

**From: The Minister**

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Our ref: SUB-0342-2026  
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Mr Colm Gildernew MLA  
Chairperson, Committee for Communities  
Room 430  
Parliament Buildings  
Belfast

**THE UNIVERSAL CREDIT, PERSONAL INDEPENDENCE PAYMENT,  
JOBSEEKER'S ALLOWANCE AND EMPLOYMENT AND SUPPORT ALLOWANCE  
(DECISIONS AND APPEALS) (AMENDMENT) 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.

This SR is a parity social security measure. In order to align with the timescale for the corresponding Statutory Instrument (SI) being brought forward by the DWP, the normal timelines and processes under the Guidance cannot be applied. This amendment is technical in nature and will ensure that we have legislative cover to extend PIP awards should we find ourselves in a national emergency; this can only be considered as a positive measure.

DWP laid their SI on 27 April 2026 to be operational from 02 June 2026. A copy of the draft NI SR and Explanatory Memorandum is attached. 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 parity social security 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 in the requested shortened timeframe considering 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', written in a cursive style.

**Gordon Lyons MLA**  
**Minister for Communities**