

## Social Security Scotland Statistics

# Number of individual clients paid by Social Security Scotland to 31 March 2025

## Key Findings

As of 31 March 2025:

- In financial year 2024–2025, over £3.5 billion has been paid to 962,525 clients across 14 benefits.
- Over 1 million individual clients have been paid more than £6.1 billion directly by Social Security Scotland since 2018.

## Frequency of publications

The next publication for individual clients paid will cover up to the end of March 2026 and will be released in June 2026. Under the Code of Practice for Official Statistics<sup>1</sup> we publish a timetable of statistical releases for the twelve months ahead<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> The Code of Practice for Statistics is available on the [UK Statistics Authority website](#).

<sup>2</sup> The forthcoming publication timetable is available on the [Scottish Government website](#).

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# Introduction

This report covers the number of individual clients who have received payments from Social Security Scotland since it was introduced on 4 September 2018 through to 31 March 2025. In this publication, information relating to the latest reporting year 2024-2025 covers the period from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

The number of clients paid is related to the rollout and uptake of new benefits over time. The total value of payments made depends on the number of recipients and the payment amounts associated with each benefit. As new benefits have been introduced, Social Security Scotland's caseload has grown, contributing to changes in both the number of clients paid and total expenditure. The 14 benefits included within the time period covered by the report are: Adult Disability Payment, Best Start Grant Pregnancy and Baby Payment, Best Start Grant Early Learning Payment, Best Start Grant School Age Payment, Best Start Foods, Carer Support Payment, Child Disability Payment, Child Winter Heating Payment, Funeral Support Payment, Job Start Payment, Pension Age Disability Payment, Scottish Child Payment, Winter Heating Payment, and Young Carer Grant.

The basis of some of the payments included is the person receiving the payment. This is different to the number of children actively benefitting from a payment, for example for Scottish Child Payment where the count of clients paid reflects the recipient of the payment, not the number of children who are benefitting.

The number of clients paid analysis does not currently include Carer's Allowance Supplement as the data available for that payment could not be linked to the data extracts for the benefits listed above. The latest published Carer's Allowance Supplement statistics showed that 99,090 carers received payment in the 2024-2025 financial year. We are currently unable to identify how many of those clients are already counted within our overall measure of clients paid. This will have a greater impact on the earlier years shown in the publication tables where the number of clients paid would be higher if Carer's Allowance Supplement could be included. Please see the [background notes](#) for more information on Carer's Allowance Supplement.

All tables and charts relating to this publication can be found at the [Social Security Scotland](#) website.

These statistics are being published as official statistics in development. Official statistics in development may be new or existing statistics, and will be tested with users, in line with the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#). The UK Statistics Authority has not yet assessed these statistics. They have not been designated as Accredited Official Statistics<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> For more information on Official Statistics in development please see the [Office for Statistics Regulation website](#).

# Main findings

The main findings of this report highlight the continued growth in both the number of clients paid by Social Security Scotland and the total value of payments issued. Since Social Security Scotland was introduced, the data shows an increase in the number of clients paid over time, largely driven by the introduction of new benefits. In the time period of the publication, 14 benefits delivered by Social Security Scotland have been included in the analysis.

In 2024-2025, Social Security Scotland paid 962,525 clients across the 14 benefits, with total payments issued amounting to £3.5 billion. The number of clients paid during 2024-2025 is a unique count of individuals who were paid one or more payments within the financial year for any of the previously mentioned benefits.

The largest value of payments was for Adult Disability Payment, while Winter Heating Payment saw the highest number of clients being paid. The national launch of Carer Support Payment in November 2024 means that the number of clients paid increased from 240 in 2023-2024 to 77,380 in 2024-2025. Pension Age Disability Payment pilot phase launched in October 2024 with rollout to additional areas in March 2025, with 1,260 clients paid in 2024-2025.

In the financial year 2024-2025,



## Clients paid in 2024-2025

In the 2024-2025 reporting year, 962,525 individual clients received payments from Social Security Scotland. This is an increase compared to 2023-2024, where 771,435 clients were paid.

Key contributors compared to the previous financial year included:

- Continued case transfer to Adult Disability Payment from Personal Independence Payment.
- The national rollout of Carer Support Payment in November 2024.
- The pilot phase launch of Pension Age Disability Payment in October 2024, and the expansion to additional areas in March 2025.

The full time series of clients paid and the amount they were paid by financial year is available in table 1 of the [publication tables](#).

## Clients paid all time

Since the introduction of Social Security Scotland in September 2018, a total of 1,060,405 individual clients have received over £6.1 billion in payments. The number of clients paid has increased each year, reflecting on the rollout of new benefits over time.

The largest year-on-year increase in client numbers occurred in 2022-2023, coinciding with the national launch of Adult Disability Payment and Winter Heating Payment and the expanded eligibility of Scottish Child Payment to eligible low-income families with children aged under 16.

Carer's Allowance Supplement is not included in the all time count of clients or expenditure. Please see the [background note](#) for details of the number of eligible carers and expenditure in each financial year.

## Clients paid by benefit

In 2024-2025, Social Security Scotland paid clients through a range of benefits. Individual clients may be included in the figures for multiple benefits, but will only be included once in the total figure.

- Winter Heating Payment was paid to the largest number of clients, with 468,450 clients paid, followed by Adult Disability Payment (465,295) and Scottish Child Payment (209,200).
- Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods combined was paid to 69,285 clients with £35.6 million being issued in payments.

- Carer Support Payment paid 77,380 carers and issued over £89 million in payments, with national launch occurring during the year.
- While still in pilot phase, Pension Age Disability Payment paid 1,260 clients.
- Winter Heating Payment and Child Winter Heating total payments issued amounted to £57 million paid to 468,450 and 39,730 clients respectively.

Clients paid by benefit and year can be found in table 2 of the [publication tables](#).

## **Clients paid by local authority area**

Social Security Scotland paid clients from all 32 local authority areas in 2024-2025.

- Glasgow City had the highest number of clients paid with 150,125 clients receiving over £533 million in payments.
- This was followed by North Lanarkshire where 75,815 clients were paid and Fife where 68,010 clients were paid, collectively receiving over £543.7 million in payments.
- Shetland Islands had the lowest number of clients paid with 2,640 clients, followed by Orkney where 2,710 clients were paid, with both receiving over £9.7 million.
- A small number of clients could not be linked to a local authority area using the postcode associated with their payments and therefore have been grouped as other local authority area. This amounted to 2,385 clients who were paid just over £8.2 million.

The full local authority area table for 2024-2025 can be found in table 3 of the [publication tables](#).

## **Client groupings**

In 2024-2025, the largest group of clients paid were disabled adults, children and young people where 560,015 individuals were paid over £2.8 billion in payments. These are clients who were in receipt of Adult Disability Payment, Child Disability Payment, or Pension Age Disability Payment.

There were 507,465 winter heating clients who received payment for Winter Heating Payment or Child Winter Heating Payment and £57 million was issued in 2024-2025 to those clients.

The benefits that Social Security Scotland deliver include five family payments, which help towards the cost of being pregnant or looking after a child. This includes the 3 components of Best Start Grant as well as Best Start Foods and Scottish

Child Payment. Since the introduction of Social Security Scotland, the number of clients being paid for five family payments has increased each financial year, with the biggest increase taking place in 2022-2023 when Scottish Child Payment was extended to eligible low-income families with children aged under 16. In 2024-2025, £491.4 million was paid to 212,300 clients who were in receipt of one or more of the five family payments.

In 2024-2025, 81,370 carers were paid over £90.7 million across Young Carer Grant and Carer Support Payment.

The full time series for the groupings of clients paid can be found in table 4 of the [publication tables](#).

# Background

Social Security Scotland is the executive agency of Scottish Government which is responsible for delivering social security benefits for Scotland. In collating the number of clients paid, this involves pulling together the 14 benefits which individual level payments data is held for. These benefits are: Adult Disability Payment, Best Start Grant Pregnancy and Baby Payment, Best Start Grant Early Learning Payment, Best Start Grant School Age Payment, Best Start Foods, Carer Support Payment, Child Disability Payment, Child Winter Heating Payment, Funeral Support Payment, Job Start Payment, Pension Age Disability Payment, Scottish Child Payment, Winter Heating Payment, and Young Carer Grant.

Each of these benefits have their own individual publication which will provide details on applications, decisions and payments for that benefit.

## Carer's Allowance Supplement

This publication does not include Carer's Allowance Supplement as the data available for that payment cannot currently be linked to the data extracts for the benefits listed above. We are currently unable to identify how many of those clients are already counted within our overall measure of clients paid. This will have a greater impact on the earlier years shown in the publication tables where the number of clients and the amount paid would be higher if Carer's Allowance Supplement could be included. The table below shows the number of clients paid Carer's Allowance Supplement in each financial year from the latest official statistics publication. Over £333.7 million has been paid since 2018 for Carer's Allowance Supplement.

Financial Year	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
Eligible Carers	86,570	89,265	91,635	93,635	94,780	96,700	99,090
Expenditure	£34.9 million	£37.0 million	£58.4 million	£59.5 million	£42.8 million	£48.0 million	£53.1 million

Please see latest summary statistics for Carer's Allowance Supplement on the [statistics pages](#) for more information on this benefit.

## Carer Support Payment

The number of clients paid is only a count of clients who have directly received a payment from Social Security Scotland. For Carer Support Payment only, some clients may have 'underlying entitlement' only. Having 'underlying entitlement' can help carers get either:

- more money on top of their other benefits
- access to benefits they could not get before.

Carer Support Payment clients with underlying entitlement will not be counted in the clients paid figures if they did not receive a payment for Carer Support Payment in a given financial year. For more information, please see the individual benefit publication.

## **Benefits administered by Department for Work and Pensions**

Benefits administered by Department for Work and Pensions on behalf of Scottish Ministers are not within the scope of this publication.

In 2024, Pension Age Winter Heating Payment was paid by the Department for Work and Pension (DWP). As Social Security Scotland did not administer the payment in 2024 it is not included in the clients paid figures for financial year 2024-2025.

## **Best Start Grant and Foods**

There are a small number of Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods payments which cannot be linked to the client's full information and therefore are not included in the figures provided here for number of clients paid or value of payments. This results in a small difference between the value of payments reported for individual clients paid in table 2 of this publication compared to the total payments shown in the Best Start Grant and Foods official statistics publication. This only impacts the following years 2018-2019, 2019-2020 and 2020-2021. The financial impact can be observed in the below table.

<b>Financial Year</b>	<b>2018-2019</b>	<b>2019-2020</b>	<b>2020-2021</b>
<b>Unlinked Payment Value</b>	£5,100	£21,555	£94,070

## **Winter Heating Payment**

For Winter Heating Payment and Child Winter Heating Payment, the figures presented in this publication are based on the issued date of payments to clients. This differs to the official statistics publications for these benefits where the payments are assigned to a winter based on eligibility at the relevant qualifying

week. Clients who receive a payment for more than one winter within the same financial year will be counted once in the clients paid publication.

# About the data

## How the data is collected

The data in this publication is sourced from Social Security Scotland's case management system. The system holds information on all applications received, decisions and payments. Data about the applicant is collected through the online application form or is entered by client advisors during telephone applications or processing of paper applications. Information about the application outcome and payments is created in the case management system as an application is processed.

The information is held across multiple tables within the system. Data cuts combine information from the different tables in the system into one daily extract which includes details of all payments made. A payments extract which contains information on the financial aspects of applications is used for calculations in this publication.

To take into account backdating and delays between applications being authorised and payments being made, the same data cuts used in the latest benefit specific publications were used to produce statistics on payments made up to 11.59 pm on 31 March 2025. Later data cuts may include retrospective changes to application details, including corrections to details in the case management system, and changes that have resulted from re-determinations and appeals.

Within our statistical reporting, key dates are used to assign payments issued to time periods. This is a different methodology to that used in financial reporting and, as a result, there may be differences in the values reported for a given time period.

## Quality assurance

The data used to produce official statistics are the same as the data extracted from the case management system on a daily basis that is used for internal reporting within Social Security Scotland. As such, the data is checked routinely for consistency with previous extracts (i.e. do payments figures increase as expected over time, and are they in proportion to each other) and compared to other sources of information such as the number of payment instructions reported by the finance team.

The data used to produce the figures has been checked where anomalies were discovered and discrepancies investigated.

Additional quality assurance and cleaning has been carried out on the variables used in the official statistics to:

- Include only issued payments.
- Include only cases where the amount paid is greater than £0.
- Count distinct clients based on a unique person identifier.

- Check postcodes that do not match local authority areas.
- Determine the local authority area of clients based on the latest available postcode per financial year across all benefit payments.

Once the data is aggregated and copied into the publication and supporting Excel tables, the final statistics are quality assured by a different member of the statistics team. The final documents are checked by the lead statistician.

## **Data Quality**

### **Rounding and disclosure control**

The number of clients paid and the value of payments has been rounded to the nearest five for disclosure control.

### **Geography**

Applications are assigned to a local authority area by postcode using a Scottish Government lookup file. For some applications, the postcode will not match to the lookup file. This can be because the postcode is not in a Scottish local authority area, or because the postcode has been introduced too recently to appear on the lookup file, for example if a property is in a new development.

Postcodes are linked to client profiles and data extracts are automatically updated in the case of a client changing address. As a result, postcodes reflect the latest address of clients and may not be the same as the address at the time of application. Therefore a small number of addresses may not reflect the correct local authority at the time of application, decision, or payment.

## **Future Developments**

We are seeking users' views on the content of this publication to ensure it best meets their requirements. If you have any comments or suggestions that you would like to provide us, please email [MI@socialsecurity.gov.scot](mailto:MI@socialsecurity.gov.scot).

## **Related Social Security Scotland publications**

Statistics about individual benefits are published at:

<https://www.socialsecurity.gov.scot/about/statistics/social-security-scotland-statistics-publications>

All research and statistics publications will be available through the Social Security Scotland 'Publications' webpage at:

<https://www.socialsecurity.gov.scot/publications>.

## **An Official Statistics publication for Scotland**

Official Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs and are produced free from any political interference.

### **Correspondence and enquiries**

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### **How to access background or source data**

The data collected for this statistical bulletin:

- are available via an alternative route. Summary tables are available at: [Social Security Scotland statistics](#).
- may be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors. Please contact [MI@socialsecurity.gov.scot](mailto:MI@socialsecurity.gov.scot) for further information.

### **Complaints and suggestions**

If you are not satisfied with our service or have any comments or suggestions, please write to the Chief Statistician, Scottish Government, St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG, e-mail [statistics.enquiries@gov.scot](mailto:statistics.enquiries@gov.scot).

If you would like to be consulted about statistical collections or receive notification of publications, please register your interest at [ScotStat](#).

Details of forthcoming publications can be found on the [Social Security Scotland website](#) and [Scottish Government website](#).

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