

**Criminal Justice Committee  
Bail and Release from Custody (Scotland) Bill**

**DWP Response - 20 December 2022**

**We have been asked to provide evidence to the Crime and Justice Committee about the support DWP offers those leaving prison and how jobcentres work with other services in Scotland.**

DWP provides a range of support to help ex-offenders re-establish back in the community and into work. This includes:

- **33 prison work coaches based in prisons** across Scotland who working alongside prison services and prison partners provide employment and benefit support before release.
- Our **extensive network of jobcentre work coaches** across Scotland continue benefit and employment support on release.
- The dedicated **National Universal Credit prison leaver telephone claim line** provides quick access to the benefit system for those prison leavers who are unable to claim online.
- Access to financial support from day 1 of release through Universal Credit **advance payments** – paid up to 100% of expected monthly entitlement.
- **Universal Credit Scottish Choices** gives people living in Scotland the option of being paid Universal Credit twice a month rather than monthly and housing costs paid directly to the landlord. DWP delivers UC Scottish Choices on behalf of Scottish Government.
- **Continuation of housing payments for single prisoners** expected to serve short term sentences or on remand, to safeguard tenancies and prevent homelessness on release.
- The **Jobcentre Plus employment offer** with individual tailoring - includes access to work experience, Sector-based Work Academy Programme (training, work placement and a guaranteed job interview).
- Jobcentre work coaches refer to the **Scottish Government's Fair Start Scotland programme**. This programme supports people with convictions, individuals who have completed a custodial sentence or offenders who are completing a community sentence.

Jobcentre Plus in Scotland works with a range of employers, charities and organisations that support prisoners and ex-offenders with their housing, health and work needs. These include Scottish Local Authorities, McGinley Support Services and Whitbread, Simon Community a homeless charity, Shine a mentoring service for women offenders and SACRO a Scottish community justice organisation that supports offenders with a wide range of needs.

We would continue to offer this support alongside services offering Throughcare support.