

The Social Security (Scotland) Bill

Easy Read version



July 2017



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
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Introduction

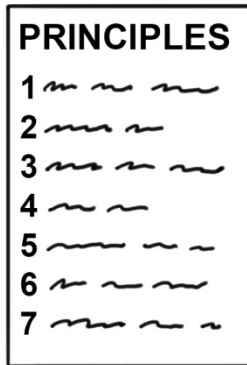


The Scottish Government has made a Social Security (Scotland) Bill, because of changes to the law. These changes mean that the Scottish Government will now be in charge of 11 social security benefits.

These benefits are:

- Disability Living Allowance (DLA)
- Personal Independence Payment (PIP)
- Attendance Allowance (AA)
- Severe Disablement Allowance
- Industrial Injuries Scheme
- Carer's Allowance
- Sure Start Maternity Grants
- Funeral Payments
- Cold Weather Payments
- Winter Fuel Payments
- Discretionary Housing Payments

What is in the Bill?



The Bill will set up a new Scottish social security system.

Part 1 of the Bill sets out seven principles that will be at the heart of the new system. This will make it possible to check that the new social security system is running properly.



Part 2 of the Bill sets out the rules for how the new Scottish social security system will be run.

These rules will cover:

- making decisions about who can get benefits
- having a decision looked at again, if someone thinks it was the wrong decision
- appeals
- when people are paid too much by mistake
- when people claim benefits they know they shouldn't get (fraud)
- mistakes



The Bill says that Scottish Ministers will give assistance to people who are entitled to it and talks about each kind of assistance:



Carer's Assistance

This will give money to a person who cares for another person with a disability. This is currently called **Carer's Allowance**.



Cold-spell Heating Assistance. This is for a person who needs help to pay for heating in cold weather. This is currently called a **Cold Weather Payment**.

Winter Heating Assistance

This is for a person who needs help to pay for heating in the Winter. This is currently called a **Winter Fuel Payment**.



Disability Assistance

These give money to a disabled person because of the effect a physical or mental disability or a terminal illness has on them. There are currently different benefits for disabled people which are called **Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payment and Attendance Allowance**.



Early Years Assistance

This gives money to a person who needs help with the costs of having a child in their family. This is also for people who are expecting to have a child. This is currently called a **Sure Start**



Maternity Grant which will be replaced with a new **Best Start Grant**.

Employment Injury Assistance

This gives money to a person who has had an injury or caught a disease through their job. This is currently part of the **Industrial Injuries Scheme**.



Funeral Expense Assistance

These give money to a person to help pay for a funeral. This is currently called a **Funeral Payment**.



Short-term assistance

This will be paid by Scottish Ministers for a short time in some cases. For example, it could be paid to someone who is appealing against a decision to have their assistance cut. This would not take the place of the Scottish Welfare Fund.



The Bill gives the Scottish Government power to make rules for each type of assistance, including who is able to get each type of assistance and how much money they will get. These rules will be made after the Bill has been agreed by the Scottish parliament.

The Scottish Government will work with others to make these rules and decide how to run the new system. They will do this in a way that is open, clear and easy to understand.

Part 3 of the Bill lets Scottish Ministers top up benefits that are still run by the UK Parliament.





It also sets out a way that a Carer's Allowance supplement can be paid to people as soon as possible. This is so that people living in Scotland who get Carer's Allowance will get more money to take their payments to the same amount as Jobseeker's Allowance.



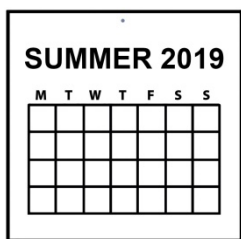
Part 4 of the Bill lets local Councils keep paying money to people to help with housing costs. These are called Discretionary Housing Payments. Councils will have more say on how they make these payments locally.

What happens next?



Members of the Scottish Parliament and other organisations will have the chance to look at the Bill and say what they think about it. The Bill is not expected to become law in Scotland until May 2018.

Once the Bill becomes law, the Scottish Government will begin payments of the different benefits at different times.



This will start with the Carer's Allowance supplement. This will be paid from summer 2018 to people living in Scotland who are receiving Carer's Allowance from the UK Government.



The Scottish Government's main goal is to make sure there is a safe and secure transfer of benefits and to make sure everyone gets the payments they need at the right time.



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