



## NEWS RELEASE

Immediate Release

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### **Advice Only One Phone Call Away for Worried Mums**

The government is introducing changes to lone parent's benefits so that people with younger children have to look for work as a condition of claiming benefit. OPFS, Scotland's only dedicated lone parent organisation, has produced a fact sheet "**Lone Parents: Changes to Income Support & Jobseeker's Allowance**" to provide worried lone parents with more information.

The change initially affects Lone Parents, who claim Income Support, and whose youngest child is aged 12 or over as they may no longer be entitled to Income Support and will have to claim Jobseeker's Allowance instead. However From October 2009, this will apply to lone parents whose youngest child is ten or over, and from October 2010 to lone parents whose youngest child is seven or over.

Worried Lone Parents can find out more by calling the Lone Parent Freephone Helpline on **0808 801 0323** and asking for our factsheet "**Lone Parents: Changes to Income Support & Jobseeker's Allowance**". The publication covers the key questions which many lone mums will be concerned about and Helpline staff can follow up more detailed questions if required. Issues such as:

Will I have to claim JSA?  
When will the changes happen?  
How will I know when my Income Support is about to end?  
What if I am doing an education course or training?  
How much JSA will I receive?  
What are JSA 'sanctions'?  
I have difficulty getting suitable childcare during school holidays

Advice is also available for lone parents claiming Income Support as a lone parent, but who also have a health problem or a disability and for those thinking about moving into work. Advisors can also deal with Child Maintenance enquires

Sue Rew, of OPFS, said today " Most lone parents want to take up paid work when the time is right for their children and we know that many parents will be worried and concerned about these new rules. We are urging parents to call our free telephone Helpline **0808 801 0323** – we can provide free, independent advice to those who may be affected now and in the very near future. Advice is only one phone call away".

**ENDS**

**Choices: One Parent Families West of Scotland  
100 Wellington Street, Glasgow, G2 6DH**

## Further Information:

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## Notes to Editors

1. The fact sheet can be down loaded from the OPFS website:  
[http://www.opfs.org.uk/files/factsheet\\_changes-to-income-support-and-jobseekers-allowance\\_200811.pdf](http://www.opfs.org.uk/files/factsheet_changes-to-income-support-and-jobseekers-allowance_200811.pdf)
2. The latest Scottish Government population projections estimate one parent families will be 38% of families with children by 2024.
3. One Parent Families Scotland works to ensure that all families, particularly those headed by a lone parent, have the support, information and confidence needed to play a full part in Scotland's economic and social life. Established in 1944, OPFS is Scotland's only national organisation dedicated to supporting Scotland's 174,000 lone parents bringing up 295,000 children. OPFS is an important participant in Scotland's social economy - with an annual income of over £2m, employing 200 people and delivering services to over 12,000 parents and children
4. The following breakdown shows how many lone parents there are in each local authority in Scotland- just under half of lone parents in each area have children over 7yrs and will be affected by new regulations to be implemented over the next 2 years

Area	Number
Aberdeen City	3,701
Aberdeenshire	3,826
Angus	2,625
Argyll & Bute	1,180
Clackmannanshire	1,158
Dumfries & Galloway	3,000
Dundee City	4,490
East Ayrshire	2,259
East Dumbartonshire	1,057
East Lothian	2,051
East Renfrewshire	818
Edinburgh, City of	10,477
Falkirk	3,388
Fife	8,500
Glasgow, City of	19,062
Highland	4,400
Inverclyde	2,011
Midlothian	1,870

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Moray	1,394
North Ayrshire	2,934
North Lanarkshire	6,012
Orkney Islands	300
Perth & Kinross	3,483
Renfrewshire	3,479
Scottish Borders	1,800
Shetland Islands	400
South Ayrshire	1,581
South Lanarkshire	4,841
Stirling	1,952
West Dunbartonshire	2,689
West Lothian	3,500
Western Isles	500