

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

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

By email to: [sjss.committee@parliament.scot](mailto:sjss.committee@parliament.scot)

22 August 2025

Dear Collette,

I write to inform you that the Scottish Ministers have shared the Winter Heating Assistance (Pension Age) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2025 with the Scottish Commission on Social Security (SCoSS).

As you will be aware, on 9 June 2025 the UK Government announced an intention to expand eligibility to the Winter Fuel Payment (WFP) to those with an individual income of £35,000 or less per year. This decision was announced with no prior engagement with the Scottish Government, and Ministers and Officials have worked at pace to understand the implications of the UK Government's decision. Following careful consideration of the options available, the Scottish Government decided to mirror the approach taken by the UK Government for our Pension Age Winter Heating Payment (PAWHP).

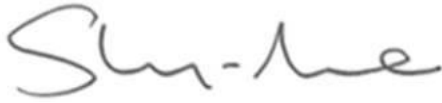
From this winter onwards, it is intended that PAWHP will be a payment of £203.40 per pensioner household with no individual aged 80 or over, or £305.10 per pensioner households with an individual aged 80 or over. We are in discussion with the UK Government to extend the proposed arrangements in England and Wales to recover payments from those pensioners with an individual income of more than £35,000 through the tax system. The intention is that the payment will be recovered automatically, and pensioners will not need to register with HMRC for this or take any further action.

On 16 June SCoSS had carried out scrutiny of the Winter Heating Assistance (Pension Age) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2025, prior to the Scottish Government's decision to mirror the UK Government approach. I am writing to the Committee to inform that, given the significant time pressures to amend the current PAWHP regulations, it has not been possible to afford SCoSS with the full scrutiny period before the regulations are laid in Parliament. I have provided SCoSS with a copy of the Winter Heating Assistance (Pension Age) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2025 and have therefore invited SCoSS to carry out scrutiny but it is likely that their report may not be prepared before the Regulations are laid in draft. I have also asked my officials to work closely with the Commission on any recommendations SCoSS wish to submit after the regulations have been laid.

I am grateful to SCoSS members for the helpful and constructive way in which they have engaged with officials, for the previous scrutiny provided to the regulations prior to our change in policy and in the preceding scrutiny process.

I look forward to appearing before Committee to give evidence on the regulations in due course.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Shirley-Anne' in a cursive, flowing style.

**SHIRLEY-ANNE SOMERVILLE**

**Draft Winter Heating Assistance (Pension Age) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2025**