

Freedom of Information request 2014-2692

Date received: 20 June 2014

Date of response: 18 July 2014

Information request

Request under Freedom of Information Act re: Guidance on DWP visits

1. In relation to the information on the webpage <https://www.gov.uk/dwp-visit>; please could you send us documents, guidance or memos to the Performance Measurement teams or visiting DWP officers which explain what options a claimant has when visited without warning – including whether there is an option to ask for the visit to take place on another occasion with prior notice - and what the effect of asking for the visit to be rearranged may be in relation to their existing benefits payments.
2. Please send any documents, guidance or memos which outline what the powers of entry there are when a visit is made, without advance warning, to review benefit entitlement.
3. Please provide copies in digital format to the email address below. If it is not possible to send documents by email please send them on disc to the address below. Hard copies can also be sent to the address below if that is the only format available.
4. Please deal with this request separately from any other request you may receive from this office.

DWP response

In reply to your question please note that the guidance you refer to relates to visits made by the Department's Performance Measurement (PM) team. The purpose of these visits is to collect information on the claims of a random sample of Benefit claimants in order that Departmental Statisticians can estimate the amount of incorrectness in the benefit system.

Turning to your questions in turn:

- 1. Whether there is an option to ask for the visit to take place on another occasion with prior notice -and what the effect of asking for the visit to be rearranged may be in relation to their existing benefits payments**

If the claimant is in but the time is not convenient for them the interview can be re-arranged.

At this point in the process there would be no effect on their benefits in payment.

2. Please send any documents, guidance or memos which outline what the powers of entry there are when a visit is made, without advance warning, to review benefit entitlement.

PM Officers have no right of entry to a claimant's home and the claimant does not have to invite the member of staff into their home. The interview can be arranged at DWP premises.

This guidance is provided as requested in the attached document 'PMG Apr 14 Part 07 Review Final Redacted.pdf'. Note that there are a number of redactions to the guidance text as this information is exempt under section 38(1)(b) of the Fol act as release of this information could compromise staff safety and supplies no benefit to the public if released.