

Withdrawn

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Work Programme Live Running Memo 209

To: Work Programme Providers

Cc: Senior Performance Managers
Performance Managers

From: Change Policy and Planning Division

Memo Serial Number 209

Date: 29/03/2017

Subject: Sharing of the Work Capability Assessment (WCA) and Permitted Work time limit.

Action: For Information

Timing: Immediate

Background

The purpose of this memo is to inform you of the decision made with regards to Sharing of the Work Capability Assessment (WCA) with Work Programme providers and the recent change made to the Permitted Work time limit.

Sharing of the Work Capability Assessment (WCA)

You may be aware that a pilot took place between 3 August 2015 and 31 October 2015 to share the WCA with Work Programme Providers. Following evaluation of the pilot, DWP has decided not to implement this change nationally for Work Programme.

The rationale for this decision was the difficulty in obtaining security clearance for sharing the WCA through PRaP and the limited time remaining for referrals to the Work Programme [referrals ceased on 31 March 2017].

Since September 2016 we have been sharing information from the Work Capability Assessment with Jobcentre Plus work coaches, in order for them to better tailor support.

Change to Permitted Work time limit.

In February 2016, Lord Freud announced that he wanted to improve the work incentive for claimants receiving ESA. Currently ESA WRAG claimants can work up to 16 hours and earn up to £107.50 per week under the permitted work rules, and keep their benefits for up to 52 weeks.

From 3 April 2017 the 52 week time limit for permitted work has been removed and claimants are able to do permitted work for any length of time. This change applies to claimants who are receiving ESA at the assessment phase rate and those in the work-related activity group.

Where an ESA claimant is undertaking permitted work and they are also on the Work Programme this does not affect their participation requirements on the Work Programme. You should continue to engage with the participant and provide support to help them into lasting employment.

You should signpost participants to the Jobcentre if they require further information about permitted work.

Further Information

All enquires on the subject of this memo should be raised with your Performance Manager in the first instance.

Regards

Work Programme Provision Enquiries Team