

# **Preparing for the Initial Work Search/New Jobseeker Interview**

## **Guidance Queries and Help**

1. If you are unable to find an answer to a particular question regarding policy within this guide you must contact the Jobcentre Plus Live Support Advice Line. Do not give the Advice Line number to claimants or outside bodies under any circumstances, it is for the use of Jobcentre Plus staff only. Details of how to contact them can be found by clicking on the following hyperlink, Advice Line Home Page.
2. Please do not use the 'E-mail page owner' and 'Page information' links at the bottom of each page of guidance to raise policy queries, these should only be used to report broken hyperlinks.

## **Checking information**

3. Before starting a Initial Work Search/New Jobseeker Interview, the following should be checked for any relevant information:
  - the Customer Management System (CMS) / clerical claim form (where available);
  - Labour Market System (LMS);
  - Customer Information System (CIS); and
  - documents from a previous claims, including ESA (where available).
4. This will help to:
  - identify and address any outstanding issues from previous claims. For example, if the claimant failed to attend or complete any mandatory provision;
  - identify if the claimant needs to be re-referred to any mandatory provision they were participating in;
  - identify any barriers to employment;
  - obtain relevant background information;
  - establish what issues need to be dealt with;
  - prepare some initial ideas about possible help and advice; and
  - establish the key points for the interview.
5. Update relevant details on LMS. For example:
  - previous employment;
  - what the claimant has been doing prior to claiming. For example, they may have been abroad;
  - details of occupational pensions; and
  - details of volunteer activities.

## **Obtaining the Work Capability Assessment Disallowance Outcome template**

6. To inform the discussion during the NJI, the Work Capability Assessment (WCA) Disallowance Outcome template must be obtained for those claimants who have had a claim to Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) disallowed in the 6 months prior to the JSA claim, following the WCA.
7. The template includes the Decision Makers reasoning, which explains why the claimant has been found to have no Limited Capability for Work (LCW), which should reduce the time spent discussing the claimant's illness and condition, allowing more time to be focused on work.
8. These cases must be identified at least 3 hours prior to the NJI, to allow the Benefit Centre enough time to provide the template.
9. Unless such a claimant has been identified on form JSA1(T), JSAPS is used to identify them:
10. Dialogue 523, F3, to confirm that a claim to ESA existed in the 6 months prior to the JSA claim; and
11. Screen JA510736, to confirm whether the reason for that claim ending was 'Disallowed – No LWC'.

**Note: If the claimant is moving to JSA directly from Incapacity Benefit (IB) the template is not required and no further action is required.**

12. If so, an e-mail must be immediately sent to the locally nominated Benefit Centre shared mailbox, requesting the WCA Outcome Disallowance template. Depending on local arrangements, the template will be sent to either the adviser conducting the NJI or a controlled access shared mailbox.
  13. The email to the Benefit Centre must include the adviser or shared mailbox e-mail address, in addition to the claimant's name and NINo and the actual request.
  14. A reminder flag is set in the e-mail, by selecting 'Follow Up' and then 'Custom' from the toolbar. A reminder is set for 3 hours, for the recipient.
  15. If the request is not made by the same person undertaking the interview, the fact that the request has been made, including the time of the request, must be recorded in LMS conversations.
  16. Under no circumstances should any information be copied from the WCA Disallowance Template into LMS and once it has been used to inform the discussion during the NJI, both the template and the email **must** be deleted.
- Note: If the template requested from the Benefit Centre has not been received before the NJI, the interview is to be conducted without it. However, once received, the template must be destroyed immediately**

## **Periodicity & Payday Calculator**

17. The Periodicity & Payday Calculator assists coaches to correctly calculate a claimant's signing dates, signing arrangements and which stationery to use to create the appropriate Labour Market Unit. The calculator contains simple step-by-step instructions.

## Labour Market Units

18. LMS should be checked to identify those claimants who have claimed previously, to establish whether a previous Labour Market Unit exists and if so if it can be retrieved from storage.

19. If the claimant has not claimed at the same office, or a previous Labour Market Unit cannot be retrieved, a new one should be prepared. For example, if the original has been destroyed. In joint claim cases, a unit must be prepared for each member.

20. A basic Labour Market Unit consists of:

- ES80AJP – claim cover;
- ES80BJP – record of:
  - forms and leaflets issued;
  - data input to JSAPS; and
  - steps in clerical decision making.
- ES228JP – document envelope;
- ES600JP – elastic garter;
- ES601JP – millboard; and
- ES80KJP – record envelope kept in dormant files.

21. The following should be recorded on form ES80AJP, the claimant's:

- title;
- name and initials;
- date of birth;
- address; and
- National Insurance number.

22. In joint claim cases, the unit should be clearly marked according to local office instructions.

## Document Retention

23. All Labour Market Units should be retained on site for 1 month after the last date of the claim and then destroyed. The Labour Market Unit is considered to be the housing (ES80AJP) and **ALL** of the documents contained within it.

24. There are three exceptions to this rule:

- LMUs are to be retained for 14 months after the last date of the claim if they contain:
  - documents supporting a decision to disallow entitlement or apply a sanction. For example, JSA Claimant Commitment or JSAG, evidence of work search/jobsearch activity or Jobseeker's Directions; or
  - a fraud, appeal or overpayment marker; and
- Labour Market Units selected by Risk Assurance Division Performance Management for checks will be marked 'Not for Destruction' by the Error Control Point and will be retained by them until Risk Assurance Division Performance Management confirm their action is complete. See the RAD PM CSD guide for further details.

25. The last electronic version of the JSA Claimant Commitment in each claim is to be retained in the secured shared folder for 30 weeks after the last date of the claim.

#### **Checking for a fraud marker**

26. Cases that have a fraud marker will have a FRAIMS flag present on CIS. To check for the FRAIMS flag, the claimant's "Interest History" in CIS should be accessed. Any FRAIMS interest (if there is one) will be listed here, with a start date of that interest.

#### **Checking for an overpayment marker**

27. Cases that have an overpayment marker will have an interest registered on CIS. An interest can be checked for by accessing:

- Award History, then;
- Interests History (This screen displays all interested parties against each benefit).

#### **Checking for an appeal marker**

28. An appeal interest can be checked for by accessing the claimant's JSAPS notepad to see if an appeal is ongoing.

#### **Claimants classified as Potentially Violent**

29. Details of the action to be taken when dealing with claimants that may, or have been classified a Potentially Violent can be found in the Potentially Violent claimants guidance

Advisory Interviews should be conducted using the advice and good practices identified in the Unacceptable Customer Behaviour guidance.