



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

## Social Justice and Social Security Committee

David Wallace,  
Chief Executive,  
Social Security Scotland

**8 April 2025**

Dear Mr Wallace,

### Financial considerations when leaving an abusive relationship

I am writing to you on behalf of the Social Justice and Social Security Committee to request information related to the Committee's inquiry into financial considerations when leaving an abusive relationship. Please find questions Members are looking for answers to below:

- How do the rules governing benefits Social Security Scotland delivers take account of the impact of domestic abuse?
- Where rules have flexibility built into them to account for domestic abuse, what evidence is required from the client?
- Are staff at Social Security Scotland trained to recognise different forms of domestic abuse, including economic abuse? Are they trained in trauma-informed working practices?
- Are staff also trained to understand the reasons people might want responsibility for a benefit transferred from an ex-partner, and the process to action this?
- How do Social Security Scotland ensure its administration of benefits cannot be used to perpetrate economic abuse?
- What is Social Security Scotland doing to address the time it can take to resolve who is responsible for a child in cases of competing claims for Scottish Child Payment?
- In what circumstances can Scottish Child Payment and Best Start Grants be backdated?
- How does Social Security Scotland help to raise awareness of Scottish Child Payment, and eligibility for this?
- To what extent are those being cared for involved in the application process for Carer Support Payment, and could this be increased and improved?

It would be appreciated if you could please respond by **Tuesday 6 May**.

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Contact: Social Justice and Social Security Committee, The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP. Email [SJSS.committee@parliament.scot](mailto:SJSS.committee@parliament.scot). We welcome calls through Relay UK and in BSL through Contact Scotland BSL.

If you have any questions about this request, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Collette Stevenson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Collette Stevenson MSP**  
**Convener**  
**Social Justice and Social Security Committee**