

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team

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

Our Ref: FOI2020/44368

21 August 2020

Dear Kelly-Marie Jones,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (Fol) request received on 11 August. You asked:

Your Universal Credit underpayment guidance [http://data.parliament.uk/DepositedPapers/Files/DEP2019-0980/139._Underpayments_v5.0.pdf] states that "if arrears of Universal Credit are owed to a claimant but they have been separately overpaid, these arrears must be offered to Debt Management to help clear the overpayment. Debt Management decide if the arrears can be used to reduce the overpayment."

Please kindly provide a copy of the guidance upon which Debt Management staff rely when deciding whether arrears may be used to reduce an overpayment.

DWP Response:

Whilst I can confirm that the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) does hold the information you have requested, section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 allows us to direct you to information that is already reasonably accessible in the public domain. Please see the link below to DWP's Benefit Overpayment Recovery Guide, Paragraph 5.49-5.55 entitled "Recovery from Arrears"

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/897689/benefit-overpayment-recovery-guide.pdf

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@dwpa.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
Web: ico.org.uk/Global/contact_us or telephone 0303 123 1113 or 01625 545745