



Department
for Work &
Pensions

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

J Roberts
request-940765-773ec014@whatdotheyknow.com

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

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

Our Ref: FOI2023/05316

02 February 2023

Dear J Roberts,

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

“An article in the Daily Mail based on reporting by The Times refers to benefit fraudsters and 'Photoshop fails':

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-11660799/The-Photoshop-FAILS-fuelling-8-5BN-benefits-scam-fraudsters-sending-faked-images-DWP.html>

1. For the period during which 'approximately 172,000 applications that appeared fraudulent were automatically suspended' please provide the number of images you received:

(i) from people making benefit claims;

(ii) from people making benefit claims which you suspected to be fraudulent; and

(iii) from people making benefit claims that you identified as fraudulent.

2. For responses (i)-(iii), please provide the number of claimants/fraudsters who sent you the images.

3. Please specify the start and end dates of the period during which you received approximately 172,000 applications that appeared to be fraudulent.”

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 FoI Act the Department is not therefore obliged to comply with your request and we will not be processing it further.

The reason being is because our recording systems do not capture this level of detail and we had no requirement to count the total volume of photographs that we received. The only way to obtain this information would be to manually check all 172,000 files.

As required under Section 16 of the FoI Act we have considered how we might help you narrow your request so that it may fall beneath the cost limit. However, given the specific nature of your request and the fact that all files have to be checked to obtain the information we do not feel that there is a way to refine the request to bring it within costs.

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@dw.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 FOI and EIR complaints](#) or telephone 0303 123 1113.