

Consultative ballot FAQs

Our national executive committee met this week and agreed to launch an online national consultative ballot in the latest stage of our national campaign over pay, pensions, redundancy terms and job security.

We would like to thank reps and members who delivered enormous levels of strike action in recent months, which have led to significant concessions from the UK government and the devolved administrations.

In the ballot, which will run from 3 to 31 August, you will be asked to support the NEC's recommendation to pause strike action, apart from where employers fail to deliver a £1,500 one-off cost-of-living crisis payment and continue our national campaign.

Is the ballot online?

Yes. You will be sent a ballot to the personal email address you gave us.

How can I update my email address?

Log on to [PCS Digital](#) to update your details.

I don't have a personal email address

You will be sent a postal ballot to your home address.

When is the consultative ballot?

The ballot opens on Thursday 3 August and closes at 12 noon on Thursday 31 August.

How do I get a replacement ballot email/paper?

If you haven't had the email with voting instructions but your personal email address is registered with us and [your employer is part of the ballot](#), please check your spam/junk folders before requesting a replacement. The email comes from

pcs@cesvotes.com.

Request a replacement online by logging in to [PCS Digital](#). The **deadline for requesting a replacement is 5pm on Sunday 20 August**.

When requests are made on PCS Digital, they are sent over in batches to Civica, the independent scrutineer, for processing. Civica will make a series of checks before sending out a replacement email or ballot paper.

This means that depending on the volume of requests we receive and Civica's workload, it can take **up to 8 working days** for a replacement email/ballot paper to be sent out.

However, as long as you request it by our deadline of **20 August** you will receive a replacement.

Is the ballot on the pay offer from the government?

No. The ballot is asking members if they agree with the National Executive Committee's (NEC) campaign strategy.

What is the NEC strategy?

We will:

- in areas that have not yet paid £1,500, continue with targeted actions and re-ballot as needed
- negotiate pay for 2023/24 at a delegated level, seeking the best deal for our members
- seek to make progress on our objectives around coherence and job security in the further talks that we have won
- while we are in these talks, temporarily stop national industrial action, including strikes and re-ballots
- campaign for full payment of the £1,500, including opposing pro-rata payments
- continue to campaign on pensions, including taking legal action.

What is the government offer on pay?

For 2022/23 the government pay offer was 2-3%. This has already been paid to most workers. Through strike action we secured an additional one off payment of £1,500.

Because of our strike action we have moved the government pay remit of 2% for 2023/24 to 4.5% with an extra 0.5% for the lowest paid members.

Who will get the £1,500 payment?

Members in the UK civil service and its related areas and the Welsh Government sector.

Why are Scottish members not getting the £1,500 payment?

Pay is a devolved matter which means members working in the Scottish and Welsh Government Sectors are not covered by the UK government offer. Members in Scotland were balloted in May on their own pay offer and overwhelmingly accepted it. The terms were at least as good as those from Westminster.

In July, the Welsh Government chose to replicate the Cabinet Office deal on the £1,500 and has encouraged arms-length bodies to do likewise. It has agreed to pay the lump sum in full to part-timers, rather than pro rata.

All members based in N Ireland who work for the UK civil service will receive the £1,500 from their department.

Will people claiming Universal Credit have their Universal Credit reduced because of the £1,500 payment?

Universal Credit is a benefits matter and entitlement to it is based on individual circumstances. Members will need to check themselves if the £1,500 payment will have an impact.

That said, we will be pressing the employer at delegated level to allow members to opt for the payment on a monthly basis rather than in the form of a lump sum. This may alleviate some of the difficulties for members on Universal Credit.

What about the £1,500 payment for part time workers?

We will continue to fight for part time members to receive the full payment rather than pro-rata.

What about the national pay claim of a 10% pay rise?

The concessions do not meet our full pay claim, but they do put serious money in members' pockets and bring parity of treatment with other public sector workers. They also halt cuts to the Civil Service Compensation Scheme (CSCS) and

redundancy protections.

What about the Civil Service Compensation Scheme?

The government has been forced to commit to not making any changes to the civil service redundancy pay before 2025. They have therefore been forced to back off from their proposed 33% cuts to the scheme and the timescale takes the matter beyond the next general election, when any new administration will need to consider their approach afresh.

What about our pensions?

There is ongoing litigation in relation to pensions. The High Court ruled that the government's approach was lawful but PCS, alongside other trade unions, is appealing the decision. We have been granted permission by the Court of Appeal to have our case heard. We will continue to press in negotiations for pensions justice while also seeking redress through the courts. Our legal advice is that we have a strong case.

Are we included in the pay review body recommendations for public sector workers?

No. Our members are not covered by any pay review body.

Will the strike fund levy still apply?

As we are pausing strike action in pursuit of our national demands while further talks take place, we will also pause the levy should members endorse the NEC strategy in a ballot. If we ballot for action again in the event that the negotiations do not produce sufficient results, we will need to raise money for the fighting fund again.

Is there a threshold for the members consultative ballot?

No it will be a simple majority of those who voted.