



Department
for Work &
Pensions

Jobseeker's Allowance and Employment and Support Allowance Sanctions – decisions made to June 2013, GB

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Background

Jobseeker's Allowance

The way in which Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) can be affected if claimants do not meet the conditions for receiving it has changed.

The new regulations introduce a regime of fixed period sanctions, which replaced the existing sanction rules from **22nd October 2012**.

Under the new regime:

- **Higher level sanctions** (for example for leaving a job voluntarily) will lead to claimants losing all of their JSA for a fixed period of 13 weeks for a first failure, 26 weeks for a second failure and 156 weeks for a third and subsequent failure (within a 52 week period of their last failure).
- **Intermediate level sanctions** of four weeks for a first failure, rising to 13 weeks for a second or subsequent failures (within a 52 week period of their last failure) may be applied following a period of disallowance for not actively seeking employment or not being available for work.
- **Lower level sanctions** (for example for failing to attend an adviser interview) will lead to claimants losing all of their JSA for a fixed period of four weeks for the first failure, followed by 13 weeks for subsequent failures (within a 52 week period of their last failure)

Employment and Support Allowance

From **3rd December 2012** a revised sanctions regime for Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) claimants who are in the Work Related Activity Group (WRAG) was introduced.

Under the system prior to 3rd December 2012 claimants in the WRAG who fail to attend or participate in a work focused interview, or who fail to carry out work related activity agreed with their adviser, receive an open ended sanction. The sanction amount was 50 per cent of the work related activity component, increasing to 100 per cent of the component after four weeks. The sanction was lifted when they re-complied.

Under the new rules ESA claimants in the WRAG who fail to comply with the conditions for receiving benefit receive an open ended sanction, followed by a fixed period sanction when they re-comply. The fixed period sanction will be one week for a first failure, two weeks for a second failure and four weeks for a third and subsequent failures in a 52 week period.

Claimants who are sanctioned will lose all of their personal allowance, but their work related activity component will not be affected.

Methodology

Data Source

Data from the Decision Makers and Appeals System (DMAS) has been used to produce these official statistics and analysis. DMAS records decisions made by decision makers on referrals made by Jobcentre Plus advisors.

Data coverage and reporting month

The reporting month referred to within this report refers to the first day of the month up to and including the last day of the month, unless otherwise stated. The month relates to the month in which the sanction decision was made.

Summary statistics at Great Britain level are included within this report.

Detailed statistics are included in the associated Excel file.

For JSA sanctions, overall sanction decisions include JSA sanction decisions from April 2000 up to 21st October 2012, relating to the previous sanctions regime. These statistics are sourced directly from the DWP Tabulation Tool and users should continue to use this source for detailed JSA sanction decisions statistics prior to the 22nd October 2012.

The more detailed tables relate to the new JSA sanctions regime implemented from 22nd October 2012.

For ESA sanctions, overall sanction decisions include monthly ESA sanction decisions from October 2008 up 2nd December 2012, relating to the previous sanctions regime. These statistics replace previously published official statistics on ESA sanction decisions.

The more detailed tables relate to the new ESA sanctions regime implemented from 3rd December 2012.

Results

Key findings – GB

For Jobseeker's Allowance:

- A total of 12.22 million sanction decisions have been made between April 2000 and June 2013 - of which, 5.51 million were adverse decisions (i.e. a sanction applied).
- Under the new sanctions regime, introduced on 22nd October 2012, a total of 1.35 million sanction decisions have been made up to June 2013, of which, 0.58 million were adverse decisions.
- 53 per cent of adverse decisions under the new sanctions regime were in the 'Low' group, 38 per cent in the 'Intermediate' group, and 9 per cent in the 'High' group.
- Under the new sanctions regime, just over one third (36 per cent) of adverse decisions were made because of a failure to actively seek employment, with 30 per cent because of a failure to participate in the Work Programme (and other training schemes), and 20 per cent because of a failure to attend an advisory interview.
- A total of 223 thousand individuals had received a low level sanction, 167 thousand individuals had received an intermediate level sanction and 48 thousand individuals received a high level sanction.
- Across all sanction levels, over three-quarters of individuals receiving an adverse decision were doing so for the first time under the new sanctions regime.

For Employment and Support Allowance:

- A total of 173 thousand sanctions decisions have been made between October 2008 and June 2013, of which, 76 thousand were adverse decisions.
- Under the new sanctions regime, introduced on 3rd December 2012, over 45 thousand sanctions decisions have been made up to June 2013, of which, just over 11 thousand were adverse decisions.
- 71 per cent of adverse decisions were made because of a failure to participate in work related activity (this includes failure to participate in the Work Programme), with the remaining due to a failure to attend a mandatory interview.
- Just over 9 thousand individuals received an adverse sanction decision under the new regime, with over 85 per cent receiving their first adverse sanction.

Contact points for further information

Press enquiries should be directed to the Department for Work and Pensions press office:

Media Enquiries: 0203 267 5129

Out of hours: 0203 267 5144

Website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-work-pensions>

Follow us on Twitter: www.twitter.com/dwppressoffice

Other enquiries about these statistics should be directed to:

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DWP Information, Governance & Security Directorate - Client Statistics Division

Other National Statistics publications, and general information about the official statistics system of the UK, are available from www.statistics.gov.uk