

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team

e-mail: freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Our Ref: FOI2019/03835

5 February 2019

Dear Ms V Todbury

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (Fol) request received on 26 January. You asked:

FOI request Re. Universal Credit (UC) effect of sudden stop on tax credits vulnerable individuals

What are DWP doing to protect vulnerable and disabled individuals from the sudden withdrawal of tax credit (TC) or child tax credit (CTC) after a request by DWP to terminate legacy benefits . This is in situations where the individual has "expressed an interest" in UC or submitted a claim for UC which may or may not progress.

What are DWP doing to protect the above named groups while they wait eight or more weeks for Mandatory Reconsideration of the TC stop and are in financial hardship.

DWP Response:

It may be helpful if I explain the role of the Freedom of Information Act. The Act provides a right of access to recorded information held by a public authority like DWP (subject to certain exemptions). The Act does not provide that a public authority must create new information to answer questions; nor does it provide that a public authority give advice, opinion or explanation in relation to issues/policies under question.

In cases where a customer does ask a question, rather than request recorded information, we do our utmost to provide the recorded information that best answers the question. Once the public authority has provided the recorded information, it has met its obligations under the Act; interpretation of the information provided is left to the requestor.

The information we hold that best explains / answers your questions:

In relation to:

'What are DWP doing to protect vulnerable and disabled individuals from the sudden withdrawal of tax credit (TC) or child tax credit (CTC) after a request by DWP to terminate legacy benefits.'

We are not, currently, migrating any claimants from legacy benefits to Universal Credit who have not had a change in their circumstances.

As planned, the testing of moving over legacy claimants to Universal Credit will begin in July 2019. This pilot will initially involve no more than 10,000 claimants. Testing the system and our processes will allow us to make sure we can provide the best possible service to those claimants who will need to move to Universal Credit from their legacy claim as planned, by the end of 2023.

However, I can confirm that the Department holds information where a claimant moves to Universal Credit due to a change in their circumstances. Section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act allows us to direct you to information which is already reasonably accessible to you. The information can be found at the link below:

'What is Universal Credit', 'New to Universal Credit', '5. Help with managing your money'

<https://www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk/new-to-universal-credit/universal-credit-and-work/>

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

Yours sincerely

Policy Group FoI Team

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@dwpgsi.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
https://ico.org.uk/Global/contact_us or telephone 0303 123 1113 or 01625 545745