

Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)
Central Freedom of Information Team

freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Our reference: IR 264

Date: 21 June 2017

Dear Mr Jefferson,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (FOI) review request, which we received on 23 May 2017.

I am of a senior grade to the person who dealt with your request; I was not involved previously, and can confirm that I have carried out an internal review. I am now in a position to respond to you.

You asked:

"We are unsure if you are requesting clarification but to-date no information has been provided to us which answers our request. While it is true that a pharmacist would accept a ESA125 within a month of its issue they would not accept that identical document three months later because it is three months old and it does not provide proof that the claimant is currently in receipt of ESA at such a point. For instance if a claimant is in receipt of ESA in April 2017 and they require ongoing medication the document we require would prove that the claimant will still be in receipt of ESA in May, June, July, August up to a date which you will review the case - thus the REVIEW DATE WOULD HAVE TO BE A FUTURE DATE NOT A PAST DATE. So far the dates presented are all in the past. They require a document which states the future date at which time the claim would be reviewed (for purposes of entitlement to free prescriptions). We request you kindly provide us with a copy of that document. Remember the review date must be a future date so that a pharmacist can look at it and be satisfied that the patient is at that point in receipt of ESA. It is reasonable for a pharmacist to expect such a document exists".

Our response:

I am content that your original request was dealt with in accordance with DWP guidelines for FOI requests.

Whilst an ESA125 can only be accepted as evidence of receipt of benefit within a month of issue, an individual may request a new ESA125 at any time, so will be able to present a valid ESA125 to a pharmacist, etc. whenever it is needed for as long as they have a claim to ESA.

I hope this is helpful but 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 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

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