

Date: 10 April 2018

Dear Tribunal User,

**Social Security and Child Support Tribunal reform update
National rollout of Track Your Appeal for Personal Independence Payment (PIP) appellants**

As part of our £1bn reform programme to modernise the courts and tribunals service, we are developing digital services to support the Social Security and Child Support Tribunal. Once complete, this work will enable people to start, progress and - where appropriate - have their case decided online without the need to attend a tribunal hearing in person.

**National rollout of Track Your Appeal**At the end of last month (March 2018), we launched a new service in England and Wales, which is just one small part of the overall Social Security and Child Support reform project. Track Your Appeal is an email and mobile phone text notification service, which is now available to PIP appellants who have chosen to have a face-to-face hearing. The national rollout follows a successful regional pilot, which tested the technology to notify appellants of the status of their appeal by email and text.

**What does Track Your Appeal do?**
For PIP appellants who have chosen to have a face-to-face hearing and have registered to use Track Your Appeal, key points in the appeals process will trigger an automated update to their phone or email account. For example, a text message will be sent to remind an appellant to submit their evidence, again to confirm when evidence is received and to remind appellants of their hearing date. The email service includes this functionality and can also notify the appellant of the response from the Department for Work and Pensions. If the appeals process isn’t going as planned – for instance, if a hearing is postponed, adjourned or withdrawn – the appellant will receive notifications about this too.

By keeping people regularly updated we expect to: help appellants and their representatives to understand the appeals process and where they are in it; reduce confusion and anxiety for appellants who are waiting for the next stage in their appeal; and reduce the need for appellants to call HMCTS Service Centres asking for updates.

**Registering for Track Your Appeal**PIP appellants, who have made an appeal since 1 March 2018 (not before) and have chosen to have a face-to-face hearing can register to use Track Your Appeal by calling 0300 123 1142, Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 5:00pm.

**Potential users**In 2017/18 around 120,000 appeals were made against decisions relating to PIP in England and Wales. Track Your Appeal could improve the experience for anyone that has a mobile phone or an email address. We have support in place for people who want to use Track Your Appeal, but who don’t have the skills or confidence to do so. And people without a mobile phone or an email address can still request updates by phone.

There is potential to use the Track Your Appeal technology for over 20 different types of benefits in the future, and we intend to expand its use in due course.

**More about Social Security and Child Support Tribunal reform**

* **Submit Your appeal:** We are currently testing an onlineform for people to submit an appeal. The online form will help people to provide the right information first time, meaning that fewer ‘incorrect’ forms will need to be returned and resubmitted.
* **Evidence Share:** We are developing a system for multiple agencies – and the appellant – to provide evidence to the tribunal digitally. We hope to pilot this later in the year. It would reduce the amount of paper files used, duplicated and moved around the system.
* **Online Resolution:** We are in the early research stage for this project, which could enable the judiciary to request and review evidence online and make a decision – for cases that are deemed suitable - without the appellant coming to a hearing.

If you would like more information about our reform programme, or Track Your Appeal in particular, please don’t hesitate to contact us by emailing sscs\_tribunal\_proj@justice.gov.uk

Yours sincerely

*D.Flury*

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