

Dear Mr Newman

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request of 2 April 2012

You requested the following information:

For the past 3 full accounting years in DWP, please provide:

1) The number of days (excl. Holidays) lost through:

- a. Sickness*
- b. Authorised absenteeism*
- c. Unauthorised absenteeism*
- d. In total*

2) What these figures represent as a % of total days.

3) The number of individuals that have contributed to the days in

a) to d) above

4) The number of individuals that have incurred no absenteeism at all and what this represents as a %.

I am aware that you submitted a previous request, FOI 1149 on 13th March. I was unable to supply you with the information that you required due to the disproportionate cost of retrieving and assessing the data, you required.

Following this, you submitted a review request for FOI 1149 on 13th April. This is to assure you that your review is being looked at by an independent person. You will receive a separate response to this review request soon.

In relation to Question 1, The Department currently employs over 100,000 staff and the Department standard is to report sickness in working days lost rather than in man hours.

- Sickness data is readily available via current recognised data sources, which we are required to publish under the government transparency agenda. We have inserted a link to the Business Plan Quarterly Data Summary, on the DWP internet site, which contains the most recently published sickness absence figures, (September 2011) which are available to the public, for your reference below:

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/publications/corporate-publications/dwp-business-plan-2011-2015/business-plan-quarterly-data/>

This current request, FOI 1516, requires the data in relation to the same four questions but in working days as opposed to 'man hours'. I appreciate that you have narrowed your search in order to obtain this information. Unfortunately, narrowing your search in this way does not simplify the request in terms of retrieving and assessing our data.

When calculating the time and cost to retrieve and assess this information, we are still outside of the cost limit to respond. When identifying cost, the Department looks at the resources needed to answer **all** your questions submitted. To do this for your current request would, again, incur disproportionate cost. An appropriate cost limit has been specified in regulations for answering Freedom of Information requests and for central Government and it is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3½ working days in determining whether the Department holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting the information. Under section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act the Department is not obliged to comply with this part of your request.

When identifying cost the Department looks at the resources needed to answer all your questions submitted. As previously stated, to do this for your current request would incur disproportionate cost. However, in the spirit of being helpful a reduced request may fall within cost limits. If you choose to request information for question 3 and question 4 some of this information may be available to you.

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, 5th Floor The Adelphi, 1-11, John Adam Street, London WC2N 6HT. 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