

Windrush Compensation Scheme pays out £360,000 within first year

More than £360,000 has been paid out in compensation as part of the ongoing work to right the wrongs experienced by the Windrush generation, the Home Secretary announced today.

Figures published by the Home Office show that a total of 60 claimants received payments through the Windrush Compensation Scheme within its first year.

The scheme, which has been operational since April 2019, continues to make payments on a weekly basis.

In the same period, the Home Office has additionally made offers of approximately £280,000 in compensation through the scheme. Once the offers are accepted by the applicants, the payments will be made.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

By listening to feedback from community leaders and those affected, we have begun to put right the wrongs caused to a generation who have contributed so much to our country.

The Windrush Compensation Scheme has been developed to ease the burden from the unacceptable mistreatment some have faced, which is why it is so important that people continue to come forward.

The payments made under the scheme vary, depending on the facts of the case, with one payment in excess of £100,000. Many payments made so far are interim payments, which means people will likely receive more at a later date.

While the scheme is making good progress and continues to process claims as quickly as possible, the Home Office is committed to getting more people to come forward and claim.

That is why the Commonwealth Citizens' Taskforce and the Windrush Compensation Scheme are running a series of online engagement events, to ensure those affected continue to come forward and claim.

Alongside these events, the department continues to work closely with communities and individuals to listen to feedback on the scheme and to ensure claims are resolved as quickly as possible. Each case is personal, with careful consideration given to the specific circumstances in every claim.

As announced by the Home Secretary in March, the Home Office will shortly

launch a separate £500,000 fund for grassroots organisations to promote the Windrush Schemes and provide advice services. The department will work with stakeholders to co-design the fund.

The outstanding offers of compensation had yet to be accepted by claimants or were going through a review so could not be included in the £362,996 paid out.

All those who have applied to the compensation scheme are then contacted by the Home Office and case workers work closely with claimants to process the claims as quickly as possible.

The Home Office continues its work to right the wrongs experienced by the Windrush generation, which is shown by the fact that over 12,000 people have been provided with documentation confirming their status so far.

In order for a payment to be made, an individual must first accept the offer made. As part of the scheme, anyone unhappy with their offer can request a free internal review. If they still do not agree with the outcome, the claimant can request a further review the Independent Adjudicator.

The Home Secretary extended the Windrush Compensation Scheme to 2 April 2023 to give more people time to claim.

To make the scheme more flexible to those who have suffered losses, the mitigation policy – the criteria by which financial settlements are made – has been amended to take a wider range of circumstances into account.

This change means people are no longer have to show they took immediate steps to resolve their immigration status, instead, simply that they tried to contact the Home Office or sought advice at any time.

Citizens Advice, funded by the Home Office, are continuing to provide free, independent claimant assistance during the pandemic for those wishing to apply to the Compensation Scheme. This can be accessed by referral through the Windrush Helpline: 0800 678 1925.

The Wendy Williams Lessons Learned review was published in March 2020. The Home Secretary made clear in her statement to the House of Commons on the day of publication that the department will carefully consider the detail of the report and its recommendations to develop a comprehensive plan for changing the ways of working of the Home Office.