

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

freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Our reference: VTR2002

Date: 9 June 2015

Dear Sir/Madam

Thank you for your Freedom of Information requests dated 14 May 2015 in which you raised a number of issues but this response only covers the five specific requests for information which you have classed as 'FOI questions' which are:

- (1) Claimants are informed in writing that a 'doubt' has arisen if they miss a JSA Work Coach interview appointment.
Has Chris Hayes correctly informed the Select Committee or has he mislead them?*
- (2) The claimants benefit payment would NOT be affected until a decision was made.
Has Chris Hayes correctly informed the Select Committee or has he mislead them?*
- (3) Chris Hayes has told the Select Committee that there is a series of checks to be done to ensure that if a claimant is 'vulnerable' they have actually received any appointment letter.
What are these series of checks?*
- (4) Do the series of checks only apply to 'vulnerable' people?*
- (5) Chris Hayes has told the Select Committee that immediate benefit suspension (entitlement and payment - not referred to a DM) would ONLY apply if a claimant failed to turn up to their fortnightly signing REVIEW, and not if they failed to turn up to a Work Coach interview.
Has Chris Hayes correctly informed the Select Committee or has he mislead them?*

Response:

To put the format of this response into context, I should explain a little about the Freedom of Information Act. The Act concerns the provision of recorded information held by public authorities such as DWP; the Act does not require that we create new information or generate answers to questions. Therefore, if a request is made in the form of a question, we provide the recorded information already held that answers the question.

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.

In answer to your specific questions:

1. Recorded information covering the action when a claimant misses a work coach appointment can be found in annex 1.
2. Recorded information covering this question can be found in paragraph 70 of annex 2.
3. Recorded information covering this question can be found in annex 3.
4. Recorded information covering this question can be found in annex 3.
5. The answer to this question is also covered by annex 1.

Additional information covering sanctions can be found in the Decision Makers Guide which is freely available to the public on the internet (type 'Decision Makers Guide' into a search engine). Chapter 34 covers sanctions.

If you have any queries about this letter please contact us 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@dwpgsi.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.org.uk/Global/contact_us or telephone 0303 123 1113 or 01625 545745