

Mr Colm Gildernew
Chairperson Committee for Communities
Parliament Buildings
Stormont

Dear Colm

**THE PNEUMOCONIOSIS, ETC., (WORKERS' COMPENSATION) (PAYMENT OF CLAIMS)
(AMENDMENT NO. 2) REGULATIONS (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2026**

I am writing to you in accordance with paragraphs 19 and 20 of the Guidance for Departments on Delegated Legislation (SL1 Pre-introductory Stage) (November 2025) ('the Guidance') to request that the Committee consider the SL1 for this Statutory Rule (SR) in a shortened timeframe.

In order for people here to benefit from these provisions from the same date as people in GB, the Northern Ireland Rule should be made and implemented to timescales which align as closely as possible with the GB Statutory Instrument (SI). In order to align with the timescale for the corresponding SI being brought forward by the DWP, the normal timelines and processes under the Guidance cannot be applied. The amendments are considered to be technical in nature and will clarify the relevant date for paying lump sum payments, remove references to Medical Boards which no longer exist and equalise dependant payments in line with those paid to sufferers; these amendments can only be considered as positive measures.

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions has laid a draft Statutory Instrument, to which these Regulations correspond, before Parliament on 1 September 2026, to be made in October and come into force on 31 October 2026. My officials are working to develop the required SR, informed by DWP drafting of the corresponding SI. It is not anticipated that the final draft SR will diverge from the policy proposals as detailed in the SL1. Should last-minute changes be made to the SR

which necessitates revision of the SL1, a revised draft SL1 will be provided to the Committee as quickly as possible to highlight any policy changes.

I am satisfied that ensuring the orderly making of this legislation in line with DWP timeframes gives rise to exceptional circumstances which require deviation from the normal process and timeframes set out in the Guidance.

I would be grateful if the Committee would agree to approve the SL1 within the requested shortened timeframe, given these exceptional circumstances. It is my intention to make the SR to align as closely as possible with the DWP timing for the corresponding SI.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gordon Lyons', with a stylized, flowing script.

GORDON LYONS MLA

Minister for Communities