



Department  
for Work &  
Pensions

DWP Central Freedom of  
Information Team  
Caxton House  
6-12 Tothill Street  
London  
SW1H 9NA

David Andrew Jameson  
request-1046805-5f809be9@whatdotheyknow.com

[freedom-of-information-  
request@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gov.uk)

[DWP Website](#)

Our Ref: FOI2023/86728

7 December 2023

Dear Mr Jameson

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (Fol) request received on [date of receipt]. You wrote:

A number of people on public social media have stated the DWP have contacted them to make bank statements available to the DWP. Upon doing this they have said the DWP then contacted them back to discuss purchases and spending patterns ie McDonald's / Dominoes etc etc. I find this hard to believe

1. Please provide a copy of the policy or guidelines with regard to the DWP having the authority to request copies of bank statements then discussing spending patterns on purchases with the claimant
2. Please provide the policy and or guidelines where the claimant can record such calls
3. Please provide copies of any training or guidelines memos or slides with reference to requesting bank statements then discussing them together with any call scripts and forms / templates for asking the questions then capturing the data from the claimants answers

### **DWP Response**

We are unable to deal with your Fol request without clarification of the information you seek.

To help us do so, we would like to know more about the specific area of DWP's work your request relates to.

Under Section 16 of the Fol Act we should assist you in helping you focus your request.

Social Security legislation permits DWP officials to request and view a range of financial documents, including bank statements. This can be in relation to establishing Capital held when claiming a specific, means-tested benefit or as part of DWP's work in detecting fraud and error.

You may wish to narrow the focus of your request to the following.

The guidance relating to a specific DWP benefit

Or

The guidance relating to the detection of fraud and error.

On the first point, there is already some related information, specific to Universal Credit, in the public domain which can be found here - If your Universal Credit is reviewed - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

Similarly on the second point, the following can be found here - Fraud Investigations: staff guide - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)).

Once you have reviewed this material you may want to refine your request further.

We will consider any revised request however we cannot guarantee that any revised request will fall within the cost limit.

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

Yours sincerely,

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team  
Department for Work and Pensions

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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.gov.uk](mailto:freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gov.uk) or by writing to: DWP Central FoI Team, Caxton House, 6-12 Tothill Street, London, SW1H 9NA.

Any request for an internal review must be received by us within 40 working days of the date of this letter. Please note we are not obliged to provide a review if it is requested after more than 40 working days.

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.

Website: [ICO FOI and EIR complaints](#) or telephone 0303 123 1113.