

Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)
Central Freedom of Information Team

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX@xxx.xxx.gov.uk

Our reference: VTR 5215

Date: 15 December 2014

Dear R Davis,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on 1 December 2014. You asked:

I have some questions to ask about staff conduct in relation to Jobseekers Allowance Claimants:

1 - Can a JSA Workcoach force Claimants to agree to have the following statement included in their Claimant Commitments:

"I will provide detailed evidence of all of my jobseeking activities when I attend the Jobcentre"

which was then verbally explained by the JSA Workcoaches as being "to print out copies of any/all roles applied for by the JSA Claimants to present to the JSA Workcoaches as evidence of jobseeking activity" under threat of referral to a decision maker if those JSA Claimants do not comply and despite those JSA Claimants fully completing and presenting their WS1 booklets at every signing on appointment?

2 - If the answer to Question 1 is NO, can JSA Claimants then request to the JSA Workcoaches that this statement was removed from their Claimant Commitments?

3 - If the answer to Question 2 is YES, can JSA Workcoaches refuse to remove this part of a Claimant's Commitment?

4 - If the answer to Question 3 is NO, what can those JSA Claimants do about those JSA Workcoaches for their refusal to remove it?

For each of these questions, they are a YES or NO answer. Therefore, please do not provide lengthy answers saying "go off and read these parts of these statutes to avail yourself of the information. Please, for each question raised, simply answer YES or NO, and provide a reason why a particular answer is given with a reference to the relevant policy and/or statute. This is a generic request, and I am not requesting advice, opinion or explanation of any policy.

To put the format of this response into context, I should explain a little about the Freedom of Information Act. The Act provides people with a right of access to recorded information held by public authorities such as DWP. The

Act does not extend to requests for views, comments or answers to questions about a particular matter. Your request can be in the form of a question, but DWP does not have to answer if this would mean creating information that is not already held in a recorded form.

However, in the interests of customer service, if we don't hold recorded information that directly answers a question, we do our utmost to provide the recorded information we believe to be most closely related to the subject under question.

The following guidance available to jobcentre staff is the source of information that best answers your questions. All of which have been included as annexes to this reply.

- Claimant Commitment
- Jobseeker's Agreement Referral to a Labour Market Decision Maker

These guidance chapters are based on the Department's interpretation of the Jobseekers Act 1995 and Jobseeker's Allowance Regulations 1996. In particular Section 8 (1)(b) of the Jobseeker's Act specifically requires a claimant to provide information and such evidence as may be prescribed as to his circumstances, his availability for employment and the extent to which he is actively seeking employment.

Links to both of these have been included below for information.

- [Jobseekers Act 1995](#)
- [Jobseeker's Allowance Regulations 1996](#)

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

Yours sincerely,

DWP Central FoI 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 FoI 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