



Department
for Work &
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THE RT HON THERESE COFFEY MP
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TC December 2021

Dear Pete

Treatment of Historical Institutional Abuse Payments in Means-Tested Benefits

Thank you for your letter dated 3 December, relating to the Treatment of Historical Institutional Abuse Payments in Means-Tested Benefits. I have considered the contents of your letter carefully.

I recognise the Managing Public Money issues that this proposal causes for you as the Principal Accounting Officer. However, as you set out in your letter to me, it is legitimate for me to consider broader issues that you are not able to accommodate in your own assessment.

As you highlight in your letter, it is a sound policy objective to seek to ensure that the benefit system does not, inadvertently, withdraw day to day support from the survivors of historic institutional abuse, those in harm's way or their next of kin. I have agreed this policy intent across government.

On that basis, I am clear that payments from these schemes should be disregarded across all means-tested benefits, and it is right to rely on common law powers to do so even before regulations are put in place.

I am therefore formally directing you as Accounting Officer to take forward this scheme with immediate effect, managing the identified risks as best you can.

In line with the usual process for ministerial directions, I am also copying this letter to the Comptroller and Auditor General, who will inform the Public Accounts Committee, and the Treasury Officer of Accounts.

*Yours sincerely,
Theresa*

RT HON THERESE COFFEY MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WORK AND PENSIONS