

# Britain's Labour government announces savage welfare cuts targeting sick and disabled

**Robert Stevens**  
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The Labour government's work and pensions minister Liz Kendall has laid out a savage programme of attacks on welfare recipients, aimed at saving more than £5 billion.

They are the most brutal cuts to welfare carried out by any post-war government, Conservative or Labour, removing disability and incapacity benefits from hundreds of thousands of people. Kendall, a leading Blairite, gleefully outlined her key proposals from the government's 80-page Green Paper in the House of Commons on Tuesday.

The Starmer government aims to legislate its Dickensian onslaught before the summer recess using Labour's substantial majority.

Access to disability benefits known as Personal Independence Payments (PIP), covering living costs and mobility costs, will be severely restricted.

Only a small minority of PIP recipients, those deemed unfit to ever work again, will retain their claim. The first of hundreds of thousands of current PIP recipients will lose their entire £70 a week payment in November 2026.

The government's torching of disability payments was trailed over several days, with its plans leaked for a multiyear freeze on the value of PIP, a real-terms cut of £600 million in 2026-27, rising to £3.3 billion by 2029.

Over the weekend media outlets including the *Guardian* reported a (non-existent) "rebellion" by a handful of Labour MPs, claiming this had forced the government to backtrack. But the *Financial Times* cited a "senior MP" saying government leaks about a PIP freeze "was a classic 'bleeding stump' tactic... To make it look like they've made concessions and the actual cuts aren't as bad."

In fact, Kendall's welfare cuts go way beyond the leaked measures.

An estimated around one million people will lose their entitlement to disability benefits altogether. To qualify for PIP in future, a minimum of four points under the "daily living" component will be required under the draconian Work Capability Assessment (WCA). People struggling with washing, eating and dressing themselves will not qualify.

Those too ill to work receive a health "top-up" currently through a Universal Credit payment, which is twice as much as that paid to job-seekers who are not ill. The new regime will freeze this health top-up for existing claimants, and it will be slashed for new claimants also, by £47 a week (£2,444 a year). People under the age of 22 wanting the health top-up to Universal Credit will no longer qualify under plans in the Green Paper.

As part of Labour's demonising the disabled as work-shy, Kendall announced a "Right to Try" scheme "giving people the confidence to take the plunge and try work without the fear this will put their benefits at risk". This measure will create a ready-made pool of ill and vulnerable people who will be pressured into jobs, while eligibility for health-related benefits is drastically narrowed.

Kendall announced the WCA will be scrapped from 2028, due to it being "complex, time-consuming and often stressful for claimants". But the Kafkaesque WCA will be replaced by increased face-to-face assessments, with Kendall attacking previous Conservative governments for allowing a fall in the number of claimants assessed, from seven in 10 to only one in 10 currently.

One of Labour's first measures on taking office in July last year was the axing of winter fuel payments to 10 million pensioners. But the £1.3 billion saved annually was ridiculed by corporate media outlets as chickenfeed. They demanded far harsher attacks on welfare to pay for military spending.

Starmer's government is on message. In parliament today, Kendall railed against the disabled and sick, vilifying the "1 in 10 people of working age now claiming a sickness or disability benefit... 2.8 million out of work due to long term sickness... And the number of people claiming Personal Independence Payments set to double this decade, from 2 to 4.3 million... with the growth in claims rising faster among young people and mental health conditions."

Following her sickening performance in the Commons, the media faithfully regurgitated her talking points. BBC News displayed graphs showing "the UK is an outlier in terms of the percentage of the population claiming sickness benefits". Kendall had earlier railed at "taxpayers paying millions more on the costs of failure" with "working age sickness and disability benefits up £20 billion since the pandemic, set to rise by a further £18 billion by the end of this Parliament to £70 billion a year."

Such a massive toll of illness and disability is a direct outcome of decades of austerity. Boris Johnson's declaration, "Let the bodies pile high in their thousands", expressed the homicidal attitude of the ruling class toward the working class. Almost 250,000 people have died from COVID-19 in Britain, millions have suffered the effects of Long COVID, while the entire hospital system is on life support.

Labour's welfare cuts were denounced by disability rights groups.

Richard Kramer, former Chief Executive of Sense, posted on X, "The government has announced the biggest cuts to disability benefits on record. These cuts are wrong and punitive and affect the poorest and most marginalised individuals in the country. Cutting the income of disabled people will not help them return to work."

Dr. Jay Watts, a consultant clinical psychologist, posted: "Can we take a moment for the sheer cruelty of increasing reassessments & face-to-face assessments—when terror of them has been explicitly linked to suicide & self-harm in Prevention of Future

Deaths reports? Labour knows this. Yet here we are."

Sam The Long Covid Unicorn wrote: "Liz Kendall's bullying and cruel #DisabilityBenefits cuts are worse than anything the Tories have ever done. Watching Liz Kendall's gruesome hate-filled expression was genuinely upsetting and unsettling for me. Labour is a fascist endeavour."

Outrage and disgust was summed up by a photoshopped image of an incapacitated woman hauling a trailer-load of bricks underneath the Nazi concentration camp slogan, "Work sets you free".

Labour's assault on welfare follows last week's announcement axing NHS England, part of Labour's plans to privatise the National Health Service. Labour is emulating the Trump administration's Department of Government Efficiency headed by fascist oligarch Elon Musk. Starmer's operation has been dubbed "Project Chainsaw", mimicking the tool Musk wielded in the air, symbolising his plans to slash \$2 trillion from government spending.

Starmer began this week with an op-ed statement in business newspaper *City A.M.* saying of Labour's deregulation and cuts agenda: "It will take years of discipline, focus and a willingness to make tough choices. But my government is taking on that challenge to bring back the animal spirits of the private sector, and to make Britain the best place in the world to start and build a business."

Starmer has explicitly linked the gutting of public spending and the destruction of the welfare state with preparation for war and the government's massive increase in military spending, declaring "now more than ever, national security is economic security... And you're not strong if you lose control of your public finances."

Today's *Telegraph* carried an article by its Senior Economics Reporter Eir Nolsøe headlined, "Britain can't afford to defend itself—the expanding welfare state is to blame", stating bluntly, "The UK's ballooning benefits bill threatens the Government's ambitions to rearm".



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