

Freedom of Information request 2014-4860

Date received 20 November 2014

Date of response 4 December 2014

Information request

We are interested in ESA benefit sanctions. The information we would like access to is supplied from October 2008 until Dec 2013 by your responses to Freedom of Information requests reference number 2014-79 and 2014-2282.

As the latest (August 2014) statistics have shown a substantial rise in ESA sanctions we would like to request the same information for the subsequent four months of ESA Sanctions Data. I have based the wording of the question on the previous FOIs.

For each month from January 2014 to March 2014 inclusive, please give the number of adverse ESA sanctions decisions against claimants in Great Britain broken down by the Summary International Classification of Diseases (i.e. ESA Total; Other; Mental and Behavioural Disorders; Diseases of the Nervous System; Diseases of the Circulatory or Respiratory System; Diseases of the Musculoskeletal system and Connective Tissue; and injury, Poisoning and certain other consequences of external causes) so that the total in each month matches the adverse decisions figures given in Table 2.1 in the DWP sanctions statistics release of 13 August 2014.

Should any part of this request be undeliverable due to cost or practical considerations, please give top priority to providing the most recent figures and differentiating between Mental and Behavioural Disorders and the ICD classifications.

DWP response

Please note that intention of the sanctions regime is to encourage people to engage with the support being offered by Jobcentres by making it clearer to claimants what they are expected to do in return for their benefits.

Information that matches your request on the number of ESA benefit sanctions from the sanction statistics publication of 13 August 2014 broken down by Summary ICD classification is shown in the table below. Please read the table footnotes carefully.

Please note that the figures supplied are derived from unpublished information and have not been quality assured to National Statistics or Official Statistics publication standard. They should therefore be treated with caution.

The number of adverse Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) sanction decisions, by ICD (disease) Summary Code, Great Britain: January 2014 - March 2014.

Month	Diseases of the Circulatory or Respiratory System	Diseases of the Musculoskeletal system and Connective Tissue	Diseases of the Nervous System	Injury, Poisoning and certain other consequences of external causes	Mental and Behavioural Disorders	Other/ Missing	Total
Jan-14	127	395	138	169	2,283	640	3,750
Feb-14	150	449	187	194	2,881	843	4,698
Mar-14	231	754	246	351	4,687	1,244	7,507

Source: DWP, ESA Sanctions

Notes:

1. Cells in this table have had statistical disclosure control applied to avoid the release of confidential data. Therefore totals may not be the sum of the individual cells.
2. Figures are to 31 March 2014, which was the latest data available at the time of request.
3. Data for the most recent months will be subject to a high degree of revision. Numbers of sanction decisions and decision outcomes can change due to reconsidered decisions and appeals.
4. These sanctions figures do not include mandatory reconsiderations.
5. ICD (disease) summary code: ICD (disease) code Causes of incapacity are based on the International Classification of Diseases, 10th Revision, published by the World Health Organisation. Medical condition is based on evidence provided at the start of the claim and so may not represent a claimant's most recent medical condition. The "Other" category includes claimants with an unknown medical condition. Please also note that where someone has more than one diagnosis or disabling condition only the predominant one is used.
6. A medical condition does not confer entitlement to Employment Support Allowance and the decision on entitlement is based on the claimant's ability to carry out the range of activities related to physical and mental function, assessed by the Work Capability Assessment.