

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team

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

Our Ref: FOI 3260

29 July 2014

Dear Mr Rymer

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request which was received on 20 July 2014. In that request, you asked:

Dear Department for Work and Pensions, on the 5/7/2014 i got as letter from a4e preston , The letter was from a so called work programme adviser called David Bragg saying that i must take part in a Employment Planning Review on tuesday 22 july 2014 @ 11 00 so a4e preston can not even get my address correct on the envelope that i still have, it says Mr R.Rymer Flat 3 my street southport merseyside my post code.no house number. could you please provide me with the following information you are the data controller for a4e preston what steps do you take to make sure that a4e preston send out letters to the correct full address of people who are on the work programme.

I made a complaint about my work programme adviser John Kennedy in southport that is why they (a4e) have moved me to preston do you think the mistake with my address was on purpose? If i was to go to a4e preston do you think i would be victimised for making a complaint against a4e, just like i was in southport?

Section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act allows us to direct you to information which is already reasonably accessible to you. The information you requested is covered in guidance for providers which is published on the Departments website.

You may find the first link useful, it details what information is shared with provider at the point of referral, this includes the participant's full postal address. See link below to chapter 4, paragraph 14 of the provider guidance.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/264168/wp-pg-chapter-4.pdf

Chapter 8 of the Generic Provider Guidance outlines the expectations the Department has regarding providers using Work Programme participants personal data securely.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/260426/pg-chapter-8.pdf

Chapter 6 of the Generic Provider Guidance outlines some of the checks the Department carries out, including checks around Data Security, to ensure that DWP data is safeguarded while being used by Work Programme providers.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/260423/pg-chapter-6.pdf

Regarding the second part of your request, you should note that the Freedom of Information act only applies to information held by the Department on the date of the request. It does not require us to answer specific questions posed by the requestor, to enter into a debate about a particular topic or provide an opinion. In cases where a person asks a question, rather than request recorded information, we do our utmost to provide the recorded information that best answers the question. Once the public authority has provided the recorded information, it has met its obligations under the Act; interpretation of the information provided is left to the requestor.

We recommend that if a Work Programme participant feels they have not received adequate support or are otherwise dissatisfied with their provider, should first raise their complaint directly with the provider through their formal complaints process. If individuals have exhausted the provider's complaint process and are still unhappy they can escalate the issue to the Independent Case Examiner (ICE). The role of ICE is to act as an independent referee for people who may feel that Government Agencies or Businesses have not treated them fairly or have not dealt with complaints in a satisfactory manner. Further information can be found at www.ind-case-exam.org.uk

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

Yours sincerely,

DWP Central 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@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 www.ico.gov.uk