

Freedom of Information request

2013-2770

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Information request

Can you please supply me with the figures and statistical information referring to sanctions imposed on claimants within Job Centre Plus offices in Sefton, I request a breakdown of all sanctions by severity of time of sanction imposed and age of claimant of sanction imposed ,plus breakdown of age and sex of claimant.

DWP response

In response to your question on the number of sanctions imposed on claimants within Job Centre Plus offices in Sefton by age and sex of claimant; the information requested, **for Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) claimants**, is shown in the table below.

Number¹ of Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) sanctions and disallowances referrals, where the decision was adverse², by Jobcentre Plus Office⁶, Age⁷ and Gender⁸ in Sefton: 1st April 2000 - 21st October 2012

Age ⁷	Job Centre Plus Office ⁶							
	Bootle		Bootle Trinity*		Southport		Southport Eastbank*	
	Gender ⁸							
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Total	2,110	7,370	200	960	1,600	5,750	-	20
16-17	20	40	10	40	-	10	-	-
18-24	1,230	3,690	150	550	720	2,520	-	-
25-29	210	1,260	10	140	200	1,000	-	-
30-34	150	740	10	80	130	640	-	-
35-39	150	650	-	60	140	460	-	-
40-44	140	430	-	30	140	390	-	-
45-49	100	280	-	10	100	300	-	-
50-54	60	180	-	20	90	230	-	-
55-59	40	90	10	20	70	170	-	-
60 and over	-	20	-	-	-	40	-	-
Unknown	-	-	-	-	-	10	-	-

Source: DWP Information Directorate: JSA Sanctions and Disallowance Decisions Statistics Database.

Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest ten. "-" denotes nil or negligible. Some additional disclosure control has been applied. Totals may not sum due to rounding method used. Figures will include claimants who have had more than one referral.
2. **Adverse decisions:** The number of adverse decisions is the number of Varied³, Fixed Length⁴ and Entitlement Decision⁵ referrals where the decision was found against the claimant.
3. **Varied Length sanctions:** A sanction of between 1 week and 26 weeks is imposed for leaving employment voluntarily without just cause, refusing employment without good cause, or losing employment through misconduct. The actual period in each case is at the discretion of the Adjudication Officer who makes the decision.
4. **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.
5. **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.
6. **Jobcentre Plus Office:** * denotes dormant office
7. **Age:** Age is calculated at the date the referral for a decision was made.
8. **Gender:** Gender of claimant as recorded on the Labour Market System (LMS).

We can confirm that the Department does hold some information on the number of Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) and Income Support for Lone Parents (ISLP) sanction referrals, where the decision was adverse, at Job Centre Plus office level. However we estimate that the cost of retrieving this information would exceed the appropriate limit of £600.

We do also hold some information on the "**severity of time of sanction imposed**" (the term sanction has been used here to mean both sanctions and disallowances). This includes the date the sanction was applied but we do not hold readily available information on the actual duration of the sanction applied.

In order to provide an answer we would need to combine data on multiple sanctions and overlapping decisions, accounting for differences in dates (e.g. when a claim ends during a sanction; when a sanction is reserved for application against a future JSA claim; when circumstances change during or

after a sanction). We therefore estimate that the cost of complying with this part of your request would exceed the appropriate limit of £600.

The appropriate limit has been specified in regulations and for central Government it is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3½ working days in determining whether the Department holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting the information. Under section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act the Department is not obliged to comply with this part of your request and we will not be processing it further.

Under Section 16 of the FOIA we are obliged to inform you of ways in which this part of your request could be narrowed to bring it within the appropriate limit. Our advice is that restricting this part of your question to the number of sanction referrals, where the decision was adverse, for ISLP claimants in Sefton Local Authority (LA) would be only information we could provide within the limit. Please note that residents in Sefton LA may not necessarily be claimants at the Jobcentre Plus offices in Sefton.