

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team

e-mail: freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Our Ref: FOI2019/04911

14 February 2019

Dear Mohammed Haque,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (Fol) request received on 2 February. You asked:

*Where a Universal Credit claimant does refuse to accept their Claimant Commitment (CC), a short 'cooling off' period is allowed to give them the opportunity to reconsider their decision. Please provide me with all the guidance issued to work coaches in relation to the 'cooling off' period and the Claimant Commitment. In particular, this information should contain information about:*

- 1. The maximum duration of the 'cooling off' period. Calender days or working days, i.e. Monday to Friday.*
- 2. What happens next if the claimant still refuses to accept the CC after the 'cooling off' period.*
- 3. What advice the coach should give the claimant in relation to his/her claim if the claimant still refuses to accept their CC after the 'cooling off' period.*
- 4. Can the claimant ask for a second opinion or reconsideration if they refuse to accept the CC after the 'cooling off' period. Who would they appeal to, and exactly how would they go about this.*

**DWP Response:**

I can confirm that the Department holds guidance for the information requested.

However, Section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act allows us to direct you to information which is already reasonably accessible to you.

Universal Credit guidance is published in the House of Commons library and can be accessed through the link below: Deposit ref. DEP2018-0759, in the Deposit ref. column click "Show all files". In response to your four points please see Deposit paper: '*Requirement to accept a claimant commitment – V5.0*', sections '*Cooling off period*' and '*Second opinion*':

[https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/business-papers/commons/deposited-papers/?search\\_term=Department+for+Work+and+Pensions&itemId=119004#toggle-759](https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/business-papers/commons/deposited-papers/?search_term=Department+for+Work+and+Pensions&itemId=119004#toggle-759)

For information, Universal Credit guidance is periodically added to the House of Commons library.

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

Yours sincerely,

DWP Central Fol Team

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**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@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gsi.gov.uk) or by writing to DWP, Central Fol Team, Caxton House, Tothill Street, SW1H 9NA. 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 [https://ico.org.uk/Global/contact\\_us](https://ico.org.uk/Global/contact_us) or telephone 0303 123 1113 or 01625 545745