

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team  
e-mail: [freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gsi.gov.uk)

**Our Ref:** Fol 1203

**Date:** 18 April 2018

Dear Ms Trudy Baddams,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request of 20 March 2018. You asked:

*“Can you please tell me if claimants are allowed to take 'days off' their jobsearch ie for a holiday? For ill-health? For Christmas Day? Sundays? Bank Holidays? Without being sanctioned?*

*Also if a claimant on Universal Credit is working part time can she take a holiday without sanctions?”*

### **DWP Response**

A claimant's work-related requirements may need to be switched off for a period of time where it is unreasonable to expect the claimant to complete their requirements for a period (for example a sudden illness and necessary care for a child).

When a claimant reports they have a health condition or disability, they do not have to look for work or be available for work for the duration of their medical evidence (fit note) for up to the first 14 days after it is reported. Outside of the 14 day switch off period, a claimant who continues to provide a fit note can be set work search requirements and asked to apply for a job, where this is reasonable based on their health condition.

People on Universal Credit should follow the conditions of their Claimant Commitment which reflects the type of regime they meet.

If a claimant is intending to go on holiday, either in the UK or abroad, then the claimant should inform their work coach beforehand. This means we can make sure the claimant commitment is more reflective of them being on holiday. This would not remove the need to undertake work search actively but make the claimant commitment more in line with their current circumstances.

To note all available guidance can be found on the following link, please click on “Show all files” in the Deposit ref. column. For reference please see Deposit paper number 52 on going abroad which does also cover taking holiday within the UK.

[http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/business-papers/commons/deposited-papers/?fd=2017-09-14&td=2017-09-19&search\\_term=Department+for+Work+and+Pensions&itemId=119004#toggle-556](http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/business-papers/commons/deposited-papers/?fd=2017-09-14&td=2017-09-19&search_term=Department+for+Work+and+Pensions&itemId=119004#toggle-556)

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

Yours sincerely,

DWP Strategy Fol Team

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**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](mailto: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](http://www.ico.gov.uk)