

1st August 2024

VICTIMS' PAYMENTS BOARD WELCOMES EXTENSION TO BACKDATING DEADLINE

Mr. Justice McAlinden, President of the Victims' Payments Board has today welcomed a decision by the Secretary of State Rt Hon Hilary Benn MP to extend a date for victims who submit an application and are eligible for a payment under the Troubles Permanent Disablement Payments Scheme to receive backdated payments.

The Victims' Payments Board is responsible for determining who is entitled to payment in respect of a permanent injury caused by a Troubles-related incident. The Troubles Permanent Disablement Payments Scheme opened for applications on 31 August 2021 and the framework on entitlement is set out in the Victims' Payments Regulations 2020 and the Secretary of State's Guidance which was published on 14 August 2020. Initially only those applications submitted within the first 3 years would be entitled to a backdating element, however, the decision by the Secretary of State extends this until 30 August 2026, in line with the closing date for the Scheme to receive applications.

In a statement, Mr Justice McAlinden said:

"I am delighted that the Secretary of State has taken the decision to extend the date for entitlement to a backdated element of payment for victims who are eligible under the Troubles Permanent Disablement Payments Scheme. This provides victims who have suffered a permanent and in many cases a life changing injury as a result of a Troubles related incident, the much-needed time and space to submit an application to the Scheme.

The process of recounting past events can be highly traumatic for victims and this extension provides time and space for them to submit an application and if eligible, receive the recognition and payments to which they are entitled to and deserve. I would also take this opportunity to encourage anyone who has been injured as a result of a Troubles related incident to consider making an application to the Scheme. It is also important to highlight that there are a number of organisations available who can provide free assistance and support to applicants during the application process, these can be found on the Victims' Payments Board website www.victimspaymentsboard.org.uk

Close to 50,000 people are believed to have suffered injuries during the troubles, and this includes a large number of people who were caught up in troubles-related incidents outside of Northern Ireland.

The Victims' Payments Regulations 2020 provides that entitlement to the backdated element beginning from the first date on which applications may be made (31 August 2021) and ending three

years after that date (30 August 2024), or such later date as the Secretary of State may determine. This date has now been extended to 30 August 2026, which is in line with the closing date to submit applications to the Troubles Permanent Disablement Payments Scheme.

As of 29 July 2024, over 8600 applications have been received by the VPB, with a total of £51 million paid out to Victims in recognition of the hurt and suffering they have endured. However, to date only 609 applications have been received from outside of NI, and it is therefore important that all potential applicants who may have suffered life-changing and permanent disabling injuries consider making an application to the Scheme.

The organisations available to provide free assistance and support to applicants during the application process are as follows:

WAVE



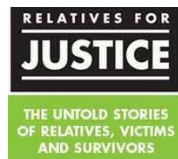
- **Belfast**
- T: 028 9077 9922
- E: adminhq@wavetrauma.org
- **Armagh**
- T: 02837511599
- E: adminarmagh@wavetrauma.org
- **Ballymoney**
- T: 02827669900
- E: adminballymoney@wavetrauma.org
- **Derry/Londonderry**
- T: 02871266655
- E: adminderry@wavetrauma.org
- **Omagh**
- T: 02882252522
- E: adminomagh@wavetrauma.org

The Ely Centre



- **Enniskillen**
- T: 028 6632 0977
- E: enquiriesvps@elycentre.co.uk
- **Markethill**
- T: 028 3755 2447
- E: enquiriesvps@elycentre.co.uk

Relatives for Justice (RfJ)



- T: 028 9071 0388
- E: injuredscheme@relativesforjustice.com

South East Fermanagh Foundation (SEFF)



Fermanagh – Rathfriland – Newry – Lisburn – SEFF GB

T: 028 6772 3884

E: welfare@seff.org.uk

Ashton Centre



- T: 028 90 742255
- E: info@ashtoncentre.com

More information on the scheme and application process can be found via the [Victims' Payments Board website](#).

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Editors' notes:

- The Victims' Payment Board came into operation on 31 August 2021
- The closing date for applications is 30 August 2026 – this also now applies to the entitlement to receive a backdated element of payment.
- The Victims Payment Board is responsible for the delivery of the Troubles Permanent Disablement Payment Scheme.
- On 24 August 2020 the TEO designated the Department of Justice to exercise the administrative functions of the Victims' Payment Board on the Board's behalf
- The Victims' Payments Board is independent of the Department of Justice
- The President of the Board is Mr Justice McAlinden
- The medical assessment provision is by Capita, appointed by the DoJ through a public procurement process. VPB is responsible for developing guidance on the medical assessment process
- The Board is made up of 72 members comprising of Legal, Medical and Lay members