

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team

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

Our Ref: FOI2018/11546

14 December 2018

Dear Mr A. J. Wilson,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (Fol) request received on 27 November. You asked:

Please provide copies of the performance measurement criteria and appraisal criteria in use by managers and senior managers working within the "Financial Investigation Unit" of the Child Maintenance Group.

*I have seen a copy of the DWP Fraud Investigations Staff Guide published here:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/523527/fraud-guide-feb-2016.pdf*

Please provide an index of policies and procedures used by members of the Financial Investigation Unit when conducting "Complex Earner Investigations". I am not concerned with policies and procedures for suspected criminal activities so please confine your answer to materials relevant only to activities relevant to procedures used in the non criminal element of the FIU's work.

DWP Response:

It may be helpful if I start by clarifying the remit of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). The FOIA gives any person legal right of access to any and all recorded information which is held by a public authority. The FOIA does not oblige a public authority to create new information to answer questions; nor does it require a public authority to give advice, opinion or explanation in relation to issues/policies under question.

On this occasion we are unable to answer your request as the Child Maintenance Service Financial Investigations Unit (FIU) does not operate under any internal policy or guidance.

However, the FIU are governed by criminal statute including the Policy and Criminal Evidence Act (1984) and the Criminal Procedure and Investigation Act (1996). Section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act provides an exemption on a public body to provide information, if that information already exists within the public domain. Both Acts are available to you at the following link:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk>

It may also be worthwhile to explain that all FIU investigators have completed and passed an Accredited Counter Fraud Specialist training developed and overseen by Portsmouth University via the Counter Fraud Professional Accreditation Board. Further information on this training can be found on the Universities website at the following link:

<http://www.port.ac.uk/centre-for-counter-fraud-studies/counter-fraud-professional-accreditation-board/>

With regards to your questions regarding performance measurement criteria, appraisal criteria , complex earners investigations, the Department does not release information in relation to investigation and detection of fraud under section 31 (1) (a) and (b) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

The link below refers:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/section/31>

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@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

https://ico.org.uk/Global/contact_us or telephone 0303 123 1113 or 01625 545745