

## SSCS Reform update

The SSCS reform project will transform the current service for people appealing decisions made by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) using digital technology. The project will enable customers to start, progress and where appropriate, have their case decided online without the need to attend a tribunal hearing in person. We will design systems around our customers to make the service simpler to understand, removing unnecessary stress and ultimately providing a quicker resolution of the appeal. We will significantly reduce the amount of paper in the system by digitising documentation and evidence. We will continue to ensure the service is accessible to all who need it and that we maintain the impartiality and consistency provided by our independent and trusted justice system.

What are we doing? The project is focused on delivering the following key products. These are:

- **Track Your Appeal and Notifications (TYA)**  
This service aims to remove confusion by making the appellant and representative understand where they are in the overall process. Key features include an email and text notification service providing status updates and an online progress tracking bar. TYA went live on 12 July 2017, initially focusing on users in NW England with Employment Support Allowance (ESA) appeals before expanding to Personal Independence Payment (PIP) appeals in England & Wales from March 2018. Users are enrolled into the new service when calling the SSCS contact center or via the Submit Your Appeal application. TYA entered public beta on 26 July 2018 in line with Submit Your Appeal.
- **Submit Your Appeal (SYA)**  
Submit Your Appeal aims to make appealing a benefit decision quicker, clearer and more accessible by allowing appellants to appeal online. Key features include a digital appeal form which can be submitted online as well as functionality to upload supporting evidence. Automated features also ensure that the appeal is submitted in compliance with the relevant tribunal procedure rules. Research into the style, content and layout of the online service has been carried out with public users to provide assurance about its usability. SYA entered its Private Beta pilot phase on 7 March 2018 for PIP appeals in the Midlands before expanding to South East England. SYA then entered Public Beta on 28 July in a phased 8-week rollout in England & Wales, which concluded on 27 September 2018. The service is now fully live in England & Wales for PIP and work is underway to extend the service to ESA appeals.  
In the Public Beta operational structure, appeals are received in the Birmingham SSCS center and then responses to the appeals are sent to the regional processing centers (RPCs) for file creation. The use of robotics will be in place at the start of August which will allow a GAPS2 case record to be created automatically using the Submit Your Appeal inputs of the appellant. Other development work will enable supporting evidence to be uploaded by users.
- **Continuous Online Resolution (COR)**  
COR aims to provide a quicker digital route to resolving a benefit appeal, without the need for a hearing. Key features will enable the judiciary to view the appeal and request further evidence digitally; parties to respond and communicate with the judiciary digitally and parties to be offered an online decision.  
The project has been researching how this will work. A proof of concept exercise commenced on 18 July 2018 which involves judicial colleagues to establish how a digital relay of questions and answers can work and what types of appeals might be suitable for resolution in this way. More information on the progress of this work will be provided as it becomes available.
- **Manage Your Appeal**  
The aim of Manage Your Appeal is to allow the appellant to view their appeal online; make applications, such as postponement or withdrawal, and to confirm hearing dates or submit expense claims.
- **HMCTS and DWP Evidence Share**  
The aim of Evidence Share is to make it quicker and simpler for DWP (and other respondent departments) to provide their response to the appeal and evidence digitally. Expected key features will include a digital document upload portal accessible by DWP and HMCTS and responses sent digitally from DWP to HMCTS