

Frank Zola
request-832792-9753caac@whatdotheyknow.com

[freedom-of-information-
request@dwp.gov.uk](https://www.dwp.gov.uk/freedom-of-information-request)

[DWP Website](https://www.dwp.gov.uk)

Our Ref: FOI2022/11705

11 March 2022

Dear Frank Zola,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (FoI) request received on 12 February. You wrote:

"RE: "240000 people each week who fail to turn up for an appointment"

"So you are opposed to sanctions. Interested in what the alternatives might be. What would you propose doing about 240000 people each week who fail to turn up for an appointment? (And bear in mind NAO found we were sanctioning only 3% of the total so DWP isn't sanctioning all)"

<https://twitter.com/NeilCouling/status/1492232062937489409>

Please disclose a copy of your internal guidance and operational procedures and customer communication guidance the DWP follows in respect to the "240000 people each week who fail to turn up for an appointment", with respect to UC. Including individuals ("people") who are themselves 'vulnerable' or have complex needs and or are a member of a UC household claim that includes others, such as but not exclusively children, other people with 'vulnerable' or have complex needs and claims that include housing costs.

Of the "240000 people each week who fail to turn up for an appointment", please provide estimates or available statistical information on how many of these 'fail to attend' appointments concern the first new UC claim appointment, for the period December 2021 to date or if not available for the period March 2018 to March 2019."

DWP Response

We confirm that we do hold the information you have requested.

Please find the following UC Guidance products attached:

[Child in considerable distress](#)

[Complex needs overview](#)

[Fail to attend](#)

[Fail to attend: good reason](#)

[Sanctions](#)

[Spotlight On: Availability Requirements and decision maker referrals for 'Failure to be available to take up work'](#)

[Spotlight on: sanction pre-referral quality check](#)

[Switching-off requirements \(easements\) for Labour Market regime interventions](#)

The information provided in the table below shows all claimants that failed to attend a UC appointment and of those the number that failed to attend their first appointment.

The data provided cannot be compared or used in relation to the 240,000 figure in your request as the information is sourced from separate data sources.

The data supplied is derived from unpublished management information. This was collected for internal Departmental use only and has not been quality assured to National Statistics or Official Statistics publication standard. The data should therefore be treated with caution.

Week Beginning	Total Failed to Attend UC Appointments Per Week	Number Failed to Attend their First UC Appointment
2021-11-29	208,490	5,060
2021-12-06	210,130	5,280
2021-12-13	218,090	5,500
2021-12-20	140,770	4,470
2021-12-27	42,160	1,680
2022-01-03	133,490	4,340
2022-01-10	183,020	5,830
2022-01-17	181,100	5,810
2022-01-24	191,680	5,650
2022-01-31	199,660	5,750
2022-02-07	202,030	5,600
2022-02-14	183,360	4,730

Notes:

1. These figures include all Universal Credit appointments (face to face, phone and video).
2. Figures rounded to the nearest 10.
3. First UC appointment is defined as the first appointment date chronologically.

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

Yours sincerely,

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team
Department for Work and Pensions

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.gov.uk or by writing to: DWP Central Fol Team, Caxton House, 6-12 Tothill Street, London, 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.

Website: [ICO Contact Information](#) or telephone 0303 123 1113.