

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team

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

Our Ref: 4489

DATE: 3 November 2014

Dear Mr Townsend-Handscombe,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (Fol) request received on 07 October 2014. You asked:

AtW currently funds the following Communication Service Providers as elements of AtW support for Deaf customers: Registered BSL/English interpreters (RSLIs), Registered Trainee BSL/English interpreters (RTIs), Registered Lipspeakers, Registered Speech to Text Reporters, Notetakers, and Communication Support Workers.

This communication support may be provided by Communication Service Providers who are self employed, employed by their own limited company, employed by an agency, or employed by another employer.

Recently the information required has included variously: NI numbers, UTR, NRCPD number, and date obtained BSL level 6.

Can I ask for all written information at AtW / DWP, including but not limited to, information for customers, for AtW Advisers, general guidance, etc.; and re the following questions, as pertains to the Communication Support services listed above, and the 4 possible employment categories as described above.

If there is no written information, please confirm that, and in your reply address the questions raised.

- 1) What information, if any, does AtW / DWP ask of of Communication Support Providers before the Deaf person is able to engage their services?*
- 2) What information, if any, does AtW / DWP ask of of Communication Support Providers on their invoices?*
- 3) What information, if any, does AtW / DWP ask of Deaf people to collect and provide to AtW / DWP about the Communication Support Providers who work with the Deaf person, either in general, or before agreeing to pay invoices submitted?*
- 4) What consideration, if any, has AtW / DWP given to the considerations of the Data Protection Act, with regards to the information that Deaf AtW users are being required to provide about he CSPs who work with them? Specifically re the requirement*

that such information that can be collected from individuals is limited to that which is proportionate and necessary?

I have checked the current AtW Guidance, previous Fol requests and responses, and searched the DWP website, and this is not available there.

All applications to AtW are considered on an individual basis and advisers use their knowledge and skills when deciding on what additional information is needed to support an application.

1. It is usual for advisers to ask to see the registration details of communication support providers engaged by customers and also their self employed reference number, if appropriate. This is to ensure that any rate of payment considered is commensurate with the qualification level.
2. All invoices submitted by support providers should contain the relevant HMRC references and, in the case of communication support providers, they may be asked for their registration details.
3. Applications are considered on an individual basis as previously stated; therefore, any information requested will vary depending on individuals' circumstances.
4. AtW and DWP have regard to the DPA in all activities. Any information requested is proportionate and necessary for a decision on an application to be reached.

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

Yours sincerely,

DWP Strategy Fol Team

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, 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 www.ico.org.uk/Global/contact_us or telephone 0303 123 1113 or 01625 545745