



Colm Gildernew
Chairperson Committee for Communities
Parliament Buildings
Stormont

Dear Colm

THE UNIVERSAL CREDIT, PERSONAL INDEPENDENCE PAYMENT, JOBSEEKER'S ALLOWANCE AND EMPLOYMENT AND SUPPORT ALLOWANCE (CLAIMS AND PAYMENTS) (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.

In addition, the final version of the corresponding Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Statutory Instrument (SI) is not yet in the public domain. As such, it is not possible to share a draft of the SR and Explanatory Memorandum with the Committee alongside the SL1 as envisaged under the Guidance.

This SR is a parity social security measure. 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 SR will have a positive impact for those receiving parents and children who rely on a child maintenance deduction as detailed in the SL1 letter.

DWP has advised that their draft SI is currently undergoing final checks. DWP intend to make their SI on 20 March 2026 to be operational from 30 April 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 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 in light of 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