

The Rt Hon Pat McFadden MP

Secretary of State for Work and Pensions
Department for Work and Pensions
Caxton House
Tothill Street
London, SW1H 9NA

29 January 2026

Subject: Thousands of people agree that our social security system should always treat us with dignity and respect.

Dear Secretary of State,

Most of us will rely on our social security system at some point in our lives. Like the NHS, it was built to be there for all of us. The government's reforms to PIP and employment support provide a crucial opportunity to create a system that promotes dignity and independence. We urge you to take that opportunity.

Most people (71%) believe that claiming benefits should not be shameful. We believe in a system that gives us security when we're not well and confidence to find our next career move.

But we know some things need to change for us to reach that point. We need you to prioritise:

- Simple, compassionate disability benefit assessments – simplifying the application process and training assessors to understand the realities of disability and illness.
- Supportive conversations, not interrogations – making sure frontline staff have the time and tools to build trust with the people they support.
- Jobcentres that lead with trust, not suspicion - giving people time and support to prepare for the next step in their careers, instead of threatening sanctions that don't work.

You can find out more about Turn2us full policy recommendations in its new report – [From stigma to support: Rebuilding trust in our social security system.](#)

We need our social security system to listen, not interrogate. To trust instead of judge. To build confidence and hope instead of making people feel ashamed and stuck. And the way we talk about social security matters too.

Right now, a shocking two-thirds of people feel bad about themselves after accessing the support they need. This is hugely damaging for people's health, financial security and wellbeing. Over half of those claiming support agree that the process made their mental health worse, rising to nearly two-thirds of PIP claimants. And this all results in an

inefficient and ineffective system that makes it harder for people to live independently or take the next step in their careers.

You now have a rare opportunity to rewrite the story. Through the Timms Review and employment support reforms, you can lead a shift away from suspicion and sanctions, towards dignity, trust, and hope.

79% of us would encourage a loved one to apply for social security if they needed support. We stand ready to work with you, to make sure that our social security system is there for everyone when they need it. Because a system that treats people with dignity and respect is a system that works.

It's time to stop the stigma and fix the system.

Sincerely,

2,453 Turn2us supporters