



Department
for Work &
Pensions

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[DWP Website](https://www.dwp.gov.uk)

Our Ref: FOI2022/13961

7 March 2022

Dear Lewis Taliaferro

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (FoI) request received on 21 February. You wrote:

“When on restart scheme can you only be sanctioned for not carrying out a mandated activity.

So does this mean all tasks are voluntary unless mandated? and that you cannot be sanctioned if you do not carry out a voluntary task issued by the restart provider.

Can a sanction only be issue if a compliance doubt is raised?”

DWP Response

We confirm that we hold the information you have requested.

The Restart Scheme has been designed to focus on positively engaging participants, so that mandation is considered only where other attempts have failed.

Restart Scheme providers may consider mandating participants to undertake activity which helps them to prepare for, or move into, work and are expected to emphasise the advantages of participation. The activity must always be reasonable and achievable in the participant's circumstances. If the participant fails to comply, the provider is expected to raise a compliance doubt with Jobcentre Plus and a decision will be made as to whether a sanction should be imposed. If a claimant refuses to take part in any stage of that process, a compliance doubt may be raised, which may or may not result in a sanction being imposed.

The Restart Scheme has introduced the following requirements:

- Providers must make non-mandatory attempts to engage with participants before considering a mandation
- Providers must not mandate participants to undertake the same activity where a sanction is already in place, or a compliance doubt is outstanding
- Providers are encouraged to use other channels before considering mandation.

Where a compliance doubt is raised, the decision making process will be followed. It will always be the Department for Work and Pensions who will make the decision on whether a sanction should be imposed.

I have provided the following link where you can find the information regarding a compliance doubt in the [Restart Scheme Provider Guidance](#) (paragraph 9.10).

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

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 or by writing to: DWP Central FoI Team, Caxton House, 6-12 Tothill Street, London, 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.

Website: [ICO Contact Information](#) or telephone 0303 123 1113.