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A time limit on people who were abused as children seeking damages in court represents a "real barrier" to access to civil justice, MSPs have been told.

[Holyrood](#)'s Justice Committee heard the current situation can also contribute to survivors' sense of self-blame - a feeling that they are being further victimised for their failure to take legal action within a certain period.

The points were raised by the Scottish Human Rights Commission (SHRC), which said it "strongly supports" the Scottish [Government](#)'s Limitation (Childhood Abuse) ([Scotland](#)) Bill.

The proposed legislation would abolish the current three-year time bar, or limitation, for bringing a civil court claim for damages in some cases of childhood abuse.

In papers submitted to the committee, the SHRC said: "It is the commission's view that given the nature of historic abuse and the significant barriers to seeking redress experienced by survivors, the three-year limitation period for personal injury actions resulting from child abuse should be removed."

The shame, fear and psychological difficulties caused by childhood abuse can contribute to survivors taking time to come forward and raise a legal action, it was suggested.

"The legislation should bring about a potentially positive impact on those seeking redress for historical child abuse," the written submission noted.

The commission said it has been working for years to promote effective access to justice for abuse survivors.

"A recurring view from survivors of historic child abuse is that the current limitation regime is a barrier to access civil justice," the submission states.

"Survivors have expressed the view that the limitation regime also contributes to their sense of self-blame, feeling that they are being further victimised for their failure to take action within the limitation period, which for many survivors was their 19th birthday."

Expanding on the points before the committee on Tuesday, SHRC legal officer Bruce Adamson told MSPs: "This Bill is not the whole solution for survivors but it is an important part of it.

"For a large number of survivors, an action for damages and personal injury is not going to be the best route for justice.

"But for some the current law represents a real barrier for accessing justice. It's been consistently cited as one of the serious concerns right from the beginning of the work on this."

The committee has also been told the legislation would create an administrative and financial burden for Scotland's local authorities.

Council umbrella body Cosla said it supports the intent of the legislation, but it highlighted "a potentially significant impact on local authorities - both financial and practical".

In its written submission, it said: "While impossible to quantify the potential volume of claims, the overall impact of the legislation on local authorities is likely to be extensive, complex and not limited to successful claims."

Speaking at the committee, Cosla policy manager Lauren Bruce said: "There is likely to be a higher percentage of claims against local authorities because of the plethora of children's services that have been provided by them over the last 50 years.

"The impact is also likely to include support services, which are either offered directly by local authorities or commissioned through third sector organisations."