

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

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

**Our reference:** VTR 5428

**5 January 2015**

Dear Mr Robertson

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (Fol) request received on 18 December 2014. You asked:

*I would like more information on Seetec as I have had several meeting with them and they seem to be changing the rules all the time.*

*It is not clear what ESA claimants are expected to gain from them or how they are able to help those who have long term illness.*

*Seetec called me in to see them and told me that I would have to attend 5 days a week even though I am on ESA.*

*Can you tell me what are the guide lines with regards to the two groups of ESA claimants and how are they managed by Seetec.*

*Have the DWP changed the rules and what are they.*

*Who do I complain to when things go wrong with Seetec.  
What are my rights as an ESA claimant when can they impose sanctions even when someone has a critical illness that sometimes does not allow then to attend Seetec appointments.*

I would like to outline the scope of the Freedom of Information Act to help put this response into context. The remit of the Act, is to provide recorded information available at the time of the request. Once the public authority has provided the information, it has met its obligations under the Act; interpretation of the information provided is left to the requestor. For example, a Freedom of Information request would be for a copy of a policy, rather than an explanation as to why we have that policy in place or questions about the policy itself.

Where a person asks a question, rather than requests recorded information, we do our utmost to provide the recorded information that best answers the question. In addition, the Act does not require the Department to create

information to answer requests. We are therefore not able to say whether an individual would be at risk of sanction, should they sometimes not be able to attend appointments with their provider.

Seetec are one of the providers of three welfare to work programmes, Work Programme, Work Choice and Community Work Placements. As you have not detailed which programme you are attending the following links take you to the provider guidance for each programme. In the first or main chapter of each there is an overview of the help that providers are expected to give participants from each claimant group.

The guidelines given to Work Programme providers can be found via this link.  
<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/supplying-dwp/what-we-buy/welfare-to-work-services/provider-guidance/work-programme-provider.shtml>

The guidelines given to Work Choice providers can be found via this link:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/work-choice-dwp-provider-guidance>

The guidelines given to Community Work Placement providers can be found via this link:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-work-placements-dwp-provider-guidance>

Individuals who feel they have not received adequate support or are otherwise dissatisfied with their provider, should first raise their complaint directly with the provider through their formal complaints process. If individuals have exhausted the provider's complaint process, received a final response from them, and are still unhappy they can escalate the issue to the Independent Case Examiner (ICE). The role of ICE is to act as an independent referee for people who may feel that Government Agencies or Businesses have not treated them fairly or have not dealt with complaints in a satisfactory manner. Further information can be found at [www.ind-case-exam.org.uk](http://www.ind-case-exam.org.uk)

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

Yours sincerely,

DWP Central FoI Team

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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.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gsi.gov.uk) or by writing to: DWP, Central FoI 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

[www.ico.org.uk/Global/contact\\_us](http://www.ico.org.uk/Global/contact_us) or telephone 0303 123 1113 or 01625 545745