

Jobseeker's Allowance Document Retention

Summary

1. Claimant information is held in various formats and Jobcentre Plus has a responsibility to store that information securely and for the appropriate period.
2. Whether to keep it and if so how long to keep it for is determined by whether there is a specific need to keep it.
3. The Data Protection Act (DPA) does not specify retention periods. It is important to remember that when deciding what documents/data to retain or destroy you are applying the principles of the DWP Benefits Document and Data Retention (Benefits DDR) policy and **not** the DPA.
4. The Benefits DDRG and the Benefits DDR policy are owned by Information and Records Management Services and ensures that whatever the format of the information held, you only need to refer to one source of guidance.
5. The Benefits DDR policy can be found in the Benefits Document and Data Retention Guide (DDRG). The Benefits DDRG and the Benefits DDR policy are designed to help identify:
 - which documents and/or data are to be retained, and
 - for how long, and
 - any exceptions to the general rules.
6. The Benefits DDRG contains both generic material that applies to all the benefit areas and benefit specific material that applies to individual benefits, including Jobseeker's Allowance. The policy and processes must be applied fully and correctly.

Clerical Documents and Systems Records

7. All clerical documents, systems records and prints, scanned images, telephone recordings etc relating to a case must be examined as a case is being processed. They must be classified and noted as either:
 - supporting, or
 - ephemeral.

Note: Where it is not possible to classify the data and a set retention period is unclear, treat all documents and systems records as supporting.
8. Supporting documents must be filed with the main claim file. Ephemeral documents can normally be destroyed after 4 weeks.
9. Following the processing of all claims, Benefit Centres retain their filing for periods of time ranging up to 13 weeks after processing of the claim is completed. Once the local retention period has been served, use FARIO to mark claim documents as PA and input a destruction date.. If non-CMS claims are being sent to Remote Store, the FARIO files should be annotated 'NON-CMS'.

Potentially Violent Persons (PVP)

10. Follow current procedures in the Unacceptable Customer Behaviour guidance for all data and records about potentially violent customers.

Note: It is important that PVP records, both clerical and system, are clearly marked and maintained to alert staff accessing them to any potential to violent or inappropriate behaviour.

Reclassification of documents/data needed for checks

11. When a document or systems data previously classified as ephemeral is needed for a check:

- reclassify it as a supporting document/data
- note it with the date of the most recent decision , and
- keep it as a supporting document/data.

12. For guidance on mandatory checks see Business Control System (BCS) guidance.

Scan Reports

13. The retention period for scan reports may vary. Scans are usually issued with a circular or bulletin giving the retention period and advice line contact numbers. If no retention period is given, contact the appropriate advice line.

14. Retention periods for JSAPS printed output is in the Printed Output guidance

Claim reaches PA stage

15. After being PA **both system records and clerically maintained cases** are normally destroyed 14 months later. For exceptions to this general rule see the Benefits DDRG.