



Department
for Work &
Pensions

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

Our Ref: FOI2021/38746

14 June 2021

Dear Joe Hannigan,

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

“Could you please send me all statistical data regarding;

1. The total number of sanctions given since April 2020.
2. The total monetary value taken from claimants from these sanctions.
3. The number of these sanctions successfully overturned at appeal
4. The number of these sanctions currently in the appeals process, as of the date of this FIO request.”

DWP Response

We can confirm that we hold information falling within the description specified in your request. However, we have estimated that the cost of meeting your request would exceed the cost limit of £600 specified in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3½ working days (equivalent to 24 staff-hours) in determining whether the Department holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting it.

Under Section 12 of the Fol Act the Department is not therefore obliged to comply with your request and we will not be processing it further. Under Section 16 of the Fol Act we should help you narrow your request so that it may fall beneath the cost limit. We will consider afresh any revised request however we cannot guarantee that any revised request will fall within the cost limit as each Fol request is judged on its own merits.

Regarding parts 1 and 3 of your request, we feel that you should narrow these to ask for the number of adverse sanction decisions made to January 2021, for those on Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), Income Support (IS), and Universal Credit Full Service (UCFS), and for the number of sanctions successfully overturned at appeal for JSA, ESA and IS to the same date.

Regarding part 2 of your request, we feel that you should narrow this to ask for the monthly number of people who received a reduction in their benefit due to a sanction for UCFS to February 2021 and for JSA and ESA to September 2020.

Regarding part 4 of your request in this instance we are unable to provide any suitable advice on how you could narrow it to bring it within the cost limit. This is because it would necessitate complex data matching to identify and extract the data required.

Were you to narrow your request as suggested above, Section 21 of the FoI Act allows us to direct you to information which is already reasonably accessible to you.

The Department publishes monthly Official Statistics on [Benefit Sanctions](#) every three months, and statistics covered in the latest release to [January 2021](#) include data for sanction decisions during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Please read the [bulletin](#) for more details.

The latest statistics showing the monthly adverse decision outcomes for those on UCFS are available in table 1.1 of the [data tables](#). The decision outcomes by decision type (including by appeal) for those on JSA, ESA, IS are available by month of decision on [Stat-Xplore](#). If needed, you can access [guidance](#) on how to extract the information required from Stat-Xplore. If you have any difficulties extracting the relevant information, please let us know.

The latest statistics showing the number of individuals on Universal Credit (Full Service) at a Point in Time with a Reduction in Payment (Due to a Sanction) by Month to February 2021 is published in table 2.1 of the [data tables](#). Similar statistics for those on JSA and ESA by month to September 2020 are published in tables 2.2 and 2.3 respectively.

You may be interested to know the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) publish [tribunal statistics](#) and the latest statistics are available to [March 2021](#). As the responsibility for these statistics lies with MOJ if you require any further information then the instructions on how to submit a freedom of information request to them can be found towards the bottom of [this page](#).

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@dwpgov.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.