



05 February 2021

Ref: SR/19535

Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP  
Chancellor of the Exchequer  
HM Treasury  
The Correspondence and Enquiry Unit  
1 Horse Guards Road  
London, SW1A 2HQ

Dear Chancellor

CC: Secretary of State for Health and Social Care

**RE: SELF-ISOLATION SUPPORT PAYMENTS**

To minimise the transmission of Covid-19 and reduce the spread of the virus, we must work together to encourage, convince and enable people who've been told to self-isolate to stay at home.

Two-thirds of the applications from those who have applied for financial support to self-isolate and stay at home have been rejected. For people on the breadline, this could be the difference between putting food on the table and taking a chance that they haven't contracted Covid - and going to work.

Government needs to make it easier for people in these circumstances; if this were not the case, then we would not have seen a significant number of applications rejected. A simpler system would mean that, if people are told to self-isolate, they qualify and receive the self-isolation payment quickly, to ensure they can stay at home and do their bit to help stop the spread of the virus.

Self-isolation is at the cornerstone of the response to reducing the transmission of Covid-19. The emergence of variants with a higher transmissibility, highlight just how important self-isolating is in breaking the infection chain. Therefore, financial support for people who need to self-isolate is absolutely critical.

I am certain that more can be done to encourage, convince and enable people who are told to self-isolate to stay at home. I would urge the Government to take the following steps:

- 1) Change the qualifying criteria for self-isolation support payments to provide greater access for people.
- 2) Ensure all Local Authorities have increased funding allocated to both the main payment fund and the discretionary fund so they can meet the demand associated with applications from people who need to self-isolate.

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