

Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service



Collette Stevenson MSP
Convenor
Social Justice and Social Security
Committee
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

From the Executive Director, Tribunals
and Office of the Public Guardian
Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service
George House
126 George Street
Edinburgh
EH2 4HH

19 April 2024

Dear Convenor,

CLIENT EXPERIENCE OF SOCIAL SECURITY SCOTLAND'S REDETERMINATION AND APPEALS PROCESS

I and my colleague Lesley Black look forward to giving evidence to the Committee on behalf of SCTS and the Social Security Chamber of the First-tier Tribunal at its meeting on Thursday 25 April. In advance of that meeting, I offer for the Committee's consideration the following documents:

- A) A workflow diagram of the basic process followed once an appeal is received by the Tribunal. There are a number of variations to this process, but this is the underlying process which all appeals follow.
- B) Tables showing a) the caseload volumes in the Social Security Chamber in every full year of its operation, broken down by benefit type; and b) forecast volumes for the next three years.
- C) SCTS Tribunals User Charter

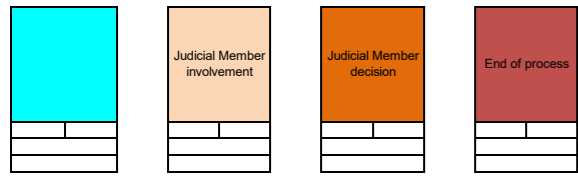
I would also like to let the Committee know that, in the light of feedback from users and user representatives, we are revising the template letter that is sent to appellants. The letter will now include a clear invitation to the appellant to state their preferred form of hearing (telephone, videoconference or in-person), should they wish a hearing to take place. The Tribunal will accommodate this preference wherever possible. I hope to be able to send you the revised wording, which is just being finalised, prior to the session on 25 April.

We will of course be happy to provide any further material that the Committee may request.

Yours sincerely,

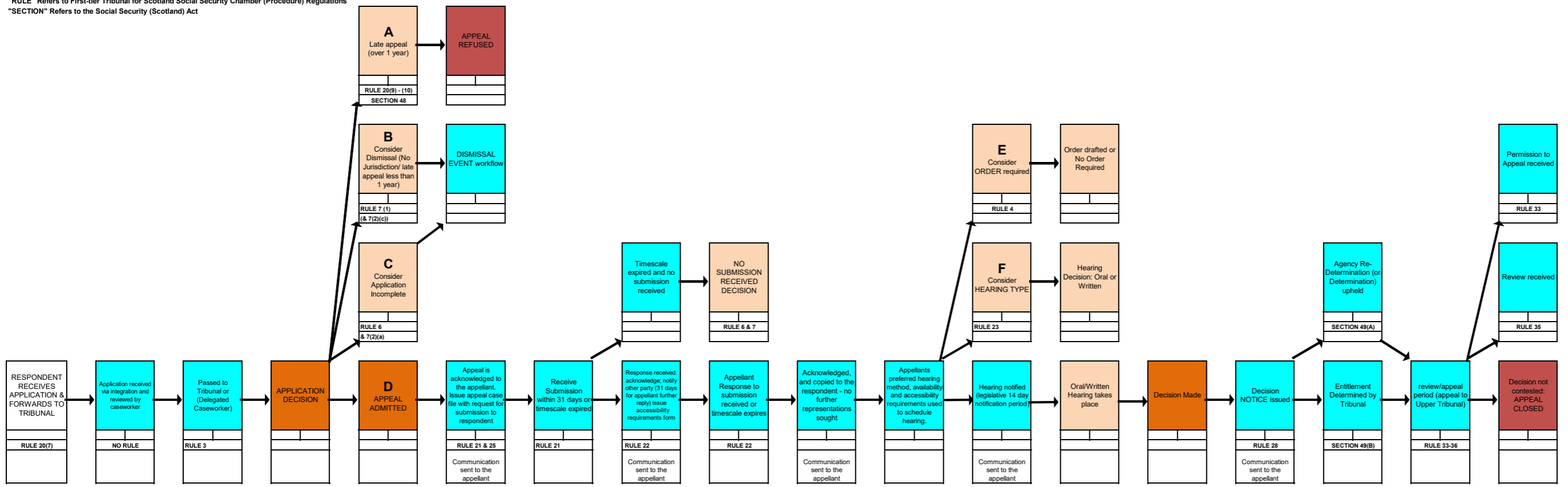
Tim Barraclough

Executive Director, Tribunals and Office of the Public Guardian



MAIN PROCESS (ENTITLEMENT APPEALS)

"RULE" Refers to First-tier Tribunal for Scotland Social Security Chamber (Procedure) Regulations
 "SECTION" Refers to the Social Security (Scotland) Act



First-tier Tribunal for Scotland Social Security Chamber Statistics

Table 1: Social Security Chamber workloads from April 2019 to March 2024.

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Receipts*	67	46	54	147	2615
- <i>Best Start Grant</i>	61	27	15	14	32
- <i>Funeral Support Payment</i>	5	16	13	19	33
- <i>Young Carer Grant</i>	1	1	2	2	7
- <i>Winter Heating Assistance for Children and Young People</i>	-	2	2	0	0
- <i>Scottish Child Payment</i>	-	0	21	12	109
- <i>Child Disability Payment</i>	-	-	1	42	188
- <i>Adult Disability Payment</i>	-	-	-	58	2242
- <i>Winter Heating Payment</i>	-	-	-	0	4
Disposals	60	42	57	54	774
Hearings	44	15	21	55	1125
- <i>In person</i>	5%	27%	0%	0%	1%
- <i>Video Conference</i>	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
- <i>Teleconference</i>	95%	73%	86%	62%	76%
- <i>Paper</i>	0%	0%	14%	38%	23%

*Receipts breakdown in order of benefit introduction.

Table 2: Social Security Chamber workload forecasts based on Scottish Government assumptions received March 2024

Annual Appeal Forecasts	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Receipts*	9700	9200	9200
- <i>Best Start Grant</i>	30	30	30
- <i>Funeral Support Payment</i>	20	20	20
- <i>Young Carer Grant</i>	<10	<10	<10
- <i>Winter Heating Assistance for Children and Young People</i>	<10	<10	<10
- <i>Scottish Child Payment</i>	20	20	20
- <i>Child Disability Payment</i>	170	150	150
- <i>Adult Disability Payment</i>	9400	8800	8500
- <i>Winter Heating Payment</i>	10	10	10
- <i>Carer Support Payment</i>	10	50	60
- <i>Pension Age Disability Payment</i>	0	160	260
- <i>Employment Injury Assistance</i>	0	0	110

*Receipts breakdown in order of benefit introduction and current timeline for introduction.

What to expect from us...

- We will treat everyone fairly irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. Further information is available in our [“Equality Statement and Outcomes”](#) available on our website.
- We will always identify ourselves.
- We will treat you with respect, be polite and helpful at all times.
- We will ensure we follow the correct process.
- We will explain what to do if you are not satisfied with how you were treated.
- We will protect your personal information.
- We will acknowledge when errors occur and rectify them.

Keeping you informed...

- We will respond to all requests.
- We will explain clearly the different methods you can use to contact us.
- We will acknowledge any complaints regarding the administration of your case in line with the timescales set out in the [SCTS Complaints Handling Procedure](#)

2

We aim to...

- Clearly explain our processes and procedures.
- Provide an efficient and effective service.
- Investigate errors and use your feedback to improve our service to all our users.
- Be impartial, fair and treat all users equally.
- Engage with our users and stakeholders through easily accessible forums that aim to improve the quality of our service.

What we expect from Tribunal users...

- Please treat our staff with respect.
- Please keep us informed of any changes to your circumstances.
- Please be on time for tribunal hearings and appointments.
- Please provide us with accurate and complete information to enable us to process your application, correspondence or enquiry efficiently.
- Please be prepared to participate in a test ahead of your digital hearing where applicable.

3

Access to information...

If you require more information about tribunals please access the website below:

<https://www.scotcourts.gov.uk/the-courts/the-tribunals/about-scottish-tribunals>

Alternatively you can contact the relevant tribunal on:

Hamilton Office

[Mental Health Tribunal for Scotland](#)

0800 345 70 60

[First-tier Tribunal for Scotland Local Taxation Chamber](#)

01698 390 012

Glasgow Office

[Upper Tribunal for Scotland](#)

0141 302 5880

[First-tier Tribunal for Scotland Health and Education Chamber \(Additional Support Needs\)](#)

0141 302 5860

[First-tier Tribunal for Scotland Housing and Property Chamber](#)

0141 302 5900

[First-tier Tribunal for Scotland Social Security Chamber](#)

0141 302 5858

Edinburgh Office

[First-tier Tribunal for Scotland General Regulatory Chamber \(Charity Appeals\)](#)

0300 303 5761

[First-tier Tribunal for Scotland General Regulatory Chamber \(Transport Appeals\)](#)

0300 303 5760

[First-tier Tribunal for Scotland Tax Chamber](#)

0131 271 4385

[Pensions Appeal Tribunal Scotland](#)

0131 271 4340

4

Obtaining copies of this leaflet in other formats...

Further copies of this document can be made available on request in other languages – TribunalsOperationsSupport@scotcourts.tribunals.gov.uk or telephone 0141 302 5900

Copii suplimentare ale acestui document se pot pune la dispoziție la cerere în alte limbi - TribunalsOperationsSupport@scotcourts.tribunals.gov.uk sau la numărul de telefon 0141 302 5900

Вы можете запросить копии данного документа на другом языке, отправив сообщение на TribunalsOperationsSupport@scotcourts.tribunals.gov.uk или позвонив по номеру 0141 302 5900

درخواست کرنے پر اس دستاویز کی مزید کاپیاں دوسری زبانوں میں دستیاب کی جا سکتی ہیں -

TribunalsOperationsSupport@scotcourts.tribunals.gov.uk کو ٹیلی فون 0141 302 5900 پر یا کریں۔

Có thể có các bản khác của tài liệu này bằng ngôn ngữ khác theo yêu cầu – TribunalsOperationsSupport@scotcourts.tribunals.gov.uk hoặc số điện thoại 0141 302 5900

5

Kolejne kopie tego dokumentu mogą być udostępnione na życzenie w innych językach po kontakcie poprzez TribunalsOperationsSupport@scotcourts.tribunals.gov.uk lub telefon 0141 302 5900.

Daugiau šio dokumento kopijų kitomis kalbomis galima gauti pateikus prašymą – TribunalsOperationsSupport@scotcourts.tribunals.gov.uk arba paskambinus telefonu 0141 302 5900

دہتوانریت کپی زباتری ٹیم بہلگہنامہیہ لہسمر داواکاری بہ زمانہکانی تر بہرہدست بکریٹ -
TribunalsOperationsSupport@scotcourts.tribunals.gov.uk یاں تہلفون بکمن بؤ 302 0141 5900

本文件的其他副本可应要求以其他语言提供 – TribunalsOperationsSupport@scotcourts.tribunals.gov.uk 或致电 0141 302 5900

بمکن توفیر نسخ اضافیہ من ہذہ الوثیقہ عند الطلب بلغات أخری - TribunalsOperationsSupport@scotcourts.tribunals.gov.uk أو الهاتف 5900 0141302

Kopje të tjera të këtij dokumenti mund të vihen në dispozicion sipas kërkesës në gjuhë të tjera - TribunalsOperationsSupport@scotcourts.tribunals.gov.uk ose telefononi 0141 302 5900

If you would like this document in audio or large format, please e-mail equalities@scotcourts.gov.uk or phone 0131 248 1866

6

SCTS Tribunals User Charter

Our Purpose...

The purpose of the Tribunals Operations is to provide administrative support to the Scottish Tribunals.



Version 5, September 2022