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Sent by e-mail

7th March 2022

Dear Deputy Johnson

Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel: Seasonal Workers and the Rural Economy Review

Thank you for your letter dated 18th February 2022.

My priority in considering the minimum wage and offset rates for 2022 was to put extra money into the pockets of those who have arguably been the most disadvantaged by the economic downturn caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. Raising the minimum wage rate to the target agreed by the States Assembly and leaving the offset rates at their current level helps to achieve that priority. I have no plans in the final months of this Government's term to alter the current offset rates.

Going forward, in the next few months the Employment Forum will be asked to consider the appropriate level of both the minimum wage and offset rates for 2023.

The eligibility rules for Social Security benefits are set out on the gov.je website. For example, see [Payments if you're off work sick \(Short Term Incapacity Allowance\) \(gov.je\)](#) for the rules in respect of STIA payments.

In terms of healthcare, people can access GP services immediately on arrival in Jersey. Prior to having been here for six months, they will not receive the Medical Benefit payment of £20.28, and so any consultation fee would be the standard GP fee, plus an additional £20.28. There are further details available at the following link:

[Health costs when moving or returning to live in Jersey \(gov.je\)](#)

Hospital costs are not covered by the Social Security system, and you may wish to seek advice from the Minister for Health and Social Services in this area.

All employees have rights as soon as they arrive in Jersey with additional rights accruing over time, and employers have a key role to play in ensuring that seasonal workers are aware of these rights before they start working in Jersey.

If the Panel would like a technical briefing on the current Social Security rules, I will make officers available.

Given the imminent election, I do not have any plans to review the current eligibility rules. However I refer the Panel to the report accompanying [P.137/2020](#) which sets out plans for a review of migrants' rights, and makes specific reference to healthcare benefits and Social Security benefits.

I received a communication from the Jersey Farmers Union on 3 March and will be responding over the next week.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Martin', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Deputy Judith Martin
Minister for Social Security