

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team

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

Our Ref: FOI2019/06640

14 March 2019

Dear Frank Zola,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (Fol) request received on 14 February. You asked:

With regards your Ashton under Lyne Jobcentre, please supply [1] a copy of the landlord and tenancy questions form given to UC claimants, as discussed in <https://thepoorsideof.life/2019/02/14/64-year-old-woman-with-multiple-health-condition-fails-universal-credit-medical-assessment-living-in-substandard-accommodation-how-are-people-supposed-to-survive-this/> You can see an image extract of the form at: <https://thepoorsideoflife.files.wordpress.com/2019/02/d3bbbd44-d8d4-4013-9e04-bed98a24a42c.jpeg>

The form contains questions, such as:

- a. 'Would your landlord accept less rent at times if you could not afford to pay the full rent?'*
- b. 'Will your landlord accept a lower rent if universal credit does not meet your full rent liability?'*
- c. 'Would your landlord take you to court to evict you if you failed to pay the rent?'*
- d. 'Would your landlord take legal action to recover rent arrears?'*

[2] If a claimant declines to complete this form or does not have any of the information requested, what penalty, benefit delay or sanction would apply? What legislation requires a UC claimant to provide any answer to all of the forms questions?

[3] For forms questions a, b, c, and d asks a claimant to offer an opinion about what a landlord could/would do, can you advise how a claimant would know what action a landlord may take with regards these questions. If a claimants answers a, b, c, and d by saying:

'I do not know, please ask the landlord or read the tenancy terms and conditions'

what penalty, benefit delay or sanction would apply?

[4] What is the purpose(s) of this form and will it's content/responses be shared/processed by any other organisation such as a local authority?

DWP Response:

We do hold information falling within the terms of your request; however we need more time to consider your request.

I wish to advise you that the following exemption applies to some of the information that you have requested:

Section 31(1)(a) - The prevention or detection of crime.

By virtue of section 10(3), where public authorities have to consider the balance of the public interest in relation to a request, they do not have to comply with the request until such a time as is reasonable in the circumstances.

The Department has not yet reached a decision on the balance of the public interest. Due to the need to consider, in all the circumstances of the case, where the balance of the public interest lies in relation to the information that you have requested, the Department will not be able to respond to your request in full within 20 working days.

Accordingly, we will let you have a response as soon as possible and no later than **11 April 2019**.

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