



Dear Colleague

£500 COVID PAYMENT: OPT OUT AND FURTHER Q&A

1. [PCS\(COV\)2020/1](#) set out NHS Scotland's agreed qualifying criteria for the £500 one off payment which had been announced by First Minister Nicola Sturgeon.

2. A number of further questions have subsequently been raised by stakeholders and this circular provides guidance in those areas. A further Q&A on these topics is attached at Annex A.

Opt Out

3. Concern has been expressed about how the £500 payment will affect those receiving benefits like Universal Credit. Whilst no one should be worse off overall as a result of the payment, everyone's circumstances will be different and, where individuals have concerns about the affect of the payment, they will have the opportunity to opt out of receiving it in their February salary by informing their employer by 5 February 2021.

4. Anyone wishing to opt out of the February payment should complete the form which is available on the Scottish Terms and Conditions Website [here](#), and forward this to their Payroll Department.

5. This will give individuals more time to consult with contacts such as their Work Coach in order to get a clearer idea of how they will be affected. Having made that further assessment, staff will then have the opportunity to opt back in by informing their employer by 5 March 2021.

6. To opt back in, staff should complete the form which is available on the Scottish Terms and Conditions Website [here](#) and forward this to thier Payroll Department.

22 January 2021

Addressees

For action

Chief Executives,
Directors of Finance,
Directors of Human Resources:
NHS Boards and Special Health
Boards, NHS National Services
Scotland (Common Services
Agency) and Healthcare
Improvement Scotland

For information

Members, Scottish Partnership
Forum
Members, Scottish Terms and
Conditions Committee
Members, Scottish Workforce and
Governance Committee

Enquiries to:

Colin Cowie
Scottish Government Health
Directorates
Health Workforce
Ground Floor Rear
St Andrew's House
EDINBURGH EH1 3DG

E-mail:
hwfpaytermsandconditions@gov.scot

Council Tax Reduction

7. The legislation put in place in support of the £500 payment means that it should be disregarded in the calculation of Council Tax Reduction. However, staff in receipt of Council Tax Reduction should inform their local authority that they have received the COVID payment in order to ensure that it does not affect their reduction.

Action

8. NHS Boards and Special Health Boards should make all staff aware of the opt out provisions set out in this circular.

Enquiries

9. Employees should direct their personal enquiries to their employing NHS Board or Special Health Board.

10. This circular is available online at www.publications.scot.nhs.uk.

Yours sincerely



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**NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE
APPROVAL OF REMUNERATION AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE**

In accordance with regulations 2 and 3 of the National Health Service (Remuneration and Conditions of Service) (Scotland) Regulations 1991 (S.I. 1991/537) the remuneration and conditions of service set out in the attached Scottish Government Health Workforce Directorate circular of 22 January 2021 – PCS(COV)2021/1 – in respect of opting out and other issues associated with the £500 one off payment are hereby approved for the purposes of the said Regulations.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Laura Zeballos'.

LAURA ZEBALLOS

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Workforce Pay, Practice and Partnership Division
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22 January 2020

FURTHER Q&A ON £500 COVID PAYMENT

In order to ensure that the Q&A is always up to date and that all questions can be addressed in one place, this section of the circular has been moved to the Scottish Government website and can be accessed [here](#).