



Ministry  
of Justice

The Right Honourable  
**Shabana Mahmood MP**  
Lord Chancellor & Secretary  
of State for Justice

Lea Paterson CBE, Senior Salaries Review Body  
By Email

**MoJ ref:** SUB119676

10 December 2024

Dear Lea,

## **UPCOMING ANNUAL REVIEW 2025/26 AND MAJOR REVIEW OF THE JUDICIAL SALARY STRUCTURE**

I wanted to welcome you as Chair of the Senior Salaries Review Body (SSRB). The expert and independent advice of the SSRB is vital in determining fair and balanced remuneration for the judiciary. I look forward to working closely with you over your term.

I write now to formally commence the 2025/26 pay round for all salaried judicial office holders for whom I have responsibility, and to formally commission the Major Review of the judicial salary structure.

A Major Review allows for a more systemic view of judicial pay. Therefore through this annual pay review you should give due regard to the role a Major Review will take in shaping judicial remuneration over the coming years.

### *Annual Review*

The Government values the vital contribution made by the almost 6 million public sector workers across the UK, who deliver the public services we all rely upon. This includes the judiciary, and the crucial role they play at the heart of the administration of justice. Attracting talent from the legal sector while balancing value for money for taxpayers is central to ensure that we are equipped to deliver mission-led, high quality public services.

During this pay round, you will receive evidence from my department, HM Treasury and the judiciary. My department's evidence will, as usual, cover the recruitment and retention context for the judiciary, including the expected position following the implementation of the 2024/25 pay award. It will also set out the funds available to the Ministry of Justice for 2025/26, which was finalised through the Spending Review and announced at the Autumn Budget on 30 October. This comes against the backdrop of the challenging financial position this government has inherited, including a £22 billion pressure against the spending plans set out for departments at Spring Budget 2024.

We are keen to ensure people in the public sector receive another fair pay award in 2025/26, but we cannot afford to cut funding for our vital public services in order to deliver this. My department will therefore also continue to strive to deliver mission-led public services to ensure it is equipped to efficiently deliver the vital, high quality public service we rely on, whilst delivering value for money for taxpayers.

We know that people who work in the public sector delivering our vital public services deserve timely pay awards, so, as this Government has consistently said, our intention is to announce pay awards as close to the start of the pay year of 1 April as possible for 2025/26. As I have been considering the important role of the upcoming Major Review, it would not have been right for me to issue a remit letter commencing the 2025/26 Annual Review at an earlier date. I am pleased to now be in a position to do so.

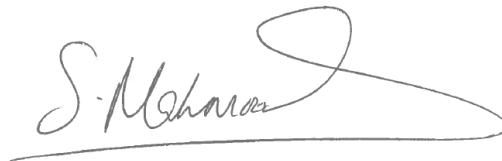
To this end, where possible I would be grateful if you, the SSRB, can deliver recommendations to the Government on the 2025/26 pay award for all judicial office holders for whom I set the rate of remuneration at the earliest point that allows you to give due consideration to the relevant evidence. To support with this, the Government will publish its written evidence as soon as possible, including budgets relating to pay. I recognise that changing the timeline from recent years will present challenges for the SSRB, especially as work commences on a Major Review. However, I am sure you also share the Government's belief in the importance of returning to more timely annual pay processes. It is also the case that the Major Review is the opportunity to consider wider strategic issues, and you should therefore consider that this annual review can be more narrowly focused.

#### *Major Review*

A Major Review provides an opportunity to examine more fundamental issues affecting the judicial pay structures. I am keen to consider longer-term planning for the judiciary ensuring that our justice system delivers a high-quality service that provides value for money for the taxpayer. I consider that the Major Review is an opportunity to do this, and I would therefore like the SSRB to commence the next major review of the judicial salary structure. My officials will engage with the SSRB's judicial member, Mark Emerton, to seek views on remit proposals and develop a terms of reference.

I look forward to working with you during the Annual and Major Reviews. I am grateful for the work of the SSRB and all it does to support the maintenance of a high quality and independent judiciary.

Yours sincerely,



**RT HON SHABANA MAHMOOD MP**

**LORD CHANCELLOR AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR JUSTICE**