

Freedom of Information request 1060/2014

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Information request

i have recently heard about an upcoming scheme which i think was called the "community work programme" which would involve 6th months of community work. if possible can you either send me details of this scheme, what its about, regulations etc

or possibly confirm if they will be "similar" to the mandatory work activity scheme but longer.

DWP response

I believe you are referring to the Community Work Placements scheme. This is an employment programme which will be introduced later in the year, consisting of six months on a community work placement for 30 hours a week, alongside provider-led jobsearch.

Community work placements are designed to increase claimants' chances of getting a job. Placements must give claimants experience of work, help strengthen their CVs and enable them to compete more effectively in the job market.

A trailblazer in 2012 found that taking part in Community Work Placements was particularly suitable for claimants whose primary barrier to work was a lack of work experience or motivation, and it had a significant positive impact on jobseekers' motivation, confidence, work-related ambition, and resulted in them spending fewer days on benefit and more time in work than a control group.

There is some information which could be said to be 'held' by DWP, but is exempt from disclosure under section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (information accessible to applicant by other means), as follows.

Firstly, there are details on the operation of this scheme in the public domain, in particular in the commercial specification available under 'Tender Documents' at the following web address:

<https://online.contractsfinder.businesslink.gov.uk/Common/View%20Notice.aspx?site=1000&lang=en¬iceid=1170725&fs=true>

Secondly, the amending regulations introducing Community Work Placements as a prescribed scheme in legislation, The Jobseeker's Allowance (Schemes for Assisting Persons to Obtain Employment) (Amendment) Regulations 2013, are also in the public domain:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2013/2584/contents/made>

The Department holds further information relating to your query which is exempt from release under Section 41 of the Freedom of Information Act, relating to information provided in confidence (in this instance, as part of a tender).

The Department also holds information which is exempt under Section 43 (information relating to commercial interests) and Section 35 (formulation of government policy). As required by the Act, I have considered the balance of public interest and I consider that the public interest in maintaining these two exemptions outweighs the public interest in favour of releasing the information in question at this time.