

Resolution Date: 8th April 2020

Resolution Title: Lift the Benefits Cap and Protect Salaries

This branch calls on Government to lift the benefits cap and extend pay protections for workers.

This branch notes that the benefits cap was introduced on the pretext of encouraging unemployed people to find work. It has always been punitive in nature, as for many people, work is not available. During the coronavirus crisis, the injustice represented by the cap is absurd. In a time of mass layoffs and furloughs, people who did not have a job before the coronavirus outbreak are not going to find one while the restrictions are in place.

Claimants who have been found to have 'Limited Capability for Work' are also exempt from the benefits cap. But if someone contacts the Department for Work and Pensions while current restrictions are in place to explain that he or she has limited capability for work, an assessment will not be possible until the coronavirus crisis is over. People who are supposed to be exempt from the cap for health reasons will not be able to get this exemption in place during the crisis.

This branch agrees that for the protection of all, government should immediately agree to:

- Removal of the overall benefits cap.
- Full pay for all workers. Workers, especially those on low pay, can't afford to lose 20% of their income.
- Any worker who has to self-isolate or cannot go to work should receive full pay from day one and not be forced to take annual leave. Pay should be paid directly to the worker not via the employer.
- Increase benefits to the level of the national minimum wage. No delay in the payment of benefits.

The branch will therefore write to government and campaign for the introduction of these measures.