

Asylum Support Partnership

help and advice



March 2010

English

Section 4 support 'Azure' payment card

If you are granted Section 4 support you are entitled to accommodation and weekly support to the value of £35. You will be given your weekly support through an automated card payment system, called an 'Azure' payment card.

An organisation called Sodexho manages the payment system on behalf of the UK Border Agency (UKBA). The card is to be used to buy food, toiletries, clothing, cleaning items, or any other items sold in certain shops which have agreed to accept the card.

How will you get the card?

Your unique payment card will be given to you by your accommodation provider after dispersal. If your card is not given to you immediately then you should be given vouchers to spend in the shops.

How does it work?

Your card account is automatically updated with your weekly support allowance at midnight on Sunday. You will then be able to take the card to certain shops to buy food, toiletries or clothes to the value of your weekly allowance. You do not need to spend all of the allowance in one shop at one time.

The shop assistant will put your card through the card reader machine and the money amount that your items cost will be taken from your card and transferred automatically to the shop.

Please note that:

- **If you are a single adult** you will not be able to save large amounts of money on the payment card. At the moment if you have any weekly allowance left **only unspent amounts up to £5** will be transferred to your next weekly allowance when the balance is updated. Any remaining money will be taken back.
- You will not be able to buy items which cost more than the amount you have on your card. If this happens the shop may not allow you to take away any of the items you are trying to buy. To avoid this happening please check that the amount you have left to spend on your card is more than or matches the cost of goods you want to buy **before** you put the card through the card reader.
- Do not use the self service checkout tills in shops; they are not all set up for the Azure card.
- You can not request 'cash back' (money back) in shops.
- **You can not use the card in a bank or a cash machine.** If you try to use your card in a cash machine it will stop working and you will be unable to use it in shops until it has been reactivated by UKBA.

Other translated leaflets are available at <http://languages.refugeecouncil.org.uk>

Asylum Support Partnership is a partnership project hosted by the British Refugee Council
 British Refugee Council, (commonly called the Refugee Council) is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales, [No 2727514] and a registered charity, [No 1014576].
 Registered office: 240-250 Ferndale Road, London SW9 8BB, United Kingdom, VAT no: 936 519 988



How do I check the amount of money I have on my card?

To check how much money you have left you can call the:

Azure Card Balance Enquiry Line Tel: 0800 056 7695

- The call is free from a landline but not from a mobile.
- You will need your Azure payment card number to enter.
- The instructions given are all in English, there is no interpreting service, please ask someone to help you if you do not understand the instructions.

Which shops can I use the card at?

You can use the card at: Tesco, Asda, Sainsbury's, Peacocks and Boots.



You should check with your accommodation provider for up to date information about national and local shops that accept the card.

Who should I contact if I have a problem?

- **If your card is not working.** A helpline has been set up for card problems:
Sodexo Asylum Seekers Customer Helpline Tel: 01276 687 098 (open 9am-5pm)
- **If there is a problem with your weekly support amount or additional payments** contact your UKBA Regional Team or Section 4 team.
- **If your card has been lost or stolen.** You should report this to your accommodation provider who should advise you further and be able to provide emergency support.
- **If you have problems in the shop:**
All the shops in the list above and any new ones that UKBA or your accommodation provider have told you about should accept your card.
Shops staff should have been given information about the card and that it does not need a signature, personal identification number (PIN) or other identification document for use.
If staff refuse to accept your card, you should ask them to contact their manager, to confirm this or ask the manager to contact the Sodexo customer service number to confirm.
If your card has been put in the card reader, but the shop refuses to let you take the items, ask for a receipt showing the sale was cancelled.
Check your balance: the money may still have been taken from your card.
If the money has been taken but you were not allowed to take the items, the amount should be put back on your card automatically in 48 hours.
If you need the amount replaced more urgently or the amount is not put back on your card after 48 hours contact your local refugee organisation.

For further information or help contact one of the refugee organisations in your region.

Asylum Support Partnership consists of:

North of England Refugee Service, charity number: 1091200 www.refugee.org.uk
Refugee Action, charity number: 283660 www.refugee-action.org.uk
Refugee Council, charity number: 1014576 www.refugeecouncil.org.uk
Scottish Refugee Council, charity number: SC008639 www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk
Welsh Refugee Council, charity number: 1102449 www.welshrefugeecouncil.org