

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team

e-mail: freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Our Ref: VTR: 2743

DATE: 30 July 2014

Dear Ms Harriman,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (Fol) request received on 25 June 2014. You asked:

Please explain the procedure for DWP to contact a UC claimant who has no fixed address and no telephone number.'

In order to make a valid claim to Universal Credit (UC), the claimant (claimants in a joint claim) must provide an address in which they live. In a couple claim both members of the claim must live at the same address, if at the new claim stage a claimant (or either claimant in a joint claim) reports that they are No Fixed Abode (NFA), they will be directed to legacy benefits.

If a claimant reports that they are of NFA as a change of circumstances they will be asked for a 'safe' correspondence address, the UC claim continues as normal

A safe address is somewhere that post can be delivered without risk of interception/theft. i.e. a house that is split into two flats may share one letterbox, this could be classed as an unsafe address by the claimant. The claimant will inform UC if their address is unsafe.

The claimant can use the address of friends or family if they are unable to provide a safe address. The claimant not being able to provide a safe address would be managed by exception. This means that if such a case arose, the Department would deal with the case on an individual basis ensuring reasonable and proportionate action was taken to support the claimant.

If you have any queries about this letter please contact me quoting the reference number above.

Yours sincerely,

DWP Strategy Fol Team

Your right to complain under the Freedom of Information Act

If you are not happy with this response you may request an internal review by e-mailing freedom-of-information-request@dwpgsi.gov.uk or by writing to DWP, Central FoI Team, Caxton House, Tothill Street, SW1H 9NA. Any review request should be submitted within two months of the date of this letter.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office for a decision. Generally the Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted our own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 5AF www.ico.org.uk/Global/contact_us or telephone 0303 123 1113 or 01625 545745