

Escalation of strikes by civil service union in long-running pay and jobs row

Workers at jobcentres and benefit offices are to take 20 days of strike action in an escalation of the bitter dispute over the pay, jobs and conditions of civil servants.

Members of the Public and Commercial Services union (PCS) at four jobcentres in [Liverpool](#), a Department for Work and Pensions contact centre in [Stockport](#) and a benefit centre in [Bolton](#) will stage a series of walkouts between February 9 and March 3.

The announcement comes ahead of a strike on February 1 by 100,000 PCS members in 123 [Government](#) departments as part of the long-running dispute.

Teachers, university lecturers, train drivers and security guards are also striking on the same day.

The PCS said thousands of its members at the DWP will be getting a pay rise only because their salaries would otherwise fall below the statutory national minimum wage.

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PCS general secretary Mark Serwotka said: “It’s a scandal that the Government pays its own workforce so little they have to rely on the national minimum wage uplift to get a pay rise.

“There was a time when it would have been unthinkable that civil servants would be scraping by on the minimum wage.

“That low pay blights some sectors of the civil service shows the contempt with which consecutive governments have treated their own workers, but this Government is in a position to right that wrong and give our members a deserved 10% pay rise to help them through the cost-of-living crisis and beyond.”

More than 100 PCS members at Toxteth, Liverpool Duke Street, Liverpool City and Liverpool Innovation Park Jobcentres will take action on February 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27 and 28, and March 1, 2 and 3.

They will be joined by almost 500 members at Stockport Contract Centre and Bolton Benefit Centre on February 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18.