

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL SECURITY
BY CONNÉTABLE OF ST. HELIER
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 7th SEPTEMBER 2026
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 14th SEPTEMBER 2026**

Question

“Will the Minister explain –

- (a) why an increase in the old-age pension can result in a reduction in a pensioner’s Income Support entitlement;
- (b) whether any part of such a pension increase is disregarded when calculating Income Support;
- (c) how many pensioners receiving Income Support have seen a reduction in their payments following the last old-age pension increase; and
- (d) whether any assessment in respect of Income Support has been made of the effect on pensioners of rises in rent, Parish rates, water, electricity, gas and food costs?”

Answer

I am pleased to reassure the Connétable and Members that an increase in the Old-Age Pension (OAP) always leads to an overall increase in household income for a pensioner household also receiving Income Support.

(a) and (b): A person who receives an OAP and Income Support will always end up with a larger total weekly income when their pension goes up. As Income Support is designed as a top up to other household income, any increase in household income will lead to a decrease in the level of Income Support needed. The OAP is no exception.

However, 26% of pension income is excluded from the Income Support calculation. For every £10 of extra pension income, the Income Support top up reduces by £7.40 and the pensioner is £2.60 better off.

(c) Every pensioner who receives Income Support and the OAP will have experienced this effect, but none of them will have seen an overall decrease in income. They will all have seen an overall increase in income as the pension payment increases by more than the corresponding decrease in the Income Support payment.

(d) Close attention is paid to the effects of rises in the cost of living on pensioners. The OAP itself is always increased by at least the RPI(Pensioner) index for the June of that year. This year the increase will be 4.7% whereas contributory (Social Security) benefits paid to working age contributors will rise by 4.1% in line with average earnings. Income Support component rates are increased in January, and the Minister will review cost pressures carefully before recommending the increases for the year.

Jersey pensioners on lower incomes also receive extra support with dental, optical and chiropody costs through the Pension Plus scheme and discounted visits to their GP. There are also schemes to support the costs of winter fuel, and a payment at Christmas. Pensioners over 75 may be eligible for a free TV licence. Pensioners who do not receive Income Support may qualify for the Community Costs Bonus.