

Freedom of Information request 4038/2013

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Information request

UNDER NEW RULES UNIVERSAL CREDIT A JOB SEEKER HAS TO DO 35 HOURS A WEEK JOB SEARCH PLEASE DETAIL WHAT THIS MUST CONSIST OF HOW MUCH TIME MUST BE SPENT ON LINE HOW MUCH MUST BE PHONEING WRITING OR LOOKING IN PAPERS OR VISITING FIRMS ALSO IF YOU ARE DOING AFTER WORK PROGRAM SIX MONTHS COMMUNITY TYPE WORK DURING BUSINESS OPENING HOURS HOW DO SUPPOSE A CLAIMANT FITS IN 35 HOURS A WEEK JOB SEARCH AS HE OR SHE WILL BE HAMPERD IF HE OR SHE IS DOING COMMUNITY BASED WORK DURING BUSINESS HOURS AND WILL BE AT MERCY IF A BIAS DWP ADVISOR WHO WILL SANCTION THEM FOR SOMETHING THAT DWP HAVE GOT THEM DOING HAVE YOU SET UP CLAIMANTS TO FAIL IN THIS WAY AND WILL IT MAKE THEM AT A DISADVANTAGE TO REST OF CLAIMANTS AS THEY WON'T BE ABLE TO JOBSEACH IN BUSINESS HOURS ALSO IF YOU DOING COMMUNITY WORK AFTER THE WORK PROGRAM AND YOU GOT JOB INTERVIEWS ON MOST DAYS WILL YOU BE ALLOWED TO ATTEND THESE WITHOUT IT AFFECTING ONES CLAIM ALSO IF YOU ARE SUBJECT TO HAVING TI ATTEND DWP WEEKLY HOW FAR DOSE A CLAIMANT HAVE TO LIVE BEFORE THE DWP HAVE TO PAY FOR A CLAIMANT TO ATTEND DWP WHAT HELP DOSE A HOMELESS PERSON RECEIVE TAKING IN TO ACCOUNT THEY ARE AT A DISADVANTAGE TO REST OF CLAIMANTS IE NO HOME NO ACCESS TO INTERNET OR PHONE OR PAPERS HOW IS A HOMELESS PERSON DEALT WITH TO A NORMAL CLAIMANT

DWP response

Anyone can request copies of information which a public authority already holds in a recorded form, but the Freedom of Information Act does not require the Department to provide opinions or explanations, generate answers to questions, or create or obtain information it does not hold.

Your request asks a series of questions which would require answers to be generated.

However, you may find the following information helpful.

Claimants in the “all work-related requirements” group have a responsibility to find work. Claimants should treat this responsibility as their “job” and our intention is that claimants should aim to spend as many hours looking for work as we would expect them to spend in work.

Work search expectations will differ for each claimant depending on their individual circumstances and job goals and advisers will tailor requirements for each claimant, setting activities which will give each claimant the best prospects of finding work.

If an adviser sets any work preparation activity, such as attending a training course or any such relevant community work, it will effectively be offset against the time a claimant is expected to spend looking for work. We will also take into account any voluntary or paid work the claimant is engaged in.

Our regulations allow that where a claimant has done all that could reasonably be expected of them - for example they have applied for all suitable jobs and undertaken all the activities set out in their work search and work preparation plan - this may be considered sufficient even where the time taken was less than the hours expected.

It should also be noted that not all work search has to be conducted within usual business hours, for example online work search is not limited to business hours. As long as claimants meet their work search requirements, they are free to plan the hours they undertake this to suit their circumstances.

Claims will not be affected where an individual has notified their adviser that they are attending a verifiable job interview.

Travelling expenses may be refunded for pre-arranged interviews in connection with benefit claims, where the claimant is asked to attend more frequently than the minimum fortnightly schedule.

The Universal Credit regulations allow the adviser the flexibility to make decisions based on the claimant’s individual circumstances. The term homelessness covers a broad range of situations - including rough sleeping, living in a hostel, and bedding-down on the floors or sofas of family and friends. So a one-size-fits-all conditionality easement would be wrong. Advisers will set tailored work search and work preparation requirements, dependent on claimants’ personal circumstances. In some instances it may be appropriate to temporarily lift work search and availability requirements while a claimant secures a place to stay, or moves to new or temporary accommodation.