



T: 0300 244 4000  
E: [scottish.ministers@gov.scot](mailto:scottish.ministers@gov.scot)

Claire Baker  
Convener  
Economy and Fair Work Committee  
E: [economyandfairwork.committee@parliament.scot](mailto:economyandfairwork.committee@parliament.scot)

23 March 2023

## Fair Start Scotland Update

I am writing to let you know that, with the approval of the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Economy, I have taken the decision to extend the Fair Start Scotland contracts for a further 12 months via a Non-Competitive Action procurement exercise. This will allow participants to join the service up until 31 March 2024.

Much has happened to impact the employability landscape over the last twelve months, including the cost-of-living crisis, implementation of the Shared Prosperity Fund and the ongoing conflict in Ukraine and resettlement of those displaced from the country. The decision to extend Fair Start Scotland will bring stability to the system and ensure that we continue to provide employability support to disabled people and those at risk of long-term unemployment over the next 12 months.

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I should highlight that Fair Start Scotland is part of a wider offer of employability support in Scotland, with complementary place-based support being delivered through No One Left Behind. More than £110 million has been made available in the Scottish Budget for delivery of employability support in 2023-24.

I hope this update is helpful.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Lochhead". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'R'.

**Richard Lochhead**

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