

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

freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Our reference: VTR 265

Date: 05 February 2015

Dear Ms St-Mart,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on 22 January 2015. You asked:

I am requesting for the ESA - WRAG, work-focused interview complete advisers guidance.

For example what guidance does advisers follow with regards to the work-focused interviews how do they conduct the interviews with claimants who have mental and physical disabilities.

What happen to claimants who have severe mental disability how are they treated by the work-focused advisers? What do advisers expect from claimants with mental disability?

In response to your request, please find attached a copy of the guidance for the Jobcentre Plus Offer, which includes detail around Work Focused Interviews.

One key factor to consider is that claimants are only required to attend Work Focused interviews if they are placed in the Work Related Activity Group (WRAG) at their Work Capability Assessment (WCA). The WCA is an assessment of the claimant, undertaken by Medical Services to determine if they have Limited Capability for Work (LCW) and / or Limited Capability for Work Related Activity (LCWRA).

If they are considered to have both LCW and LCWRA, the claimant is placed into the Support Group, and no Labour Market conditionality is applied to them, so they do not need to attend Work Focused Interviews. This means that it is possible that claimants with severe mental disability will never be required to attend a Work Focused Interview.

If the claimant is assessed as having LCW, but not LCWRA, they are placed in the WRAG, and will be required to attend a Work Focused Interview.

Other than attending and participating in an interview, the only other mandatory activity a claimant in the WRAG may be required to undertake is Work Related Activity (WRA), and as explained in chapter 5 of the Guidance. 'It is vital that when agreeing work related activities that the claimant's circumstances are taken into account; including physical or mental health and

any learning or cognitive issues, as failure to undertake WRA can result in a sanction applied to the claimants benefit.'

This means that a claimant who has severe mental disability would not be asked to do anything which was unachievable, or unrealistic.

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

Yours sincerely,

DWP Central 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
www.ico.org.uk/Global/contact_us or telephone 0303 123 1113 or 01625 545745