

Freedom of Information request 726/2014

Received 15 February 2014

Published

Information request and response

- i) i have been informed by a decision maker - in writing - that the DWP "expects" that a proportion of the Jobseekers Allowance payment is to be used towards job search activity in the same way an employed person would be expected to pay for example their travel costs to and from work. Is this true?
- ii) And if so, exactly how much of the JSA payment does the DWP "expect" a claimant to spend on jobsearch?
- iii) Also please provide me with any legislation that would back up this decision makers claim.

DWP response

- i) Although it is not specified in legislation that benefit be used towards the costs of seeking work, it is one of the conditions of receiving Jobseeker's Allowance that a claimant is actively seeking work and it is therefore inevitable that part of the allowance would be used towards meeting that condition.
- ii) The benefit rates do not reflect, nor are they made up of, specific items of household and other expenditure. The Government has not prescribed what expenses the personal allowances cover as it is for each individual or family unit to decide how to spend their benefit, dependant on their needs, preferences and responsibilities.
- iii) The main Act which governs Jobseeker's Allowance is Jobseekers Act 1995:
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1995/18/contents>

Information on the amount payable can be found at:
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1995/18/section/4>

Guidance on the amount of benefit payable can be found at:
<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/dmgch23.pdf>

I would also like to refer you to Regulations 79 and 82 in the Jobseeker's Allowance Regulations 1996. These set out in 1996 the amount that an individual would need to live on, and that figure has been uprated each year by the Uprating Order:

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/a11-4001.pdf>

Jobcentre Plus District Managers have been allocated funding which they can use to help them deliver their business objectives. This is known as the Flexible Support Fund (FSF). The FSF may be used for a wide range of activities at the discretion of Jobcentre Plus District Managers and Advisers, to support and help eligible claimants to move closer to the labour market. The FSF includes scope to support local partnership working and enable local decisions to improve employment outcomes or prospects of future employment outcomes for communities and individuals facing the most complex and intractable barriers to work.

Payments can be made from the Flexible Support Fund (FSF) to help claimants with travel expenses enter sustained employment or move themselves closer to the labour market