

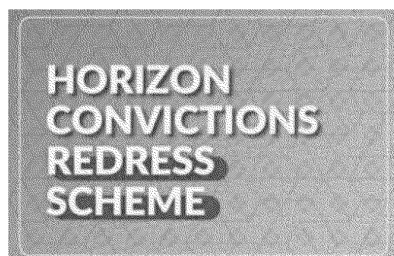
Press release

New redress scheme opens for postmasters with overturned convictions

Postmasters whose convictions have been overturned by the Post Office Offences Act can now apply to a new redress scheme.

From: [Department for Business and Trade \(/government/organisations/department-for-business-and-trade\)](#), [Ministry of Justice \(/government/organisations/ministry-of-justice\)](#), [The Rt Hon Jonathan Reynolds MP \(/government/people/jonathan-reynolds\)](#) and [The Rt Hon Shabana Mahmood MP \(/government/people/shabana-mahmood\)](#)

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- Postmasters whose convictions were overturned by the Post Office Offences Act

can now access the new Horizon Convictions Redress Scheme.

- This new redress scheme has been specifically designed for postmasters whose conviction was not already overturned by the courts.
- Victims will have the choice of taking a fixed settlement of £600,000 or having a fully detailed assessment.

Postmasters whose convictions have been overturned by the Post Office Offences Act (including that passed by the Scottish Government) can now apply to a new redress scheme.

From today, postmasters are invited to come forward and register for the scheme, known as the Horizon Convictions Redress Scheme (HCRS). Once eligibility is confirmed the new scheme will provide swift and fair redress, allowing those affected to rebuild their lives.

Many victims have been traumatised by the Post Office Horizon Scandal and this scheme aims to ensure that postmasters receive redress without unnecessary bureaucracy.

Business and Trade Secretary Jonathan Reynolds said:

“ Postmasters have suffered immeasurably so I hope today’s new redress scheme brings some relief to postmasters who have waited far too long to get back the money that is rightfully theirs.

“ Any postmaster who thinks they are eligible for this scheme can come forward and register. We know that every case is different, and this government fully supports the right of every postmaster to choose what is best for them.” ”

Postmasters eligible can either accept a fixed settlement of £600,000 or those who believe their losses exceed that amount can choose a full claim assessment route. This will mean their application will be fully examined by a team of dedicated

caseworkers in the Department for Business and Trade.

The scheme will be delivered by the Department for Business and Trade with a key aim of providing as much transparency as possible about how it will operate and how decisions will be taken on redress. Guidance has been published today which will allow postmasters to see how much redress they may be eligible for and what will be taken into account when assessing applications.

Following Royal Assent of the Post Office Offences Act, hundreds of postmasters had their convictions overturned providing they met the following criteria:

- Prosecutions were brought about by the Post Office or Crown Prosecution Service (or in Northern Ireland, the state prosecutor or the police).
- Offences were carried out in connection with Post Office business between 1996 and 2018.
- Offences were for relevant offences such as theft, fraud and false accounting.
- Offences were against sub-postmasters, their employees, officers, family members or direct employees of the Post Office working in a Post Office that used the Horizon system software.
- The conviction has not been considered by the Court of Appeal

The Department for Business and Trade will work closely with the Ministry of Justice to confirm the eligibility of individuals registering for the scheme and postmasters with overturned convictions will begin to receive written confirmation of their exoneration from the Ministry of Justice from this week.

The letters will also explain how criminal justice agencies will be amending their court and criminal records. If there is insufficient evidence to confirm that a conviction can be quashed, postmasters may receive a request to submit further information.

Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice Shabana Mahmood, said:

“ Justice must be a reality, not an ideal. Today we begin putting this into practice by overturning the convictions of the innocent postmasters affected by this inexplicable and unprecedented miscarriage of justice.

“ I pay tribute to those hard-working men and women for their courage and determination. I am pleased today we can begin to right this wrong and ensure they are quickly and fairly compensated.” ”

The Government has committed to paying all reasonable legal fees for postmasters’ legal representation to ensure more of their own money is not spent on this appalling scandal.

The independent inquiry continues its work of uncovering the truth behind the Horizon scandal so that the right people can be held to account, and justice can be served.

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