

COVID-19 Statutory sick pay enhancement scheme

Support for care workers who are required to stay off work due to actual or suspected COVID-19 or because they have to self-isolate.

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The Statutory sick pay enhancement scheme supports care workers who only get [statutory sick pay \(SSP\)](#) when absent or are not eligible for SSP.

It provides funding to allow employers to pay eligible workers at full pay if they can't work due to COVID-19.

This removes the financial disadvantage to care workers of staying away from work. This will help to protect our most vulnerable citizens. The purpose of the fund is infection control.

The scheme runs from 1 November 2020 until 31 March 2021.

Eligibility

Eligibility for the scheme depends on:

- An individual's role
- types of employment
- reasons for absence and duration
- what sick pay is given

The role

To be eligible the individual must be:

- an employee of a registered care home (including children's homes)
- an employee of a domiciliary care service
- support workers in emergency/temporary accommodation
- support workers in supported housing and homelessness outreach workers
- support workers from supported housing schemes providing floating support in people's homes

- an agency care worker or agency nurse (with work booked in with a registered care home, domiciliary care service or eligible housing support service included in scheme)
- bank or pool staff booked to undertake a series of shifts in an eligible setting/ service
- contracted staff providing daily essential services such as routine catering in care homes and having substantial contact with residents
- a personal assistant paid through direct payments

An employee with two jobs, where both eligible for the scheme, may claim payments in respect of both part time wages.

Types of employment

To be eligible the individual can be:

- full-time or part-time
- subject to a zero hours employment contract
- subject to a permanent or temporary contract
- working from a care agency
- bank or pool staff
- self-employed

Reasons for absence

The individual must be taking time off work for one of the following:

- having symptoms of COVID-19
- testing positive for COVID-19
- self-isolating due to being identified as a contact by the NHS Wales Test Trace Protect service
- self-isolating because a member of the household has symptoms of COVID-19 or has tested positive

The guidance on how long employees should self-isolate is available on Welsh Government website:

<https://gov.wales/self-isolation-stay-home-guidance-households-possible-coronavirus>

The periods for which the SSP Enhancement payment is made depends on the length of self-isolation set out in current guidance. As this is subject to change, we

have not specified the duration of self-isolation periods above. However, it is important local authorities and employers keep up to date with current requirements.

The self-isolation periods outlined in the self-isolation guidance are the maximum periods for which the SSP Enhancement scheme will provide funding for the individual employee or agency worker.

Employed staff

The enhanced payment is payable from the first day of absence. If the employee is not eligible for SSP, the scheme will provide 100% of the usual income.

The employee is expected to seek a COVID-19 test immediately and return to work as soon as they can, in line with current health advice.

If an employee tests negative but is unwell due to a different illness, the SSP enhanced payment must stop and income for the remainder of the absence reduces to what it ordinarily would be when the employee takes sick leave.

When the employee tests positive for COVID-19, the enhancement is paid for the required self-isolation period. If the person remains unwell and cannot return to work, the SSP Enhancement scheme must stop and income for the remainder of absence reduces to what it ordinarily would be when the employee takes sick leave.

When the employee is required to self-isolate, the payment is for the period specified only. For example, an employee is off for 4 days with symptoms and awaiting test results:

- On receipt of a negative test, the employee feels well and returns to work. The claim is for 4 days income minus any SSP paid
- On receipt of a negative test, the employee continues to feel unwell and stays off work. The claim is for 4 days income minus any SSP paid. There is no claim with regard to further absence, since the absence is not COVID-19 related.
- On receipt of a positive test result, the employee stays off for a further 10 days or the length of time consistent with current health advice. The claim is for 14 days income minus any SSP paid. Claims can be sequential in this instance i.e. claim for suspected COVID-19, then for self-isolation as a result of actual COVID-19
- On receipt of a positive test result, the employee stays off for a further 30 days due to the impact of the virus. The claim is for 14 days income minus any SSP paid. This is the claim for suspected COVID-19 followed by 10 days for self-isolation as a result of actual COVID-19, or a period consistent with current health advice.
- On receipt of a positive test result, the employee decides to apply the Self-isolation support scheme (see below). The employee informs the employer

who ensures SSP enhancement payment stops from the day of the positive test result.

There is no limit on the number of times eligible that employees can benefit from this scheme.

Agency staff

The enhanced payment is payable from the first day of absence. If the agency worker is not eligible for SSP, the scheme will provide 100% of the usual income.

The agency worker is expected to seek a COVID-19 test immediately and notify the agency as soon as a result is obtained. No further enhanced payment is made as soon as a negative result is obtained. If the agency worker remains unwell due to a different illness, the payment must stop as this is no longer covered by this scheme.

When an agency worker tests positive for COVID-19, the scheme will fund for the worker to be paid for all shifts already booked in at the point where they suspect they may have symptoms or receive a test, whichever is the earlier. Payment is for the booked shifts within the required isolation period only and with any SSP deducted.

If the agency worker remains unwell after the isolation period specified in current guidance, payments from the SSP Enhancement scheme must stop and income for the remainder of absence reduces SSP or zero, depending on their usual circumstances.

When the agency worker is required to self-isolate, the payment is for shifts already booked in and for the period specified only. For example, an agency worker is off for 4 days with symptoms and awaiting test results:

- On receipt of a negative test, the agency worker feels well and returns to work. The claim is for any pre-booked shifts minus any SSP paid
- On receipt of a negative test, the agency worker continues to feel unwell and stays off work. The claim is for any pre-booked shifts for 4 days minus any SSP paid. There is no claim with regard to further absence, since the absence is not COVID-19 related.
- On receipt of a positive test result, the agency worker stays off for a further 10 days or the length of time consistent with current health advice. The claim is for payment for any shifts that had been pre booked for 14 days in total minus any SSP paid. Claims can be sequential in this instance i.e. claim for suspected COVID-19, then for self-isolation as a result of actual COVID-19
- On receipt of a positive test result, the agency worker stays off for a further 30 days due to the impact of the virus. The claim is for payment for any shifts that had been pre booked for 14 days in total minus any SSP paid. This is the claim for suspected COVID-19 followed by 10 days for self-isolation as a result of actual COVID-19, or a period consistent with current health advice. The scheme does not cover the agency worker for the duration of their illness.

It is confined to the period where they may be infectious, as this is the premise of the scheme.

- On receipt of a positive test result, the agency worker decides to apply the Self-isolation support scheme (see below). The agency worker informs the employer who ensures SSP enhancement payment stops from the day of the positive test result.

There is no limit on the number of times eligible employees can benefit from the SSP enhancement scheme.

Sick pay

An individual is eligible if they receive only SSP when off sick or are not eligible for SSP.

This scheme is intended to increase individuals' pay should they revert to SSP as a result of a COVID-19 related absence from work. This enhancement is funded by the Welsh Government. Employers should not seek to reclaim these enhancement costs from the Statutory Sick Pay Rebate Scheme (SSPR). Nor should employers seek to claim the SSP enhancement payment from HMRC. Employers who make incorrect claims via SSPR may be subject to HMRC compliance activity.

Part time workers will be eligible for this scheme from the first day they are not able to come into work because of a COVID-19 reason for absence, when they are due in.

If employees test positive for COVID-19 or are requested to self-isolate during a period of pre booked annual leave, eligibility for this scheme will depend on the employer's sickness absence policy and whether, in such circumstances the employee would usually be regarded as sick and thereby not use annual leave.

If the employer pays full pay in some or all sickness absence circumstances

- the employee is not eligible for this scheme if they receive full pay for all sickness absence (which includes COVID-19 related absences outline above)
- the employee is eligible if the period for which full pay is provided is limited in amount and the employee has exceeded this
- the employee is eligible for the first few days of absence, if the employer does not provide full pay for this period
- the employee is eligible if full pay is not provided during a probationary period

The employee or agency worker is not eligible for this scheme if they:

- have childcare or carer responsibilities, even if schools or day services have closed due to COVID-19
- need to quarantine following foreign travel
- cannot work due to being assessed as high risk using the All Wales COVID - 19 workforce risk assessment tool
- have been advised by a GP or hospital doctor to self-isolate as a precaution before or after a medical procedure

Eligible staff roles

Role	Information on eligibility
Domiciliary care workers	Care workers employed by a registered domiciliary support service are eligible. This includes: care workers providing care to people in private homes people in a supported living arrangement
Care workers and nurses employed in care homes	Care workers employed to care for people living in registered care homes are eligible. This includes: care homes for older adults, younger adults and children residential special schools and colleges registered as care homes with Care Inspectorate Wales
Ancillary staff in care homes	Cooks, domestic staff, administrators, activity coordinators, maintenance and other ancillary staff are eligible where they are required to work in regular close contact with residents.

Managers and supervisory staff in care homes and domiciliary services	Senior staff are eligible for payment when their work brings them into close proximity with people receiving care and they are not able to maintain social distancing.
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Staff working for contractors in care homes	Staff must be providing daily essential services such as routine catering or cleaning services and have substantial contact with residents
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Personal Assistants (PAs)	PAs provide personal care and support for individuals in their own homes. PAs are eligible only where they are paid via direct payments and not by other arrangements.
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Support workers in supported housing schemes, floating support, emergency accommodation and homelessness outreach workers	Support workers in these housing support schemes are covered by this scheme.
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Agency care workers and agency nurses	Agency staff booked for work in an eligible service. The worker must have confirmed bookings to provide shifts prior to noticing symptoms or being required to self-isolate.
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Bank/ pool/casual workers	Workers booked to provide shifts in an eligible service. The worker must have confirmed bookings to provide shifts prior to noticing symptoms or being required to self-isolate.
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Allied health professionals	AHPs employed by, and working within, a registered care home or domiciliary care service are eligible if they are providing direct care and support for people and social distancing is not possible
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Non eligible staff roles

Role	Information on eligibility
Staff working in healthcare settings, including private hospitals and hospices	This scheme is specifically to support social care staff and does not cover those working in healthcare settings.
Regional managers/ Responsible Individuals	Regional managers and RIs are not usually based within care services and do not provide personal care. They are not eligible for this scheme unless they can demonstrate eligibility due to their specific working arrangements.
Foster carers	Foster carers receive an allowance and are generally not paid employees. They are not eligible for this scheme.
Shared lives carers	Shared lives carers receive an allowance and are generally not paid employees. They are not eligible for this scheme.
Workers in residential family centres	Workers are not providing significant levels of personal care and are not eligible for the scheme.
Other staff in care homes for children	Teaching staff, therapeutic staff and office based staff in care homes for children and residential special schools or colleges are not eligible for the scheme. Such staff are likely to be able to maintain social distancing and their roles do not include direct care.
Early intervention and community based services	Social care workers employed in community based services are not eligible for the scheme, unless they have been redeployed into an eligible staff role.

Volunteers and unpaid carers	Volunteers and unpaid carers are not included in this scheme, which is aimed at paid employees.
Childcare and play services	Care workers employed by these services do not provide personal care in people's homes and are not eligible for this scheme.

Cross border issues

If the employee or agency worker works in an eligible service in Wales, they are eligible for the scheme, irrespective of where they live.

If the employee or agency worker works in an eligible service outside of Wales, they are not eligible for the scheme, irrespective of where they live.

If the employee or agency worker works for a domiciliary care agency registered in Wales and is providing care for people in Wales, they are eligible for the scheme.

If the employee or agency worker works for a domiciliary care agency not registered in Wales, they will ordinarily not be eligible for the scheme.

An exception to this is where domiciliary care is commissioned by a local authority to meet the needs outlined in an individual's care and support plan, but where the domiciliary care agency is exempt from registration outlined in Part 2 Reg 3(1)(b) of the Regulations (RISCA)¹.

Personal Assistants must be providing care and support for a person who is receiving direct payments from a Welsh local authority.

¹ 3.—(1) The following things are not to be treated as a domiciliary support service, despite paragraph 8 of Schedule 1 to the Act (regulated services: definitions, domiciliary support services)—

(b) the provision of care and support to four or fewer individuals at any one time;

How the scheme works – process overview

If an employee or agency worker is eligible to receive the SSP enhancement, the process is as follows:

Declaration

All eligible employees and agency workers must submit a brief declaration form. This states the employee is content for personal data to be shared with their local authority to administer the scheme and in order for the local authority and any external agency undertaking such an exercise to make appropriate checks to detect duplicate claims. Employees and agency workers should complete these declarations as soon as possible, so they are in place for any relevant absence. Declaration forms will be sent to employers and agencies by the local authority. For logistical purposes, agency staff may have to complete at the point of absence rather than in advance.

Staff absence

The employee or agency worker informs employer they cannot report for work/ they are not available for work as they:

- have suspected symptoms of COVID-19
- tested positive for COVID-19
- have to self-isolate as someone in their (extended) household has symptoms or has tested positive for COVID-19
- have to self-isolate because they have been contacted by the NHS Wales Test Trace Protect service

Employed staff

The employee confirms to the employer they wish to access the SSP enhancement scheme (declaration form should already have been submitted), then:

- the employer pays employee their full salary as per the usual payroll arrangements (weekly or monthly). Where hours are irregular, pay should be the average of the last eight weeks or two months.
- the scheme will support employees for the length of the absence due to COVID-19, which is specified in current health advice)
- employer informs the local authority and provides details of employee's NI number, pay, hours covered by absence, absence dates and SSP deducted

- this process applies to care providers, contractors and the employers of Personal Assistants
- The local authority will reimburse the employer through monthly payments, or more frequently if required due to employer cash flow concerns
- We request direct payments continue to be made to allow employers to make appropriate payments to Personal Assistants under this scheme (further details on reclaiming these costs outlined below)

Agency workers

The agency worker confirms to the agency they wish to access the SSP enhancement scheme (declaration form should already have been submitted), then:

- the agency pays the agency worker for pre booked shifts, as outlined above by the usual payroll arrangements
- the scheme will support agency workers for pre booked shifts for the length of the absence due to COVID-19, which is specified above in current health advice)
- the agency informs the local authority and provides details of employee's NI number, pay, hours covered by absence, absence dates and SSP deducted
- The local authority will reimburse the employer through monthly payments, or more frequently if required due to employer cash flow concerns

How the scheme works – delivery

Employers and care agencies are responsible for:

- advising employee/agency worker of the availability of the scheme
- issuing declaration forms
- collecting and retaining completed declaration forms for audit/checking purposes for a minimum of 24 months.

The employee or agency worker completes and returns the declaration form as soon as possible (before any absence has occurred). Electronic forms are valid providing they are submitted via an email account known to be held by the employee.

When an absence occurs

The employee or agency worker informs employer/agency that they cannot report for work as per employer sickness absence reporting procedures. The employer or

agency checks employee eligibility and will automatically put employees or agency worker onto the SSP enhancement scheme unless they are notified otherwise (for example if employees or agency worker wish to access the Self-isolation Support scheme instead).

An employee or agency worker who receives a payment from this scheme when they have suspected COVID-19 may choose to apply to the Self-isolation Support scheme following a positive test result (if they are eligible for the Self-isolation support scheme). Although the absence will be continuous, we regard this as a change in circumstances allowing a move between schemes and therefore they are treated as essentially two separate absences.

In this instance, the employee or agency worker must inform the employer/agency immediately that a positive test result is received and that they wish to access the Self-Isolation Support scheme. The enhanced payment from the SSP scheme stops and there must be no overlap of dates as this would constitute a duplicate payment.

Clarity on claim dates is therefore very important.

Claims can be paid for absences from 1 November, but not for any earlier absences. As an ongoing principle, payments should be made in the pay packet covering that particular absence period and not paid at a later date.

Employers and agencies are entitled to claim for additional overhead costs at a flat rate of £5 per claim.

When the absence or time eligibility for the scheme ends

The employer:

- claims the difference between SSP and full pay (if the employee receives SSP) or claims the value of full pay cost (if the employee does not receive SSP).

The agency:

- claims the difference between SSP and the pay for the agency worker in respect of the pre booked shifts for the relevant absence (if the worker receives SSP)
- claims the full amount of the pay for the agency worker in respect of the pre booked shifts for the relevant absence

The employer or agency submits the claim to their local authority to recover the costs of the scheme on a monthly, or more frequent basis as required for cash flow purposes (to be agreed with the local authority). Claims can be for partial absences if

an absence spans a cut-off date for claiming or the start of the scheme on 1 November.

The enhanced payment is regarded as earnings. It is therefore subject to tax, national insurance and pension contributions and student loan repayments, where appropriate. It will also be included in benefit calculations.

As these payments will take an employee's pay up to the level of full pay, the deductions should be the same as those usually taken from wages. We do not expect this to cause any specific issues.

Evidence and validation of claims - employers and agencies should retain:

- the declaration forms
- the claim forms submitted to their local authority
- the usual records to substantiate employee/ agency worker pay and any SSP paid but only submit this to local authorities upon request

This scheme does not place requirements on employers/agencies to obtain specific evidence/ proof of the need for absence. We expect employers/agencies to operate their usual sickness absence procedures in respect of absences eligible for the enhanced payment.

Claim forms require the number of hours being claimed for; these are required for overall monitoring purposes, since staff will be on different shift patterns or are working specific hours in the case of agency or pool workers. It is anticipated the numbers of hours worked is a key piece of information needed by payroll systems to work out the necessary pay and therefore is not expected to be an additional burden.

Reimbursement of employer contributions

The scheme covers employer's National Insurance and pension contribution for the proportion of the staff or agency pay that relates to absence covered.

Employers should clearly add these costs to their overall claim to the local authority and these costs will be reimbursed.

Local authorities are responsible for:

- managing the operational delivery of the scheme on behalf of Welsh Government
- managing the scheme on a geographical basis rather than a commissioned care basis (in the same way as the £500 social care worker payment)
- contacting care providers, agencies and those employing Personal Assistants to make them aware of the scheme, issue declaration forms and provide

contact details obtaining claims from employers

- check lists for reasonableness, making sure the numbers of claims from employers are consistent with the size and scale of the care provider
- check the lists (within their geographic area) for duplicate claims (using national insurance numbers and sickness absence dates)
- pay claims to employers and agencies
- reclaim funding from the Local Government Hardship Fund – a separate category has been added to the Hardship Fund claim form, the number of people and numbers of hours paid will need to be included in the claim
- maintain sufficient records to satisfy audit
- ensure appropriate measures are in place to minimise the risk of fraud or losses.

Arrangements for Personal Assistants

Local authorities may make their own arrangements to allow PAs access to declaration forms electronically and return these electronically. Local authorities must be reasonably satisfied with the authenticity of declaration forms and that receipt of completed forms is in accordance with their own policy on information security.

Local authorities will continue to pay direct payments to service users as normal. If a PA has to self-isolate, they will continue to receive full pay as per the rules of the scheme. The person in receipt of direct payments will need to inform the local authority or management company without delay if their PA has a relevant absence for the purpose of this scheme.

Local authorities will record the details of the PA on Form 2 to ensure there is a record of the PA to allow checks to be made with respect to duplicate claims, for example. Local authorities may make their own arrangement with regard to the extent to which they ask management companies to complete these functions on its behalf.

Local authorities will consider arrangements to provide additional monies to be made to direct payment recipients to allow them to arrange cover for their PAs absence as required. The Welsh Government will fund the absent PAs costs for the duration of their absence (in accordance with the scheme rules). It is not the intention that the requirement to pay full pay to the absent PA to result in any barriers to people making alternative care arrangements for themselves.

Evidence and validation of claims – local authorities

The local authority should maintain a master record/spreadsheet of all claims. This list should include the employer name, names of employees/agencies, national insurance numbers, the dates of the absence from work relating to the claims, number of hours paid and the value of the claims. This will include PA details.

We will confirm details at a later date with regard to further arrangements for checks to identify duplicate payments across local authority boundaries and with the Self-isolation support scheme.

There should be an acceptance across employers and local authorities of open book accounting as has been adopted successfully for other schemes. This will allow for any sample testing/spot checks when they are considered necessary.

Calculating the value of the enhancement

The scheme includes provision to reimburse employer or agency national insurance costs and employer pension costs resulting from this enhancement payment.

Employed staff

The employee should be paid their usual full pay costs for the duration of their absence under this scheme, and the employer will be compensated for the difference in cost between SSP and the usual full pay cost.

The value of the enhancement payment is the difference between the value of SSP and the employee's usual full pay.

Where employees work regular contracted hours their usual full pay costs will be the amount they cost their employer on a regular basis.

If the employee works irregular hours, the average pay is taken from earnings over the past eight weeks or two months.

This calculation must not include bonuses or back pay.

If the employee regularly works over their contracted hours, this can be included in the average calculation.

If the employee is not eligible for SSP, the enhancement is 100% of the usual/average pay and the full cost will be reimbursed.

Agency workers

The agency worker should be paid for the shifts that were booked in at the time they first knew they could not work due to COVID-19 for the duration of their absence under this scheme. The agency will be compensated for the difference in cost between SSP and what is paid to the agency worker.

The value of the enhancement payment is the difference between the value of SSP and what is paid to the agency worker.

If the agency worker is not eligible for SSP, the enhancement is 100% of the pay for the pre booked shifts. Payments the agency makes with respect to employer National Insurance and any pension contribution will be reimbursed. The costs that will be reimbursed are those employer contributions that pertain to the shifts covered by the scheme only.

Timing of payments and claims

Employers and agencies should ensure payments to employees/agency workers are not delayed.

Employers and agencies should claim their costs from the local authorities as quickly as possible once the absence period has concluded. If the absence spans cut off dates for claims, then employers and agencies should claim monthly.

Local authorities should reclaim the funding they have provided to employers and agencies from the Welsh Government by the end of financial year. Further guidance re accruing at the year-end will be provided for all elements of the Hardship fund in due course.

Forms

The Welsh Government has provided local authorities with electronic forms.

- **Form 1 – employee/agency worker declaration claim form**

This is completed by the employee or agency worker and submitted to their employer /agency who should retain it (for two years). The form should ideally be completed and submitted before any absence has occurred. The form covers all relevant absences. The form is to obtain the employee's and agency worker's consent to sharing of personal data.

- **Form 2 –employer/ agency claim form**

This is completed by the employer/ agency and submitted to their local authority. It is to:

- provide the local authority with information regarding the claims
- request funding from the local authority in accordance with the scheme
- local authorities use this form to record absences of PAs, or request these are completed by management companies, dependant on its own arrangements.

There is no additional form for local authorities to submit to Welsh Government as the claim is incorporated into the Hardship Fund monthly claim process. The

numbers of hours absence covered will be requested as part of this as the overall monitoring of use of the fund.

Guidance for employees and agency workers

Guidance for individuals is published on the Welsh Government's website:

<https://gov.wales/covid-19-statutory-sick-pay-enhancement-scheme>

Data management

Each organisation is responsible for ensuring the data they collect and retain complies with the relevant GDPR regulations. Welsh Government will only collect and retain summarised data setting out the costs and number of payments by employer.

Staff will be asked to confirm on their declaration form they are content for personal information to be shared between their employer and the local authority for the purposes of making this payment only and with any agency identified by Welsh Government to check for duplicate payments between this scheme and the Self-isolation support scheme

Local authorities must ensure the statement of how personal information is to be used included on the declaration form is sufficient for their local authority. If it is not, the local authority should amend it.

Scheme administration

Periodically the Welsh Government may write to local authorities asking for an update of the number of awards they have funded. These requests are to assist the Welsh Government with its internal management of the scheme and should not hold up the delivery of funding to care providers, agencies or employers. Local authorities should not pass detailed lists of employees to the Welsh Government.

Overhead/ administration costs

If local authorities incur additional administration costs as a result of the scheme, they may claim reimbursement of these costs. Such costs must be clearly additional to the existing cost base. Existing staff costs will not be reimbursed but overtime payments to staff working on the scheme could be reimbursed.

These costs can be claimed through the Local Government Hardship Fund.

Employers are entitled to claim for additional overhead costs at a flat rate of £5 per claim.

Additional issues

Payment arrangements between local authorities and care providers or agencies

This is for local authorities to determine. They should seek to use existing payment mechanisms, if appropriate. In the absence of an appropriate existing payment mechanism local authorities should create a basic grant arrangement using standard clauses and terms and conditions.

How do employers prove the payments have been made?

Employers are asked to submit a completed form 2 to the local authority. If there are any questions arising from the 'sense checking' of the claims being made, the local authority may request documentation to allow it to be payments have been made to the staff listed on the form, for example a payroll report.

How does an employer classify the income to fund these payments in their accounts?

The SSP enhancement payments received from Welsh Government via local authorities should be recognised in employer's accounts as a taxable income. Employers will be able to claim a matching deduction in their accounts for employee costs, so there is no net effect on the employers overall taxable profit.

What happens if an employer has multiple care settings in different local authority areas?

Where an employer provides services across more than one local authority geographic area, the relevant local authorities and the employer can, by mutual consent, agree for one local authority to lead on the payments for all settings for that care provider to reduce complexity and the administrative burden on both care providers and local authorities.

Care staff who are also eligible for the Self-isolation support scheme

An employee or agency worker eligible for the SSP enhancement scheme, may also be eligible for the [Self-isolation support scheme](#).

Care workers can apply for this scheme where eligible, but not claim from both schemes for the same absence. This is likely to be regarded as fraud.

An employee or agency worker may receive a payment from the SSP Enhancement scheme when they have suspected COVID-19 but may wish to apply to the Self-isolation support scheme following a positive test result. Although the absence will be continuous, we regard this as a change in circumstances allowing a move between schemes.

The employee or agency worker must inform the employer/agency immediately that they wish to access the Self-Isolation support scheme and the enhanced payment must be stopped. There must be no overlap as this would constitute a duplicate payment. It is the employee's and agency worker's responsibility to only apply for one scheme at a time and to notify employer/agency of any changes from one scheme to the other.

Employees and agency workers will get taxed on payments from both schemes. But the schemes have different rules with regards to National Insurance contributions and how they affect any benefits received. If an employee is eligible for both schemes, they need to decide which scheme is better for them.