



Social Security Scotland
Tèarainteachd Shòisealta Alba



Social Security Scotland – Insights Research Findings 01 April 2021 to 31 March 2022

1.1. Introduction

Social Security Scotland runs an insights research programme to continuously improve its services.

This publication covers the period 01 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, during which Job Start Payment, Scottish Child Payment, Child Winter Heating Assistance, Carer's Allowance Supplement, Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods, Funeral Support Payment, and Young Carer Grant were live.

This publication also covers Child Disability Payment, which went live July 2021. Child Disability Payment Case Transfers which went live in November 2021. Adult Disability Payment data is also included from March 2022 when it went into its Pilot.

1.2. Key Findings

- From 01 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, Social Security Scotland handled approximately 177,668 calls.
- Of these, the most popular calls were in relation to Best Start Grant and Best Start Food, with 56,698 calls. This is followed by Scottish Child Payment at 47,894 calls.
- From 01 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, the average call wait time was 5 minutes and 51 seconds across all benefit queues. This ranged from an average of 30 seconds for Child Disability Payment Case Transfer queues to an average of 8 minutes and 55 seconds for Carers Allowance Supplement queues.
- From 01 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, the average call handling time across all queues was 12 minutes 55 seconds.
- In terms of applications received, from 01 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods was the most popular with 84,185 applications received. Followed by 53,185 applications for Scottish Child Payment.
- From 01 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, online was the most popular channel for applying for Social Security Scotland benefits.

1.3. Background

An analytical team within Social Security Scotland runs a programme of insights research.

The programme includes collecting, analysing and publishing management information, research and statistics that relate to the delivery and performance of Social Security Scotland.

The aim of the programme is to gather the experiences, needs and priorities of those who use and deliver social security in Scotland. This information, in turn, is fed back into the organisation's processes, policy and practice, to facilitate continuous improvement.

The insights research programme includes this publication of Insights Research Findings that covers client point of contact with the organisation. Further detail on the background of the insights research programme and future plans can be found [here](#).

1.4. Methodology

This insights research involves the collection of routine management information, as well as directly asking clients about their experiences when interacting with the organisation and applying for benefits. This report will focus on the management information, with a further report on direct client feedback to follow.

4.1 Client Insights – telephony: call data and general call experience

To capture client interactions and experiences with Social Security Scotland, research mechanisms have been built into telephony, postal and online channels. Management information is taken from the organisation’s telephony reporting system. This is used to report on call wait and handling times, as well as call volumes.

Based on their needs, callers are sifted into their final telephony destination stream, known as queues. Queues might relate to specific benefits or processes.

4.2 Client Insights – updates in service delivery and reporting

This Insights Research Findings publication includes an additional queue: Accessible Vehicles and Equipment. This queue relates to the Accessible Vehicles and Equipment Scheme and is most appropriate to disabled clients who are receiving the higher rate of the mobility component of Child Disability Payment, or the enhanced rate of the mobility component of Adult Disability Payment. It is therefore treated as a separate queue and reported on as distinct from those benefits.

From 30 March 2021 Social Security Scotland switched telephony systems. With the introduction of the new telephony system, new reporting tools were put in place to record management information.

1.5. Findings

5.1 Client Insights – telephony contacts

From 01 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, Social Security Scotland received approximately 177,668 contacts by phone.

5.1.1 In-bound and out-bound calls handled between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022

The number of in-bound and out-bound calls handled during this period for each benefit is provided in the tables below. A more detailed presentation of this data, by benefit and by month, is included in Annex A.

In-bound calls handled, 01 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, by queue	
Queue	Calls
Adult Disability Payment	481
Accessible Vehicles and Equipment	29
Best Start Grant / Foods	56,698
Carers Allowance Supplement	11,360
Child Disability Payment Case Transfer	2,698
Child Disability Payment General	11,455

Child Winter Heating Assistance	2,664
Funeral Support Payment	19,826
General Enquiries	16,014
Job Start Payment	5,731
Scottish Child Payment	47,894
Young Carer Grant	2,818
Total calls for all queues	177,668

5.1.2 Call wait times

Between 01 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, the average length of time a caller waited before a call was answered was 5 minutes and 51 seconds across all queues. This ranged from an average of 30 seconds for Child Disability Payment Case Transfer to an average of 8 minutes and 55 seconds for Carers Allowance Supplement.

Average call wait time, 01 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, by queue	
Queue	Average waiting time (minutes:seconds)
Adult Disability Payment	00:55
Accessible Vehicles and Equipment	02:16
Best Start Grant / Foods	07:11
Carers Allowance Supplement	08:55
Child Disability Payment Case Transfer	00:30
Child Disability Payment General	00:46
Child Winter Heating Assistance	03:53
Funeral Support Payment	01:46
General Enquiries	07:09
Job Start Payment	02:18
Scottish Child Payment	07:05
Young Carer Grant	02:56
All Queues	05:51

A more detailed presentation of this data, made divisible by benefit and by month, is included in Annex C.

5.1.3 Call lengths (handling times)

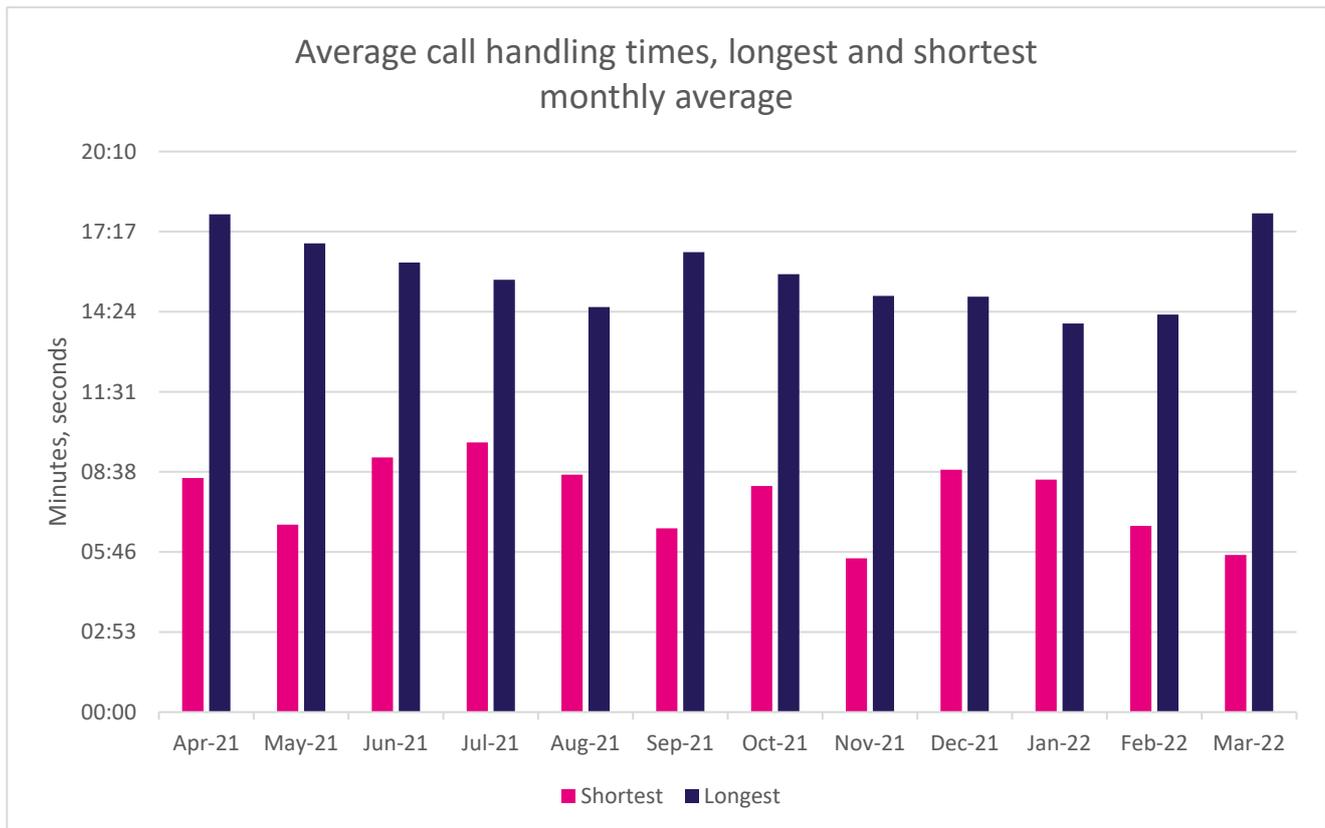
Between the period of 01 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, the average call handling time across all queues was 12 minutes 55 seconds.

For the purposes of highlighting the monthly average longest and shortest call lengths across the year, we have removed the Accessible Vehicles and Equipment queue from the analysis. This is due to the low volume of calls this queue received. Accessible Vehicles and Equipment is included in the full breakdown in Annex C. Accessible Vehicles and Equipment is included in the average call handling time for all queues.

When taking a monthly average, the longest call lengths (total time a client was connected with a client advisor) were experienced by those who called with an Adult Disability Payment query in the month of March 2022 (17 minutes and 56 seconds).

When taking a monthly average, the shortest call times were experienced by those who called in relation to Carers Allowance Supplement in the month of November 2021 (5 minutes, 32 seconds).

The longest and shortest monthly average call lengths are presented in the chart below. A more detailed presentation of this data, made divisible by benefit and by month, is included in Annex C.



5.2 Client Insights – application contacts

Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods

From 01 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, 84,185 applications for Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods were received. More detail on [Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods high level statistics](#) have been published.

A comparison of the number of Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods applications by mode is provided in the table below.

Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods – Application modes April 21 to March 22 ⁺	
Number of telephony applications	8,960
Number of online applications	73,505
Number of postal applications	1,640
Number of unknown channel applications*	75

*Where application channel has been manually entered incorrectly, application channel has been classed as 'unknown'.

+Figures are rounded for disclosure and may not sum due to rounding.

Child Disability Payment

From 26 July 2021 to 31 March 2022, 9,570 applications for Child Disability Payment were received. More detail on [Child Disability Payment high level statistics](#) have been published.

A comparison of the number of Child Disability Payment applications by mode is provided in the table below. The total number of applications includes 5 applications that were completed as a combined application form, they have not been included in the channel breakdowns due to the small numbers.

Child Disability Payment – Application modes July 21 to March 22 ⁺	
Number of telephony applications	1,510
Number of online applications	7,125
Number of postal applications	130
Alternative applications*	790
Local Delivery applications	10

* An alternative application is where a Disability Living Allowance application form has been completed and the Department of Work and Pensions has redirected it to Social Security Scotland.

+ From the 26 July 2021, new applications were taken for Child Disability Payment for children under 16 that live in the pilot areas of Dundee City, Na h-Eileanan Siar and Perth and Kinross. On 22 November 2021, Child Disability Payment launched nationwide to all new applicants living in Scotland.

Funeral Support Payment

From 1st April 2021 to end of March 2022, 8,710 applications for Funeral Support Payment were received. More detail on [Funeral Support Payment high level statistics](#) have been published.

A comparison of the number of Funeral Support Payment applications by mode is provided in the table below.

Funeral Support Payment – Application modes April 21 to March 22*	
Number of telephony applications	3,580
Number of online applications	4,845
Number of postal applications	290

* Figures are rounded for disclosure control and may not sum due to rounding.

Job Start Payment

From 01 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, 6,910 applications for Job Start Payment were received. More detail on [Job Start Payment high level statistics](#) have been published.

A comparison of the number of Job Start Payment applications by mode is provided in the table below.

Job Start Payment – Application modes April 21 to March 22*	
Number of telephony applications	455
Number of online applications	6,440
Number of postal applications	25

* Figures are rounded for disclosure control and may not sum due to rounding.

Scottish Child Payment

From 1st April 2021 to end of March 2022, 53,185 applications for Scottish Child Payment were received. More detail on [Scottish Child Payment high level statistics](#) have been published.

A comparison of the number of Scottish Child Payment applications by mode is provided in the table below.

Scottish Child Payment – Application modes April 21 to March 22	
Number of telephony applications	4,785
Number of online applications	46,965
Number of postal applications	1,310
Number of Unknown Channel Applications*	110

*Where application channel has been manually entered incorrectly, application channel has been classed as 'unknown'.

Young Carer Grant

From 1st April 2021 to end of March 2022, 3,930 applications for Young Carer Grant were received. More detail on [Young Carer Grant high level statistics](#) have been published.

A comparison of the number of Young Carer Grant applications by mode is provided in the table below.

Young Carer Grant – Application modes April 21 to March 22*	
Number of telephony applications	205
Number of online applications	3,700
Number of postal applications ⁺	20

* Figures are rounded for disclosure control and may not sum due to rounding.

1.6. References

- 1) <https://www.gov.scot/policies/social-security/engagement-on-social-security/>
- 2) <https://www.socialsecurity.gov.scot/about/our-charter>
- 3) <https://www.gov.scot/publications/social-security-scotland---workforce-information-march-2021/>

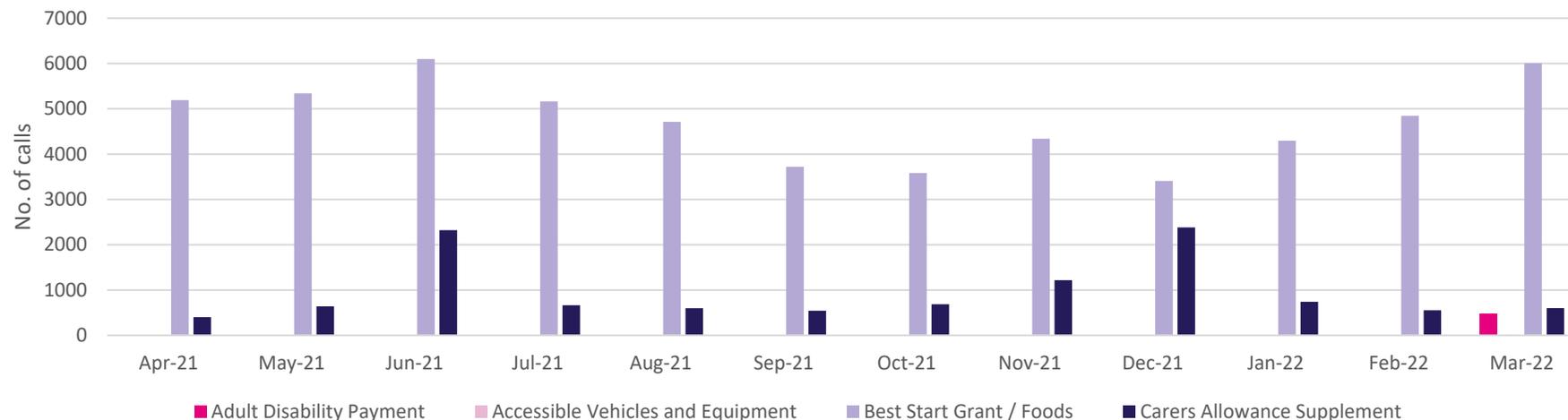
10. Annex A – Calls handled

In-bound calls handled between April 2021 to March 2022												
Queue	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22
Adult Disability Payment	n/a	481										
Accessible Vehicles and Equipment	n/a	n/a	n/a	[c]	10							
Best Start Grant / Foods	5,193	5,340	6,097	5,163	4,711	3,719	3,582	4,341	3,407	4,295	4,846	6,004
Carers Allowance Supplement	403	640	2,321	666	599	544	689	1,218	2,382	741	555	602
Child Disability Payment Case Transfer	n/a	59	144	409	699	1,387						
Child Disability Payment	n/a	n/a	n/a	31	87	119	199	217	646	2,146	3,161	4,849
Child Winter Heating Allowance	34	18	29	26	29	54	91	300	1,235	411	230	207
Funeral Support Payment	1,622	1,390	1,945	1,587	1,643	1,600	1,478	1,782	1,450	1,708	1,758	1,863
General Enquiries	1,090	1,056	1,702	1,430	1,436	1,076	895	1,067	1,185	1,546	1,663	1,868
Job Start Payment	365	372	598	620	807	350	458	450	477	330	432	472
Scottish Child Payment	5,988	4,290	4,562	3,374	3,501	3,120	2,679	3,279	2,998	3,904	4,233	5,966
Young Carers Grant	157	143	190	183	213	127	142	266	316	369	318	394

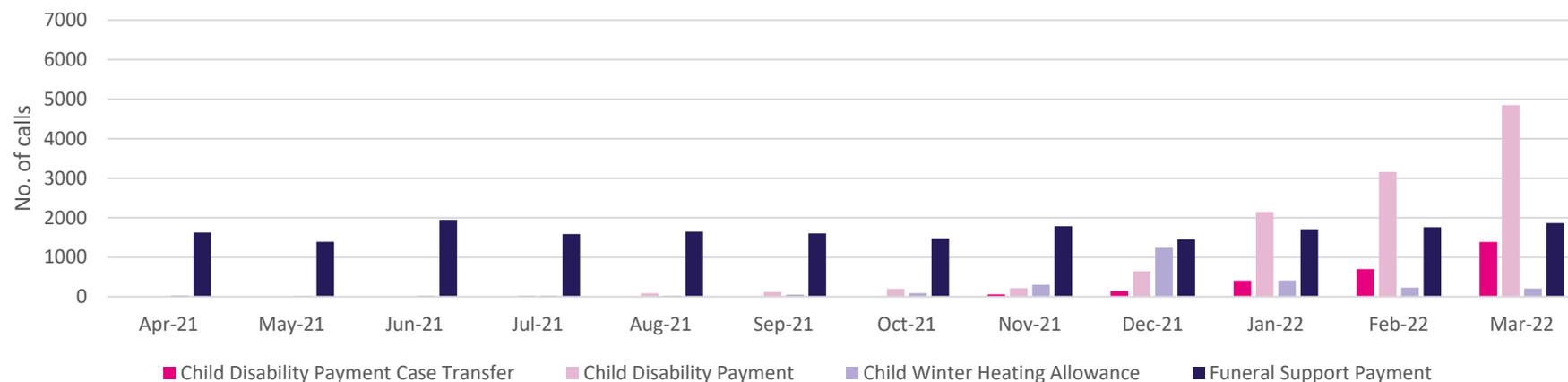
Note: N/A covers period where benefit or queue was not live.

[c] Figures suppressed for disclosure control

In-bound calls handled between April 2021 to March 2022 for Adult Disability Payment, Accessible Vehicles and Equipment, Best Start Grant / Foods and Carers Allowance Supplement



In-bound calls handled between April 2021 to March 2022 for Child Disability Payment Case Transfer, Child Disability Payment, Child Winter Heating Allowance and Funeral Support Payment



In-bound calls handled between April 2021 to March 2022 for General Enquiries, Job Start Payment, Scottish Child Payment and Young Carers Grant

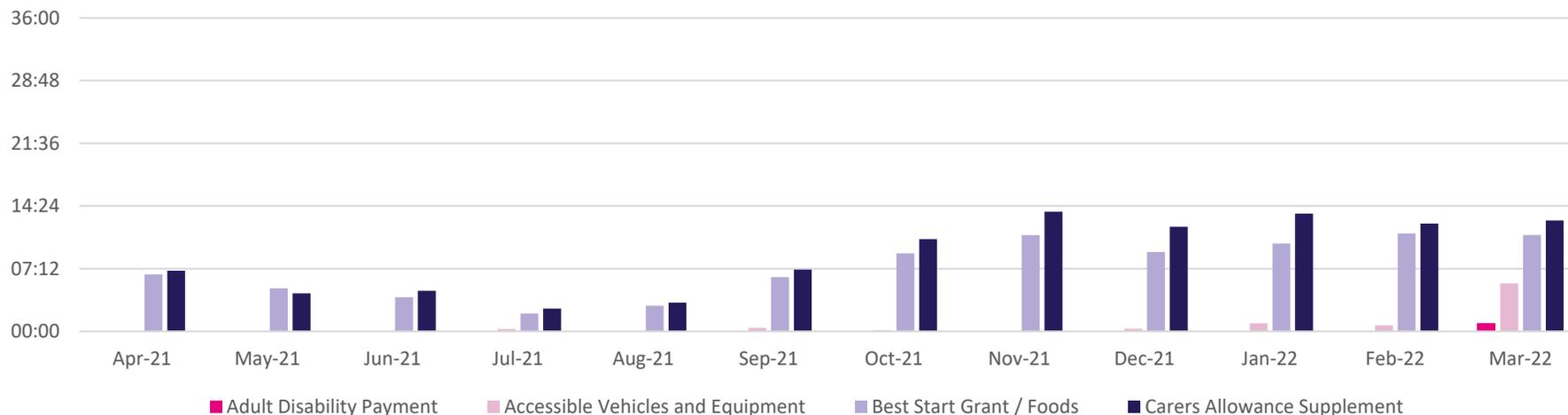


11. Annex B – Average call wait times, per month per queue

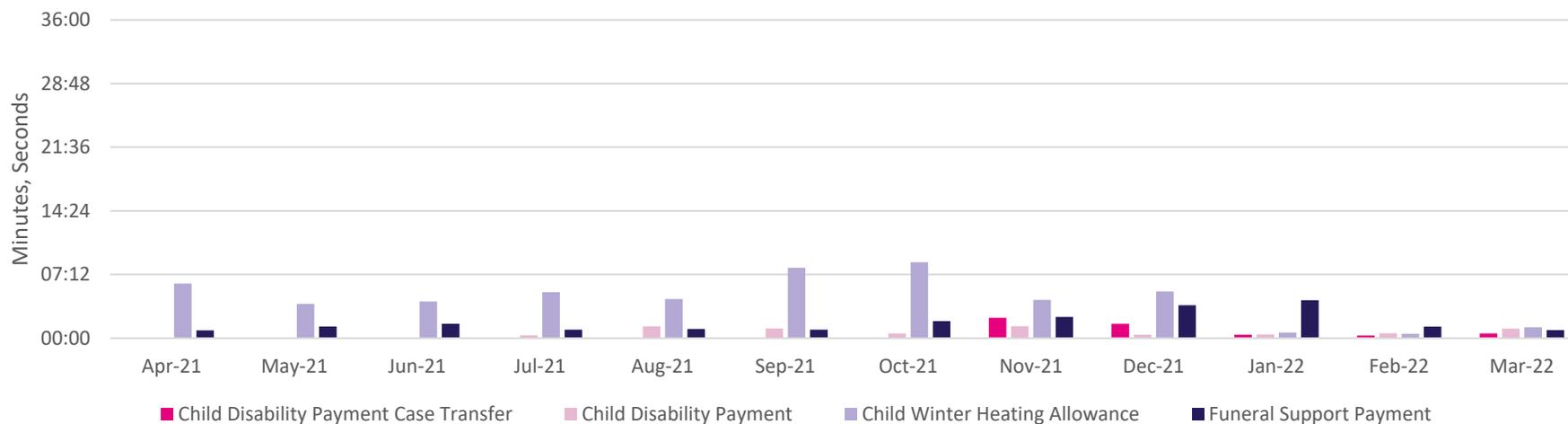
Average monthly call wait times by telephony queue between April 2021 and March 2022 (MM:SS)												
Queue	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22
Adult Disability Payment	n/a	00:55										
Accessible Vehicles and Equipment	n/a	n/a	n/a	00:16	n/a	00:24	00:08	n/a	00:18	00:55	00:42	05:31
Best Start Grant / Foods	06:33	04:57	03:56	02:03	02:57	06:14	08:58	11:04	09:07	00:06	11:15	11:04
Carers Allowance Supplement	06:59	04:22	04:40	02:37	03:19	07:07	10:36	13:46	12:01	13:32	12:23	12:45
Child Disability Payment Case Transfer	n/a	02:18	01:38	00:23	00:19	00:32						
Child Disability Payment	n/a	n/a	n/a	00:19	01:21	01:06	00:33	01:22	00:23	00:26	00:33	01:05
Child Winter Heating Allowance	06:11	03:52	04:09	05:12	04:25	07:58	08:36	04:20	05:17	00:38	00:29	01:15
Funeral Support Payment	00:53	01:19	01:38	00:57	01:03	00:58	01:56	02:24	03:44	04:18	01:18	00:55
General Enquiries	06:24	04:41	04:23	02:05	02:49	06:30	09:34	11:39	09:32	08:39	10:19	09:49
Job Start Payment	01:54	02:20	02:52	02:27	02:27	00:50	01:55	03:13	03:03	01:57	01:40	02:02
Scottish Child Payment	06:04	04:33	04:25	02:21	03:01	06:25	08:58	09:56	08:46	09:07	09:51	10:51
Young Carers Grant	01:50	02:11	04:03	04:04	03:29	02:13	02:06	03:50	04:39	02:17	01:42	02:27

Note: N/A covers period where benefit or queue was not live.

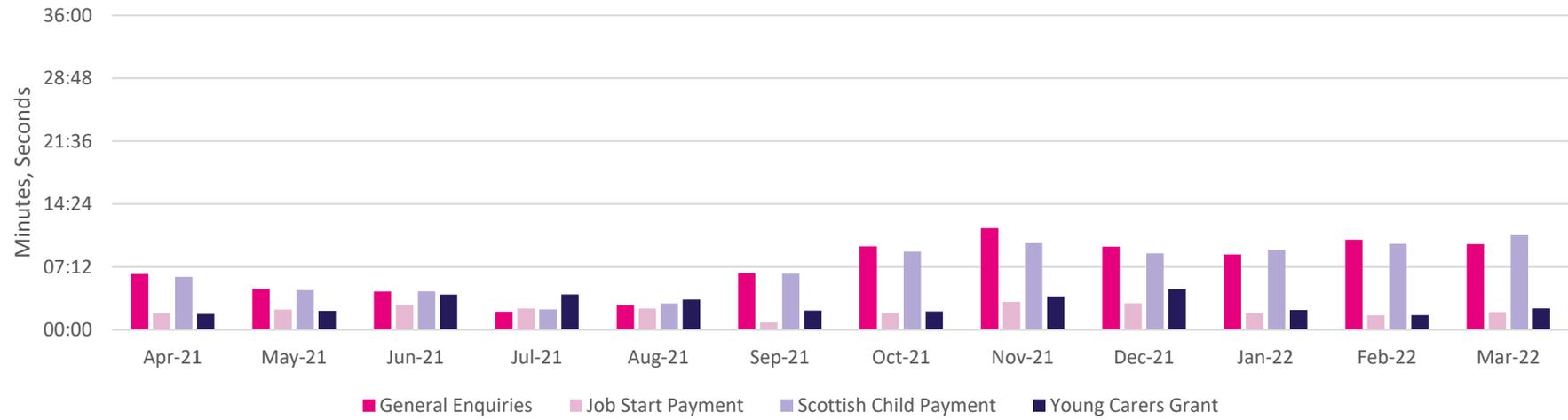
Monthly average call wait time for Adult Disability Payment, Accessible Vehicles and Equipment, Best Start Grant / Foods and Carers Allowance Supplement



Monthly average call wait time for Child Disability Payment Case Transfer, Child Disability Payment, Child Winter Heating Allowance and Funeral Support Payment



Monthly average call wait time for General Enquiries, Job Start Payment, Scottish Child Payment and Young Carers Grant

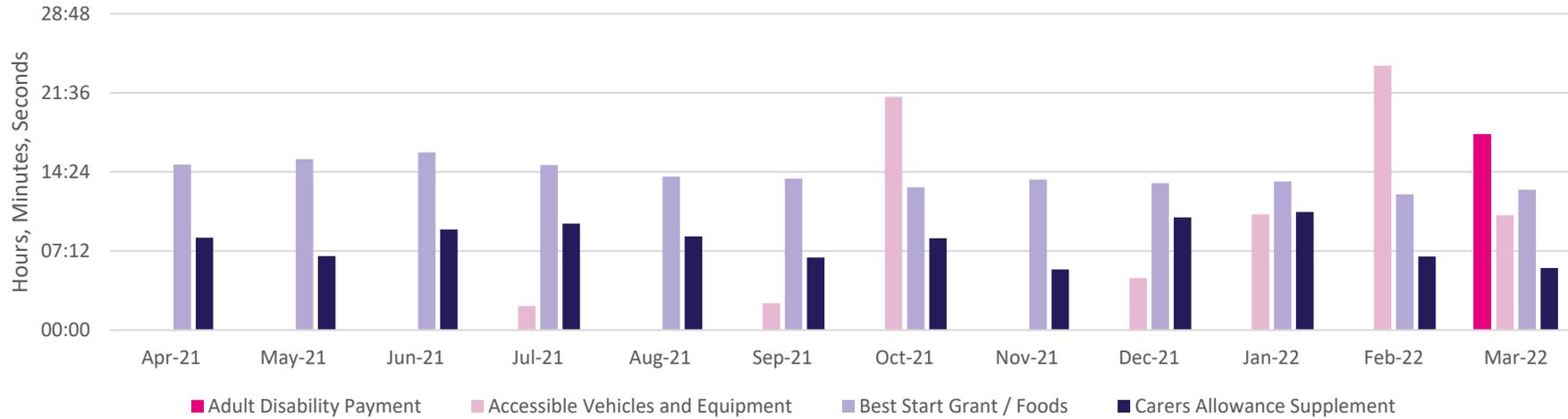


12. Annex C – Average call length, per month per queue

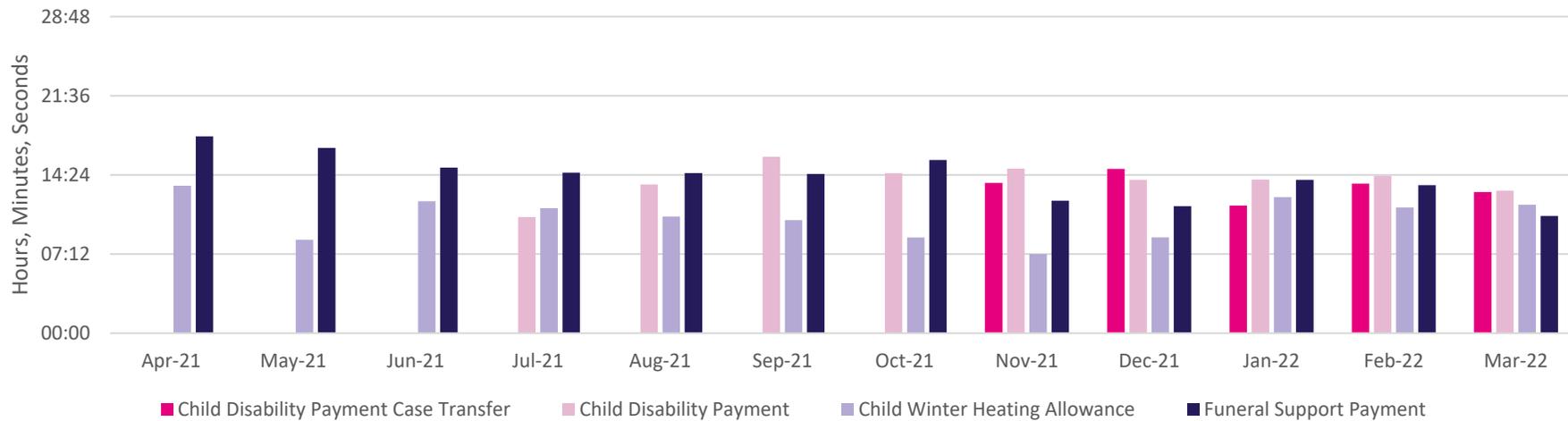
Average monthly call handling times by telephony queue between April 2021 and March 2022												
Queue	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22
Adult Disability Payment	n/a	17:50										
Accessible Vehicles and Equipment	n/a	n/a	n/a	02:11		02:27	21:14		04:44	10:32	24:04	10:27
Best Start Grant / Foods	15:04	15:33	16:10	15:01	13:59	13:47	13:00	13:42	13:22	13:31	12:21	12:47
Carers Allowance Supplement	08:25	06:44	09:09	09:42	08:32	06:37	08:21	05:32	10:15	10:46	06:42	05:39
Child Disability Payment Case Transfer	n/a	13:40	14:56	11:36	13:37	12:50						
Child Disability Payment	n/a	n/a	n/a	10:33	13:32	16:04	14:33	14:58	13:57	13:59	14:18	12:58
Child Winter Heating Allowance	13:25	08:30	12:00	11:22	10:37	10:18	08:42	07:12	08:43	12:23	11:26	11:41
Funeral Support Payment	17:54	16:51	15:03	14:36	14:34	14:29	15:45	12:03	11:33	13:57	13:28	10:40
General Enquiries	12:04	13:12	13:03	11:09	11:38	10:05	08:08	09:23	09:25	08:22	08:56	07:40
Job Start Payment	13:45	12:37	12:56	10:33	11:18	16:32	11:24	10:57	10:05	10:33	09:38	08:49
Scottish Child Payment	14:33	15:04	15:46	15:33	13:58	13:47	12:55	12:31	12:11	12:22	11:52	10:37
Young Carers Grant	06:32	13:59	10:17	11:16	11:44	09:55	11:17	10:39	09:01	10:01	08:46	09:07

Note: N/A covers period where benefit or queue was not live.

Average call handling times for Adult Disability Payment, Accessible Vehicles and Equipment, Best Start Grant / Foods and Carers Allowance Supplement



Average call handling times for Child Disability Payment Case Transfer, Child Disability Payment, Child Winter Heating Allowance and Funeral Support Payment



Average call handling times for General Enquiries, Job Start Payment, Scottish Child Payment and Young Carers Grant



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