



## Claiming Contribution-Based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)

Under UK rules JSA is not normally payable to people who move abroad. However, there are special arrangements which enable contribution-based JSA to be transferred abroad for payment in countries where EC regulations apply (including Cyprus from 1st May 2004).

The maximum period of entitlement to UK contribution-based JSA in another country is three calendar months from the date of departure. The amount which can be transferred to another country cannot exceed that remaining at departure from the UK.

To qualify for the TRANSFER of the UK contribution-based JSA, it is necessary to satisfy all of the following four conditions:

- A legal resident in the UK who legally moves to Cyprus
- Seeking work in another country where EC regulations apply
- Entitlement to receive payment of JSA on the day of departure from the UK
- Be registered at a Jobcentre Plus office as a jobseeker available for work for a four week period before departure. However, this can be reduced to a minimum of four days for people who are accompanying a spouse/partner who has been posted abroad or has a job abroad

It is essential to satisfy all four conditions above. If there is no claim to the allowance at a Jobcentre Plus office before departure, there can be no transfer of contribution-based JSA. A person leaving their job to go with their spouse/partner on an overseas posting must make sure that their employer knows this is the reason for them leaving their job so that they can correctly complete the form they receive from the Jobcentre Plus. It is important to show that you are a jobseeker leaving your UK job to go abroad with your spouse/partner who, as a Serviceman/woman, has no choice in the matter. You should stress you are still available for work right up until the date of departure. Reasons such as: "unavailable due to cleaning of SFA" for example will not be accepted. If you are not available for work, you will not be able to claim contribution-based JSA on the date you leave and therefore you will not be able to claim it abroad either.

A person wishing to transfer UK contribution-based JSA abroad must tell their local Jobcentre Plus of their plans as soon as possible. Contact your local Jobcentre Plus and inform them of your employment end date, state that you wish to claim contribution-based JSA before you depart and ask for an interview to complete your claim paperwork. It is advisable to allow at least a fortnight before departure date.

Jobcentre Plus will not be able to offer you a job seeker's interview until the first day that you are unemployed, when you should phone the Contact Centre on 0845 601 8871 and ask for an appointment. Explain clearly that you must have this appointment booked in advance as you will be leaving the country within 4 days. As this is an unusual request many of the Job Centre staff are not familiar with the procedure; it is important to follow this procedure. Take the following documents to your job seeker's interview: your passport, P45 and a copy of your travel itinerary as proof that you are leaving to join your spouse abroad.

When you attend the interview it is advisable to ask the person you see to telephone the Pension Service at Tyneview House on 0191 218 7135 who can give advice to the Jobcentre staff about the procedure and location of correct forms on their internal computer system.

When a definite departure date is known, the Jobcentre Plus office will work out the your position and, if appropriate, send details to the Pension Service, JBES (JSA & Benefits Enhancement Section), Room TCO13, Tyneview Park, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE98 1BA Tel: 0191 2187652/21887065.

The Jobcentre Plus office will issue a special introductory letter called 'DLJA 402/403'. This gives advice on what to do before leaving the UK and after arriving abroad - it can also assist when registering for employment in the other country.

On receipt of details from the Jobcentre Plus office (they complete and send 'DLJA 401') the Pension Service at Tyneview Park will, if appropriate, issue form E303 or explain why it cannot be issued.

Form E303 authorises the Employment Services in the other country to pay UK contribution based JSA for a maximum period of three months. It is important to remember that form E303 is not an instruction to pay but an authority to pay if the other conditions set out in the EC Regulations are satisfied.

If the Pension Service can issue form E303, they will send it direct to the jobseeker at his/her UK address if there is sufficient time to do so. If not, to an address abroad if this is held. Sometimes the Pension Service has to await a request for the E303 from the claimant abroad.

Some points to bear in mind:

- A jobseeker who intends seeking work abroad should have a full passport
- The process of registration must start and take place in the UK
- The jobseeker must be in receipt of contribution-based JSA on date of departure from the UK
- The EC Regulations allow 7 days in which to complete the registration and claims formalities in Cyprus

Payment of transferred contribution-based JSA is the responsibility of the Employment Services in Cyprus. Money is not sent to a jobseeker abroad and is not sent to the Cypriot Employment Services for passing on to a jobseeker. As the arrangements for payment have to comply with the system in Cyprus, there can be a considerable delay in receiving payment.

- Transferred JSA is authorised at the UK rate in £ Sterling. The rate of contribution based JSA is £60.50 Sterling per week as of 7<sup>th</sup> April 2008.

The Cypriot Employment Service will make payment in local currency after applying a fixed rate of exchange. The European Commission determines the rate of exchange to be used by all Member States and it is updated every three months.

- Although the transfer system works smoothly for many people overseas, others meet with obstacles and experience delays in receipt of the allowance. Sometimes they return to the UK having received no allowance at all. The cost of living in Cyprus is increasing and relying on the prompt payment of JSA is inadvisable.
- Failure to register as a jobseeker and claim the allowance in Cyprus will result in non-payment - regardless of which circumstances resulted in the failure to register and/or claim.
- It is the jobseeker's responsibility to comply with the Cypriot requirements during the allowance transfer period. There is no discretion to overlook a failure to satisfy the requirements because of difficult circumstances.
- Income-based JSA is not covered by EC Regulations and cannot be transferred abroad.

In some circumstances it might be possible to claim Cypriot unemployment benefit in Cyprus using UK Insurance Contributions. Any claim to Cypriot unemployment benefit is a matter for the Cypriot Employment Services. Form E301 is used to relay the necessary information from the UK to Cyprus. If further information is required about these arrangements, enquiries should be addressed to:

Inland Revenue  
National Insurance Contributions Office  
Centre for Non Residents  
Benton Park View  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
England  
NE98 1ZZ

Tel: 0044 191 2135000 (ask to be put through to Centre for non residents (EU) section) or dial direct on 0044 191 2254811.

## Cyprus Unemployment Benefits Offices

Limassol Office (large grey building) is located at the corner of Dimokratous Street and Franklin Roosevelt Street.

Opening hours: 0800-1200

It is best to arrive early in the morning as you also have to attend three different departments on your first visit. All the signs in the Government building are in Greek, although most of the staff speak good English.

Directions for the Limassol Office:

Head towards RAF Akrotiri. Turn left at water tower into Limassol. Stay on this road for approximately 15-20 minutes.

Turn left opposite SHOHAM (tall building - on the right hand side) at junction with Alpha Bank (there is a speed boat display on the left hand corner).

Proceed for 100m. Take the second right turn and park anywhere on rough ground which can be used as a car park for 1 Euro. Walk back to the main road and cross over at the pedestrian crossing.

Go to the Job Centre to register for employment. This is the glass fronted building called "YMHPEEIA AMAZXONEHZ" with a wheelchair ramp outside. You will need to take your passport, CV and any educational certificates you have to register for jobs. If not, register for work as a salesperson as no experience/qualifications are needed.

After registering for work (which you will have to do once a month - maximum three times) you will be given a form with your details. You then have to go back across the road to the Post Office which has yellow blind and yellow post box outside. You need to register for a PO Box which costs Euros 18 per annum. Cheques will not be sent to a BFPO address and you will not be paid your JSA cheque without a PO Box number. The opening hours of the Post Office are 0730-1330.

The final step (and this will take the longest) is to claim for JSA at the EU Office. Walk back a short way towards the Alpha Bank Junction and on your right you will see a large grey building called

"ΜΕ ΓΑΡΟ ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΚΩΝ ΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΤΩΝ".

Enter the building and go through door marked "05" on the right hand side. Turn left where "ANETIAKO ←" is marked on the wall in front of you and into the waiting room which is usually very crowded. There are rows of wooden seating and a long counter style desk with about four members of staff. There is a wooden box on the counter which you should place your sheet of paper from the Job Centre and then take a seat. This office can get very busy and you may wait for several hours. The staff take the papers from the box and will call out your name. At that stage you will then have to provide your passport, NI number, PO Box number and paperwork supplied by the Job Centre.

When all the paperwork is completed you will be given a blue card and a date to return to sign on again. You will be asked to sign on fortnightly and to attend the Job Centre every 4 weeks in case they have found you a job.

After 3 months, the staff in the signing on office will advise you that your entitlement to payment has finished, and at that point they will retain your blue card.

Larnaca Labour & Social Office located at:  
Filiou Tsigaridi Street  
Larnaca  
6307  
Tel: 24 805 200 or 201  
Opening hours - 0800-1200

The Employment Office is sited next door.

Directions for the Larnaca Office:

Drive into Larnaca. Go straight across the Port roundabout into Leoforos Archiepifkopu Makarios III Street. Take the 12<sup>th</sup> turning on the left (signed for the Police Station) into Filiou Tsigaridi Street and the building is on the right hand side.  
Tel: 24 805 317.  
Opening hours: 0800-1200  
Parking is available outside the building.

To register for a PO Box number go to the Larnaca Post Office (tel number 24 802600) which is sited opposite the Police Station.

- Top tip - allow 2-3 hours for the first visit. Keep asking where to go and who to see - do not give up
- You need to sign on every two weeks
- Payments are made by cheque on a monthly basis
- It takes about three months for the payment to come through. You may need to chase up the UK to send you the E303 as you will need to hand that in before any payments are made

Useful contact: Nicosia District Labour Office  
Kinyras Street  
Shiocolas Building  
Nicosia  
Tel: 22 401601 or 22 401602  
Contact this office to check progress of your cheque

This factsheet has been compiled with the help of staff from the Pension Service, Episkopi and HIVE. Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the information is correct, it is not a full and authoritative statement of the law.

The Greek signs of the buildings have been copied by a non-Greek speaker.