



Department
for Work &
Pensions

DWP Central Freedom of
Information Team
Caxton House
6-12 Tothill Street
London
SW1H 9NA

Amanda Hart
request-777755-6bdfbb5f@whatdotheyknow.com

[freedom-of-information-
request@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gov.uk)

[DWP Website](#)

Our Ref: IR2021/69347

23 September 2021

Dear Amanda Hart,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (FoI) request received on 25th August. You wrote:

"I am writing to request an internal review of Department for Work and Pensions's handling of my FOI request 'Jobcentre deaths 2019 & 2020 Scotland'.

We do not intend to get into what we have previously requested in terms of jobcentre deaths, except to say that in all cases the information requested was eventually provided despite the fact your department gave us the run around by denying a national request and wanted to turn back the clock when we subsequently asked for the information in specific areas when it claimed it shouldn't have in fact denied the national request.

Your claim that this request is vexatious is frankly disrespectful to those claimants who have lost their lives while in receipt of benefits or similarly lost them after benefit termination. Furthermore you are not entitled to refuse a request based on how you think the information may be used. This is because FOI requests are purpose blind. In fact the only nearest valid basis for refusal would be if we asked for this information within too short a period from a similar request - and this is not the case.

You are under no legal obligation to complete an internal review, but it is considered 'good practice' to do so. Should you inform us that you are not completing one, or claim there "is nothing to review", there is no further legal requirement for us to wait any longer. Be advised we would then pass the matter directly to the Information Commissioner.

We still require the information requested and will now allow up to 40 working days for the internal review to be carried out."

DWP Response

In response to your internal review request, we can confirm that the handling of your original request and response has now been appropriately reviewed by someone unconnected with the handling of your original request.

As a result of this review we are satisfied that the original response was handled properly and that the outcome of your original request was correct. Your complaint is therefore not upheld and the reason for this is as follows.

Our decision to treat this request as vexatious was not related to how the information may or may not be used. As stated in our response to you, we have treated the request as vexatious because we gave, in our response to you (IR2021/50402) the location of the death that was recorded in 2017 and went on to confirm that no deaths in Jobcentres have been recorded by DWP since this incident.

I can confirm that it is our opinion that you are already in possession of all of the information that we hold relating to your request.

We believe that this request is likely to result in a series of requests for information region by region and given that each of these would elicit an identical response to the current request, we believe that this intended to cause annoyance to the Department, as we would be unable to add anything to our previous statement to you.

To this effect, we believe that it is reasonable to apply s14(1) and s17(6) which permits us to notify you that we will not be issuing refusal notices on any related questions.

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 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.

Web: [ICO Contact Information](#) or telephone 0303 123 1113 or 01625 545745