

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team

e-mail: freedom-of-information-xxxxxxx@xxx.xxx.xxx.xx

Our Ref: VTR 1365

25 April 2012

Dear Mr Kingsley,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request of 27 March 2011. You asked:

Dear Department for Work and Pensions,

Are these figures below correct, if not please provide the correct figures

BRITISH OLD AGED PENSIONER -

Weekly allowance: £106.00?

IMMIGRANTS/REFUGEES LIVING IN BRITAIN -

Weekly allowance: £250.00

BRITISH OLD AGED PENSIONER -

Weekly Spouse Allowance: £25.00?

ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS/REFUGEES LIVING IN BRITAIN

Weekly Spouse Allowance: £225.00

BRITISH OLD AGED PENSIONER

Additional Weekly Hardship Allowance: £0.00?

ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS/REFUGEES LIVING IN BRITAIN

Additional Weekly Hardship Allowance: £100.00

BRITISH OLD AGED PENSIONER

TOTAL YEARLY BENEFIT £6,000?

ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS/REFUGEES LIVING IN BRITAIN

TOTAL YEARLY BENEFIT: £29,900

Yours faithfully,

Melvin Kingsley

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It may help if I explain that benefits are not payable to illegal immigrants.

The weekly rates for Asylum Support, which is administered by the Home Office, are £36.62 for a single person aged 18 or over, £43.94 for a single parent and £72.52 for a couple, which includes a spouse rate equivalent to £35.90 per week. You can find the Asylum Support rates on the UK Border Agency website at www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk.

The full basic State Pension is currently £107.45 per week. A pension of up to £64.40 per week can be paid for a spouse or civil partner depending on for example, the age of the spouse or civil partner and any entitlement to pensions they may have in their own right.

Many pensioners also receive an additional State Pension, also known as the State Earnings-Related Pension Scheme (SERPS) or State Second Pension. The average weekly payment at March 2011 was £26. For somebody with a long working life and high earnings, the additional State Pension can exceed £100 a week.

Usually, a spouse or civil partner from outside the UK is subject to a requirement that they have no recourse to public funds for the first two years that they are in the UK. Once a spouse or civil partner has been in the UK for two years, they can apply to the Home Office for settlement. If settlement is granted, they are no longer subject to immigration control and will have access to public funds.

On the matter of the 'hardship allowance', I must explain that this is not a weekly payment. If a person is in hardship because of non-payment of an income, that person may qualify for help from the Social Fund. Amounts paid by the Social Fund will vary according to circumstance.

In 2012/13, a single pensioner with a full basic State Pension of £107.45 per week and an annual Winter Fuel Payment of £200 could receive £5,787.40 a year up to the age of 79 and from the age of 80, a higher amount of £5,900.40. Pensioners who get the 'couples rate' of £171.85, comprising a single pensioner's full rate of basic State Pension of £107.45 and State Pension based on a spouse's or civil partner's National Insurance contribution record of £64.40 and who also receive an annual Winter Fuel

Payment of £200, could receive £9,136.20 up to the age of 79 and a higher amount from age 80 of £9,249.20.

Many pensioners also receive additional State Pension as mentioned earlier and/or a workplace pension. Workplace and private pension contributions are given generous tax privileges by the Government.

Some pensioners may also qualify for Pension Credit, which can top up income to £142.70 a week (£7,420.40 a year) for single pensioners and to £217.90 a week (£11,330.80 a year) for couples. These amounts may be higher if pensioners are disabled, have caring responsibilities or certain housing costs such as mortgage interest payments. Many pensioners also receive help with Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit.

The amounts above are exclusive of the annual worth of other pensioner benefits such as free off-peak bus travel, free eye tests and prescriptions and from the age of 75, the free television licence scheme.

Full details of the range of help and advice available are contained in the Pensioners' guide published by this Department and available on-line at www.direct.gov.uk or from the Pension Information Order Line on telephone number 08457 313233.

If you have any queries about this letter please contact me quoting the reference number above.

Yours sincerely,

DWP State Pension Policy

Your right to complain under the Freedom of Information Act

If you are not happy with this response you may request an internal review by e-mailing freedom-of-information-request@dwpgsi.gov.uk or by writing to DWP, Central Fol Team, 5th Floor The Adelphi, 1-11, John Adam Street, London WC2N 6HT. Any review request should be submitted within two months of the date of this letter.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office for a decision. Generally the Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted our own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 5AF www.ico.gov.uk