

17 March 2023

# Passport Officers announce five-week strike as PCS action escalates

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More than a thousand PCS union members working in the Passport Offices in England, Scotland and Wales are to take five weeks' strike action.

Those working in Durham, Glasgow, Liverpool, London, Newport, Peterborough and Southport will walk out from April 3 to May 5. Members in the Passport Office in N. Ireland are currently being balloted and may well join the action subject to the ballot result. The ballot closes tomorrow.

The action is a significant escalation of the union's long-running dispute over pay, pensions, redundancy terms and job security and is likely to have a significant impact on the delivery of passports as the summer approaches.

PCS general secretary Mark Serwotka said: "This escalation of our action has come about because, in sharp contrast with other parts of the public sector, ministers have failed to hold any meaningful talks with us, despite two massive strikes and sustained, targeted action lasting six months.

"Their approach is further evidence they're treating their own workforce worse than anyone else. They've had six months to resolve this dispute but for six months have refused to improve their 2% imposed pay rise, and failed to address our members' other issues of concern.

"They seem to think if they ignore our members, they'll go away. But how can our members ignore the cost-of-living crisis when 40,000 civil servants are using foodbanks and 45,000 of them are claiming the benefits they administer themselves?

"It is a national scandal and a stain on this government's reputation that so many of its own workforce are living in poverty."

