

Peter McCallion
Committee Clerk
The Committee for the Economy
Northern Ireland Assembly
Parliament Buildings
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3SW

4 February 2026

Dear Peter

**SL1 – THE EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS (INCREASE OF LIMITS) ORDER
(NORTHERN IRELAND) 2026**

The Department for the Economy proposes to make an Order under powers conferred by Articles 33(2) and 39(3) of the Employment Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1999 (“the 1999 Order”). The Order is subject to a laying requirement but not to any form of resolution by the Assembly.

Purpose of the Statutory Rule

The Order will increase the limits applying to certain awards and payments under employment rights legislation. This is required by Article 33 of the 1999 Order, which places a statutory duty on the Department to revise these limits annually in line with changes in the Retail Prices Index (RPI).

The following details apply:

- i The Department is under a statutory duty to make this Order each year.
- ii No alternative options were considered, as the requirement to revise sums in line with RPI is set out in legislation.
- iii The Department will apply the RPI increase of 4.5% (September 2024 to September 2025), rounded to the nearest pound, in accordance with the statutory formula.
- iv There are no risks or unintended consequences identified. This is a routine, technical adjustment.

- v Failure to implement this Order would result in non-compliance with a statutory duty and would disadvantage individuals entitled to the awards and payments under the specified employment rights legislation.

Previous Engagement with the Committee

Previous Committees have considered SL1s for annual revision under the 1999 Order. The approach remains consistent with previous years.

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications for the Department. Payments are funded through the UK-wide National Insurance Fund.

Consultation

Public consultation has not been carried out. The Department is under a statutory duty to make the Order and bring the revised limits into operation on 6th April. The Order is considered to be of a routine and technical nature.

Compliance with Section 24 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998

Checks have been carried out to ensure compliance with Section 24 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

Consideration by the Executive

The SL1 and draft Order have not been referred to the Executive.

Equality Impact

Consideration has been given to compliance with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. An Equality Impact Assessment is not considered necessary. The Order does not introduce new policy or change existing policy; it simply revises awards and payments in line with inflation.

Regulatory Impact

A Regulatory Impact Assessment is not required. The Order applies a predetermined formula (RPI) and has negligible impact on business, charities, social economy enterprises or voluntary bodies.

Rural Needs Impact

A Rural Needs Impact Assessment is not required. The Order applies equally across Northern Ireland and does not create differential impacts.

Data Protection Impact

A Data Protection Impact Assessment is not required. The Order does not involve processing personal data.

Child Rights Impact

A Child Rights Impact Assessment is not required. The Order does not affect children's rights or introduce new policy.

Position in Great Britain

Equivalent legislation in Great Britain applies similar annual RPI-based revisions. NI provisions diverge slightly due to historical rounding differences, but the approach remains broadly aligned.

Any other information

The Department intends to issue a press release prior to the Order coming into operation.

Proposed timing of consideration of the SL1

The SL1 has been submitted in accordance with the minimum four-week timeframe. The Department proposes that the Committee consider the SL1 at its meeting on 4 March 2026.

Proposed Operational Date

It is a statutory requirement that the Order comes into operation on 6th April 2026. The draft of the proposed Order and Explanatory memorandum are attached, and you will wish to bring this matter to the attention of the Committee for the Economy.

Yours faithfully


Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer

cc

Human Rights Commission (All SL1s)

Equality Commission (All SL1s)