



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

## Social Justice and Social Security Committee

Shirley-Anne Somerville MSP  
Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice  
Scottish Government

**27 November 2025**

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

## Job Start Payment and Funeral Support Payment: Request for Information

I write on behalf of the Social Justice and Social Security Committee to request information and an update on two important benefits administered by Social Security Scotland: the Job Start Payment and the Funeral Support Payment.

### Job Start Payment

The Committee notes that uptake of the Job Start Payment has remained consistently low. In 2024-25, only 19% of eligible individuals accessed the benefit, with 1,860 applications processed and 39% authorised. Given the importance of this support for young people entering the workforce, we would welcome further detail on:

- What are currently understood to be the main barriers to take-up and delivery?
- What steps are the Scottish Government currently taking or planning to take to improve uptake ahead of the new Job Start Payment take-up strategy, which is due in October 2026?
- What measures are being considered to better support eligible young people in accessing this benefit?

### Funeral Support Payment

This benefit provides vital support to households on low incomes who face the financial burden of funeral costs. In 2024-25, there were 8,540 applications for Funeral Support Payment, with a reported take-up rate of 61%.

The Committee understands that Social Security Scotland has been working to improve uptake, including involving stakeholders in shaping promotional resources. We would be grateful if you would provide information on:

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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.

- What are currently understood to be the main barriers to take-up and delivery of this benefit?
- What steps are the Scottish Government currently taking or planning to take to improve uptake ahead of the new Funeral Support Payment?
- What measures are being considered to better support people in accessing this benefit?
- What analysis has been undertaken of the impact of Social Security Scotland's engagement with stakeholders involved in funeral provision?

The Committee is aware of the [East Ayrshire Respectful Funeral Service model](#), where the local authority works with local funeral directors to increase awareness of the benefit and simplify the application journey for eligible households. We would welcome your views on how models such as this are influencing the Scottish Government's approach to enhancing awareness and uptake.

Additionally, any information or data the Scottish Government can provide in relation to fraud or misuse of funds associated with both benefits would be much appreciated.

We would be grateful to receive your response to the above by **Friday 8<sup>th</sup> January**.

Yours sincerely,



**Bob Doris MSP**  
**Deputy Convener**  
**Social Justice and Social Security Committee**