

ASAP NEWS UPDATE MAY 2008

Asylum Support Appeals Project

Registered charity no. 1105625 Company limited by guarantee no. 04763838

May 2008

Increase Asylum Support Subsistence Payments from 14 Mar '08

The increased Asylum Support subsistence payments reflects an increase in line with the Consumer Price Index for September 2007, the month used by other Government departments in calculating up rating of benefit levels for 2008-09. It will ensure that all those supported receive an inflationary based increase in benefit. The total support package for adults, including accommodation related costs such as utilities, remains commensurate with income support levels.

This year, the Department for Work and Pensions has made significant changes to payments for those under 18 in order to reflect the child tax credit system. UKBA does not consider that, as part of the tax system, child tax credits are a suitable comparator on which to base payments to those supported via the asylum system. However, it wants to ensure that children continue to receive an appropriate level of support and have therefore increased payments for those under 18 by the same percentage as adults.

2008/9	
Qualifying couple	£66.13
Lone parent aged 18 or over	£42.16
Single person aged 25 or over	£42.16
Single person aged at least 18 but under 25	£33.39
Person aged at least 16 but under 18 (except a member of a qualifying couple)	£36.29
Person aged under 16	£48.30

Section 4 workshop by the Case Resolution Directorate - Will it lead to a better Section 4 system?

Case Resolution Directorate (CRD) hosted a Section 4 Workshop on 29th April 2008 in Croydon. Many senior managers from the CRD and representatives from voluntary sector organisations attended the event. ASAP was one of the participants.

The participants discussed ways to resolve many problems experienced by many refused asylum seekers who apply for and/or receive section 4 support, such as delays in processing applications and complaints about accommodation.

CRD shared the concerns raised by the voluntary sector organisations and agreed to make improvements in many areas immediately. ASAP welcomes CRD's commitment and hopes to see positive changes in the section 4 system very soon. We will monitor its progress and report any positive or negative changes to our members.

For instance, ASAP was concerned that there was no adequate provision of food for destitute asylum seekers who had to travel from the regions to Croydon to attend their asylum support appeal hearings. This meant that asylum seekers were often extremely hungry and weak during their appeal hearings. At the workshop, CRD agreed to look into a possibility of providing food at the Asylum Support Tribunal.

If you would like to know more about this workshop or discuss any other section 4 issues, please contact Eiri@asaproject.org.uk. We can tell you more about the results of the workshop once we receive the full minutes of the event.