

# Windrush compensation scheme end date removed

Home Secretary Priti Patel has today announced that the end date for the Windrush Compensation Scheme has been removed.

This means no one who is eligible will be prevented from making a claim because the deadline has passed.

The announcement comes as new statistics show that the Windrush Compensation Scheme has now offered more than £34 million, of which almost £27 million has been paid.

Today's changes will give reassurance that anyone seeking compensation for the losses and impacts they suffered, because they were unable to demonstrate their lawful status, will still be able to apply if they come forward after April 2023, the scheme's previous end date.

Further improvements to simplify the application process have also been made, including changes to the primary claim form, designed in consultation with stakeholders, to make it easier to complete and easier for caseworkers to process.

The Home Office has also published refreshed caseworker guidance, which sets out clearly how caseworkers should make decisions on claims and ensure they only ask applicants to provide the minimum information necessary to award the maximum compensation.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

I have always been clear that I will listen and act to put right the wrongs suffered by the Windrush generation.

Today I am removing the end date of the Windrush compensation scheme and announcing a new package of support to help bereaved families claim compensation more easily.

The additional changes I am making will ensure everyone can claim the compensation they deserve and I am pleased that we have now paid or offered more than £34 million to victims so far.

In addition, the Home Office is also launching a package of support to make it easier for those making claims on behalf of a relative who has passed away.

This includes reimbursing up to £1,500 towards legal advice that has been sought to apply for probate, which is the legal right to deal with someone's estate when they die. We Are Digital, who provide independent advice for

those claiming compensation, will also be able to provide free help and support to those applying for probate, including how to complete the different application forms.

The Home Office will be writing to all those who have already made claims on behalf of a relative who has passed away without evidence of probate, and publishing information about the support available on gov.uk in the coming weeks.

The figures published today show that, to the end of June 2021, the Home Office had paid £26.9 million to 776 people, and had offered a further £7.3 million.

This rapid increase in payments has been driven by an overhaul of the scheme announced by the Home Secretary last December, following consultation with community representatives including the Cross-Government Windrush Working Group.

Those changes included increasing the minimum payment to £10,000, which is 40 times greater than the previous minimum award available.

The Home Office's work to further raise awareness of the Windrush Compensation Scheme and encourage those affected to apply is ongoing. Last December, the Home Secretary launched the £500,000 Windrush Community Fund, for grassroots organisations and community groups to promote the Windrush Schemes.

Since 2018, the department has held approximately 180 engagement events, in person and virtually, reaching over 3,000 people, and last year's national communications campaign is estimated to have reached over 12 million people across community channels.

Whilst the Home Office initially estimated it would receive around 15,000 eligible claims, it has received 2,631 since the compensation scheme launched. The compensation scheme planning assumption – the number of eligible claims the Home Office estimates it is likely to receive – is therefore being adjusted to a range of 4,000 – 6,000. It is not a cap and any eligible individual who applies will be considered for compensation. It remains the case that there is no cap on the total amount of compensation the Home Office will pay out.

The Home Secretary has this week written to the Home Affairs Select Committee to announce the removal of the Windrush Compensation Scheme deadline and the reduction of the planning assumption. The decision was taken in consultation with stakeholders, including the Windrush Cross Government Working Group.