

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team

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

Our Ref: FOI2018/11546

6 August 2019

Dear Mr A. J. Wilson,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (Fol) request received on 27 November 2018. You asked:

1. 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*

2. 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:

Following correspondence with the Information Commissioner we have revised our position and can provide an updated 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.

1. With regards to your request regarding performance measurement criteria, and appraisal criteria, following clarification of the request, I can provide Key Work Objectives and standards which are applied to FIU staff. See annex 1 & 2.

It is worth noting that the majority of these measures also apply generically to the wider enforcement teams, with others applying to all staff in Child Maintenance

2. In your request FOI 11546, you have asked for an index of policies and procedures used by members of the Financial Investigation Unit when Conducting Complex Earner investigations. In your review request VTR2047 and IR240 you requested 'Copies of their policies and procedures and/or workflow diagrams when conducting a "complex earner investigation"'.

As we advised previously regarding the Index, 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 therefore there is no Index in existence. As each case is different it is reviewed on a case by case basis and there is no flow chart available that we can provide. There is also no information that we can provide that is specific to a complex earner investigation carried out by FIU.

General guidance is available to all Child Maintenance colleagues however and we can provide this which may be of use to you. See annex 3

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

Yours sincerely,

DWP Central FOI 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 FOI 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