

Department for Work and Pensions

Work Programme Live Running Memo

To: Work Programme Providers

Cc: Account Managers
Account Executives
Senior Performance Managers
Performance Managers

From: Contracted Employment Provision Directorate

Memo Serial Number: 161

Date: 11 July 2014

Subject: New Easement for Homeless Persons on the Work Programme

Action: For information and action

Timing: Immediate

Background

An amendment has been made to the regulations to help support homeless claimants on Jobseekers Allowance in finding sustainable living accommodation which will help to remove a barrier into employment.

The Regulations allow Jobcentre Plus to treat certain homeless claimants as meeting the jobseeking conditions for periods of longer than one week with no limit on the number of occasions on which it can be applied.

A claimant will not be required to attend the Work Programme for the duration of any easement.

Summary and action

From 21/07/2014 Jobcentre Plus have the flexibility to decide that a person who says that they are homeless can be treated as not being available for work and will not need to take part in the work programme for the duration of the easement.

Regulations do not specify a duration for which an easement can be applied for a homeless claimant, nor set a limit on the number of occasions on which it can be applied.

It will be for Jobcentre Plus to decide whether a claimant's homelessness constitutes a "domestic emergency" and the length of time for which the easement is to be applied.

It is not expected that a domestic emergency due to homelessness would last for more than four weeks. Although Jobcentre Plus can extend the duration of the easement beyond four weeks if they decide that it is appropriate.

Claimants who are suffering a domestic emergency as a result of recently becoming homeless can benefit from the easement.

It is likely to be most suitable for the specific groups of homeless individuals mentioned below:

- Rough sleepers
- Those staying in direct hostels (i.e. hostels designed to include short-stay residency options specifically for the homeless)

If an easement is applied, the Jobcentre Plus must urgently advise you of this by issuing you with form WP07b.

Further information and contact details

All enquiries on the subject of this memo should be raised with your Performance Manager in the first instance; they will endeavour to provide you with an answer as soon as possible.

Regards

Work Programme Provision Enquiries Team