent

One of those exceptions applied for third and subsequent children where either:

- the claimant did not, or could not, consent to the act that led to the conception of the child, or
- the claimant was in a coercive or controlling relationship with the other biological parent of the child at or around the time of the conception.

In either case the exception cannot apply if the claimant is still living with the other biological parent of the child. You will not be required to ask the claimant if they are living with the other biological parent, as the claimant will confirm this as part of their declaration within the form.

Purpose of this form

The government has chosen to develop a third-party model approach to help to establish that claimants qualify for this exception.

Approved third parties have been chosen owing to their positions that already support individuals in sensitive circumstances. These are healthcare professionals, specialist support workers from an approved organisation or registered social workers.

Please note that ticking a box on the corresponding form only confirms that the claimant's circumstances, as described by them, are consistent with the statement next to the box. There is no requirement on the approved agencies or workers to seek any further documentation or evidence to confirm the circumstances.

This model means claimants are not placed in the position of having to give sensitive details to the Department for Communities officials, but to professionals who are best placed to offer relevant additional support. The Department for Communities will administer and make the decision regarding entitlement.

Please offer whatever additional support you feel appropriate to the claimant. Additional support links are listed at the end of this document.

Criminal convictions and criminal injuries compensation

If evidence is available to show any of the below, relating to the conception of the child, the claimant may not need to use the form that this guidance applies to in order to qualify for the exception:

- an award from the Compensation Services in Northern Ireland (or the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority). This must be in respect of a relevant sexual offence, physical abuse or mental injury, where this relates to the conception of a child
- conviction in the United Kingdom for rape (or a conviction abroad for an analogous offence)

- conviction in Northern Ireland for controlling or coercive behaviour in an intimate or family relationship under sections 1 – 14 of the Domestic Abuse and Civil Proceedings Act (Northern Ireland) 2021 (or a conviction abroad for an analogous offence).

Definitions of terms used in the form

What is non-consensual conception?

For this form, it means conception that results from an act to which the claimant did not agree by choice or did not have the freedom or capacity to agree by choice.

This can be where the claimant was raped (whether by a partner, someone they knew, or a stranger).

It can also include circumstances in which at or around the time of conception the claimant was subject to repeated or continuous controlling or coercive behaviour in an intimate or family relationship.

What is controlling or coercive behaviour?

Controlling or coercive behaviour is a type of domestic abuse or violence.

Coercive behaviour is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

Controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Controlling or coercive behaviours might include:

- isolating a person from their friends and family
- depriving them of their basic needs
- monitoring their time
- monitoring a person via online communication tools or using spyware

- taking control over aspects of their everyday life, such as where they can go, who they can see, what to wear and when they can sleep
- depriving them of access to support services, such as specialist support or medical services
- repeatedly putting them down such as telling them they are worthless
- enforcing rules and activities which humiliate, degrade or dehumanise the victim
- forcing the victim to take part in criminal activity such as shoplifting, neglect or abuse of children to encourage self-blame and prevent disclosure to authorities
- financial abuse including control of finances, such as only allowing a person a punitive allowance
- threats to hurt or kill
- threats to a child
- threats to reveal or publish private information for example, threatening to “out” someone.
- assault
- criminal damage (such as destruction of household goods)
- rape
- preventing a person from having access to transport or from working.

This is not an exhaustive list.

For this exception, the controlling or coercive behaviour must have had a serious effect on the claimant.

This means that it causes someone to fear that violence will be used against them on at least two occasions; or causes them serious alarm or distress which had a substantial adverse effect on their usual day-to-day activities.

What is covered by “intimate or family relationship”?

The claimant must, at or around the time the child was conceived, have been personally connected with the person who is likely to be the child's other biological parent. "Personally connected" covers situations where:

- they were in an intimate personal relationship with each other (whether or not they were living together)
- they were living together in the same household and were a member of the same family or had previously been in an intimate personal relationship with each other. Family members include a former partner or a relative such as a parent, step parent, sibling, step sibling (and it can also include a relative of the claimant's spouse or partner).

Areas of the form to complete

The claimant must complete section 1.

Please complete **sections 2 and 3** of the form.

At the end of section 3 please provide your authentication for your profession, support worker role or approved agency status:

- if you are a health care professional, please provide your professional registration number
- if you are a registered social worker, please provide your registration number
- if you are a specialist support worker from an approved organisation, please specify which and provide your agency reference number or registered charity number

The claimant or social/support worker must then return the completed form electronically, as soon as possible, to universalcredit.exceptions@dfcni.gov.uk

Other key requirements

You must only complete this form in the course of your professional duties.

Further questions

1. Which boxes need to be ticked for the claimant to be eligible for the exception?

a. Please tick as many boxes as apply to the circumstance the claimant has reported to you. The Department for Communities will determine whether the individual qualifies for the exception based on which boxes are ticked.

2. Do I have any legal responsibilities to inform any authorities now a claimant has told me of these circumstances?

a. You will continue to operate within your professional duty of confidence and any legal obligations you currently have. For example, safeguarding children and the public.

Completing this form and meeting the claimant will not bring in any additional legal responsibilities to your existing professional role. You are not called upon by this assessment to form a belief as to whether an offence has occurred.

If, however, as a result of your meeting with the claimant, you do form a belief that a person has committed a relevant offence (such as rape), you have a duty under the Criminal Law Act (NI) 1967 to give to the police information likely to be of material assistance in securing the apprehension, prosecution or conviction of that person.

However, you need not give that information if you have a reasonable excuse for not doing so. Discharge of your professional duty in relation to confidentiality may amount to such a reasonable excuse.

3. What should the claimant do with the form after completion?

a. It is the responsibility of the claimant to return the form to the Department for Communities. There is guidance on the final page of the form to assist them doing so. The Department for Communities may contact you to confirm your authentication.

Note: Universal Credit will accept the form being submitted by both the claimant or the third party (Social worker).

4. What does point (2) of the form mean by “claimant lacked the freedom or capacity to agree by choice”?

a. An individual may lack the freedom or capacity to agree by choice due to a variety of different circumstances, including as a result of mental disorder or the effects of alcohol or drugs.

Regarding mental disorder, it may be that the individual lacked sufficient understanding of the nature, or reasonably foreseeable consequences, of what was being done.

5. How will the Department for Communities handle this sensitive data?

a. The Department for Communities will handle this extremely sensitive information discreetly and confidentially, in line with its strict data protection rules.

Any benefit award notices sent to claimants will not include the reason for the additional support for the child.

6. What external support can I offer the claimant or direct them to?

a. Please see the section **Assisting victims of rape, sexual abuse and domestic abuse**.

Assisting victims of rape, sexual abuse and domestic violence

The following is a list of organisations available that may be able to provide additional support for the claimant:

Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) – [The Rowan\(external link opens in a new window / tab\)](#) is the regional Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) for Northern Ireland.

Freephone **0800 389 4424**

Northern Ireland 24 hour Domestic and Sexual Violence Helpline – run by [Women's Aid Northern Ireland\(external link opens in a new window / tab\)](#) and is a freephone national service that provides support for all those affected by domestic and sexual violence. Women's Aid Northern Ireland provides advice and safe accommodation for women (and their children) who have been abused mentally, physically and/or sexually by their partner or ex-partner.

Free 24-hour helpline **0808 802 1414**

NI Direct – for Northern Ireland specific [help and support for victims of sexual assault and rape\(external link opens in a new window / tab\)](#), including links to support organisations, go to the NI Direct dedicated page

[NEXUS NI\(external link opens in a new window / tab\)](#) – operates across Northern Ireland to respond to people aged 16 and over who have experienced sexual abuse and may benefit from specialist counselling for survivors of sexual abuse or violence.

[Victim Support NI\(external link opens in a new window / tab\)](#) – Victim Support provides practical and emotional support for all victims of crime at local offices across Northern Ireland.

Phone: **028 9024 3133** (Belfast)

Or: **028 7137 0086** (Foyle)

[Relate NI\(external link opens in a new window / tab\)](#) – offers professional counselling and therapeutic services to enhance emotional wellbeing in individuals, couples, families and communities.

Call **028 9032 3454**

[The Survivors Trust\(external link opens in a new window / tab\)](#) – has over 135 member agencies across the UK which provide support for survivors of rape, sexual violence or childhood sexual abuse.

Phone: **0808 801 0818**

Note: This list is not exhaustive, and there may also be local organisations which the claimant could be made aware of.

You may find the [Victim and Witness Information\(external link opens in a new window / tab\)](#) website useful for locating support in your local area: