

22 May 2024

# **Equality and Human Rights Commission investigation into DWP**

PCS welcomes the investigation launched today (22) by the EHRC into the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions over concerns about the treatment of some disabled benefits claimants.

The concerns raised by the Equality and Human Rights Commission are long held by PCS. We will continue to campaign along side other welfare and disability rights organisations for a fairer social security system.

We believe that the current system is punitive, unfair and discriminatory and the government needs to be held responsible for the untold damage their policies have created amongst the most vulnerable people in society. The EHRC suspects that successive Secretaries of State may have broken equality law in their roles as Minister responsible for the DWP. The investigation will focus on whether the DWP has failed to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people with learning disabilities or long-term mental health conditions during health assessment determinations for the following assessments and benefits:

Work Capability Assessment (WCA) for:

- Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) and
- Universal Credit (UC)

PIP Assessment for:

- Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

Alongside the investigation, the EHRC is also assessing the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions' compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) when developing, implementing and monitoring policy guidance relevant to health assessment determinations. As part of the investigation, EHRC will be asking stakeholders to share relevant evidence about interactions with the DWP. As a key stakeholder, representing members that have to deliver these unfair and discriminatory policies PCS intends to fully respond to this investigation.