

1  
00:00:03,700 --> 00:00:06,200  
I think people's naivety with  
Universal Credit did come out

2  
00:00:06,966 --> 00:00:10,033  
as you say, when they were  
getting a lump sum.

3  
00:00:10,866 --> 00:00:12,233  
I didn't know when I got that,

4  
00:00:12,233 --> 00:00:15,966  
I didn't know that had to do me  
for a certain time.

5  
00:00:16,866 --> 00:00:17,500  
do you know what I mean?

6  
00:00:17,500 --> 00:00:20,666  
And I was shocked  
because I was near skint

7  
00:00:20,666 --> 00:00:23,666  
and I had no money and they were  
taking that money back off me.

8  
00:00:24,300 --> 00:00:26,900  
If I'd have known at that time,  
I would never have took it

9  
00:00:27,500 --> 00:00:28,966  
Do you know what I mean  
everybody thought

10  
00:00:28,966 --> 00:00:30,300  
they were having this  
'oh brilliant'

11  
00:00:30,300 --> 00:00:31,666  
'we're getting an extra  
few hundred pound'

12

00:00:32,533 --> 00:00:34,666  
So what advice on that subject

13  
00:00:34,666 --> 00:00:36,533  
and you know about  
the big loans, what advice

14  
00:00:36,533 --> 00:00:37,800  
would you give to somebody else

15  
00:00:37,800 --> 00:00:39,666  
when starting Universal Credit?

16  
00:00:40,833 --> 00:00:44,100  
If they are asking for loans  
or whatever

17  
00:00:44,100 --> 00:00:46,300  
To ask them what way it works

18  
00:00:47,033 --> 00:00:49,400  
and how it's going to be  
taken out of their money

19  
00:00:49,400 --> 00:00:51,400  
every month or every  
fortnight

20  
00:00:51,400 --> 00:00:52,866  
whenever they get paid

21  
00:00:54,133 --> 00:00:57,600  
just ask them what way that

22  
00:00:57,600 --> 00:00:59,933  
the system is going to be workin

23  
00:01:04,500 --> 00:01:07,766  
The lump sum payment referred to  
in this example is actually

24

00:01:07,766 --> 00:01:10,766  
called an advanced payment,  
an advance payment.

25  
00:01:10,766 --> 00:01:13,566  
is a loan of your entitlement  
to Universal Credit

26  
00:01:13,566 --> 00:01:15,866  
and is available to you  
during the first five weeks

27  
00:01:15,866 --> 00:01:17,233  
of your Universal Credit claim

28  
00:01:17,233 --> 00:01:17,900  
when you're waiting

29  
00:01:17,900 --> 00:01:20,466  
for your actual first  
Universal Credit payment.

30  
00:01:21,200 --> 00:01:22,900  
The advance payment is a loan,

31  
00:01:22,900 --> 00:01:24,966  
and this means it does  
have to be repaid.

32  
00:01:25,366 --> 00:01:27,900  
And the normal repayment  
schedule is 12 months.

33  
00:01:28,500 --> 00:01:29,833  
An advance payment is repaid

34  
00:01:29,833 --> 00:01:31,833  
through deductions  
from your Universal Credit.

35  
00:01:32,166 --> 00:01:33,300  
So you do need to carefully

36

00:01:33,300 --> 00:01:35,600  
consider if an advance  
payment is for you,

37

00:01:35,933 --> 00:01:37,900  
because for the first  
year of your claim,

38

00:01:37,900 --> 00:01:39,966  
you can be paying  
back an advance payment.

39

00:01:40,966 --> 00:01:43,866  
It's also really important to  
note that you don't have to tak

40

00:01:43,866 --> 00:01:46,266  
the full amount of the advance  
payment that's offered to you.

41

00:01:47,000 --> 00:01:48,900  
The amount of the advance  
payment will be based

42

00:01:48,900 --> 00:01:50,466  
on your individual circumstances

43

00:01:50,466 --> 00:01:52,866  
and your maximum  
Universal Credit award.

44

00:01:52,866 --> 00:01:55,500  
That will vary depending  
on the claim, depending

45

00:01:55,500 --> 00:01:57,966  
on your circumstances  
and who is in your household.

46

00:01:58,600 --> 00:02:02,433  
You can, however, elect just to  
take half of that or even less,

47  
00:02:02,433 --> 00:02:05,900  
if that suits your circumstances

48  
00:02:09,600 --> 00:02:10,500  
In Northern Ireland,

49  
00:02:10,500 --> 00:02:13,400  
not everybody does  
have to take an advance payment

50  
00:02:13,666 --> 00:02:15,533  
There is the option  
of getting support

51  
00:02:15,533 --> 00:02:17,866  
through the Universal Credit  
Contingency Fund.

52  
00:02:18,400 --> 00:02:21,133  
The huge advantage  
of the contingency fund is that

53  
00:02:21,133 --> 00:02:22,866  
it is the payment of a grant.

54  
00:02:22,866 --> 00:02:25,400  
and this means it does  
not have to be paid back.

55  
00:02:26,366 --> 00:02:29,666  
There are, however, some  
additional eligibility criteria

56  
00:02:29,666 --> 00:02:30,833  
which need to be met

57  
00:02:30,833 --> 00:02:33,500  
in order to get support  
through the contingency fund.

58  
00:02:33,833 --> 00:02:36,833  
And these eligibility

criteria are not present

59

00:02:37,000 --> 00:02:39,166  
when you're trying to get help  
through an advance payment.

60

00:02:39,933 --> 00:02:43,100  
So, for example, to get help  
through the contingency fund,

61

00:02:43,366 --> 00:02:47,033  
you do need to show that you are  
in an extreme, exceptional

62

00:02:47,033 --> 00:02:51,333  
or crisis situation which places  
you or your immediate family's

63

00:02:51,333 --> 00:02:54,566  
health, safety or well-being  
at a significant risk.

64

00:02:55,466 --> 00:02:58,066  
There is also an annual  
income threshold.

65

00:02:58,400 --> 00:03:02,600  
So the annual income of you  
and your partner must not excee

66

00:03:02,666 --> 00:03:04,066  
twenty thousand eight

67

00:03:04,066 --> 00:03:06,466  
hundred and forty  
nine pounds and forty pence.

68

00:03:07,633 --> 00:03:09,766  
It is really worth  
exploring whether or not

69

00:03:09,766 --> 00:03:11,900  
you would be eligible

for a Universal Credit

70

00:03:11,900 --> 00:03:15,233  
contingency fund before  
accepting your advance payment.

71

00:03:15,766 --> 00:03:18,766  
This will mean that you start  
your Universal Credit claim

72

00:03:18,766 --> 00:03:21,000  
When it's not in debt,  
and you won't

73

00:03:21,000 --> 00:03:22,533  
have those deductions happening

74

00:03:22,533 --> 00:03:24,800  
several months from your  
Universal Credit claim

75

00:03:25,633 --> 00:03:28,233  
Information on accessing  
the contingency fund

76

00:03:28,233 --> 00:03:30,333  
should be made available  
in your journal.

77

00:03:30,333 --> 00:03:32,066  
But you can contact the

78

00:03:32,066 --> 00:03:35,100  
financial support team within  
the Department for Communities

79

00:03:35,100 --> 00:03:38,500  
or speak to your local advice  
centre, including Law Centre NI

80

00:03:38,500 --> 00:03:40,866  
And we'll be able to  
talk you through the process.

