

Freedom of Information request 2013-4322

Date received 9 September 2013
Date of response 7 October 2013

Information request

"I would like to know what % of Macclesfield claimants have lost their JSA due to them not having attended an appointment at the Job Centre at the correct time/date 1) this year 2)last year"

DWP response

In response to your question the information requested, in the last two years for which figures are available, is shown in the table below.

Please note that the proportions are derived from unpublished information which have not been quality assured to Official Statistics publication standards. They should therefore be treated with caution.

Number¹ of individuals with a Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) sanction applied² for failing to attend an advisory interview³ in Macclesfield Jobcentre and what percentage¹ this figure represents of the total number of individuals claiming JSA⁵ by year of decision⁶; 1st January 2011 to 21st October 2012

Year of decision ⁶	Number ¹ of individuals with a JSA sanction applied ²	Percentage ¹ of the total number of individuals claiming JSA ⁵
2011	220	5%
2012	230	6%

Source: DWP Information, Governance and Security Directorate

Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest ten and will include individuals who have had more than one sanction applied² for failing to attend an advisory interview³ in more than one year e.g. if an individual has a sanction applied² in 2011 and 2012 then they will appear twice. Percentages are shown to the nearest whole number.
2. **Sanctions applied:** The number of sanctions applied is the number of, Fixed Length⁶ and Entitlement Decision⁷ referrals where the decision was found against the claimant.

3. **Failing to attend an advisory interview:** Prior to April 2010, failure to attend an advisory interview attracted an entitlement decision⁷. Since then, it has attracted a fixed length sanction⁶ of between 1 and 2 weeks.
4. **Total number of individuals claiming JSA:** Individuals claiming JSA are those who have had a live claim at any point throughout the period: 1st January 2011 to 31st December 2011 for 2011 and 1st January 2012 to 21st October 2012 for 2012.
5. **Year of Decision:** The year in which the decision to apply the sanction was made. The year 2012 only includes data up to and including the 21st of October 2012, which this is the latest data available.
6. **Fixed Length sanctions:** A sanction of between 1 week and 26 weeks is imposed for refusal, without good cause, to attend an employment programme or carry out a Jobseeker's Direction. Payment of benefit continues in full pending the Adjudication Officer's decision on a sanction question.
7. **Entitlement Decisions:** These are questions on which entitlement to JSA depends. For example, if there is doubt around whether the Jobseeker's agreement (JSAg) is suitable, whether they are actively looking for work or making themselves available for work. In most cases payment of JSA will be suspended by benefit processing until the doubt is resolved.

As the specific information you have requested covers the new sanctions regime introduced on 22nd October 2012 and these statistics are intended for future publication this information is therefore exempt from disclosure under the terms of Section 22 (Information intended for future publication) of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). This exemption is qualified, and is therefore subject to a public interest test. The public interest test is where the Department considers whether the balance of the public interest falls in favour of withholding or disclosing the information requested.

Arguments in favour of disclosure: There are public interest arguments in favour of disclosure of this information at the present time. Disclosure would for example improve transparency in the operations of the Department.

Arguments against disclosure: There are public interest arguments against disclosure of this information at the present time. These arguments include that it is in the public interest to adhere to the existing publication process for official statistics, which includes time for the data to be collated and properly verified.

It is also in the public interest to ensure that the publication of official information is a properly planned and managed process, to ensure that the data are accurate once placed into the public domain. It is also in the public interest to ensure that the information is available to all members of the public at the same time, and premature publication could undermine the principle of

making the information available to all at the same time through the official publication process.

On this occasion, the balance of the public interest test falls in favour of withholding this information. As we have explained above, statistics on this issue will be published in due course.

A proposed publication date will be announced in advance via <https://www.gov.uk/> and <http://www.statsusernet.org.uk/Home/> in the "Welfare and Benefits" community.

More information on the new sanctions regime can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-work-pensions/series/jobseekers-allowance-sanctions>