

## **Claimants who need help using our services**

### **Claimants who need help in using our services**

1. This guidance aims to help staff identify and make judgements about those claimants for whom it would be more appropriate to deliver services face to face, particularly where it appears the claimant would need help in using our services.
2. This client group are those who have difficulty in coping with the demands of our processes when they need to access a service. As a result, they are unlikely to be able to use normal access channels and are likely to benefit from face to face support.
3. For further guidance on dealing with claimants who need help in using our services, see the Vulnerability Hub.

### **Identification of claimants who need help in using our services**

4. It is important to talk with claimants when considering whether they would need help in using our services. When considering whether a claimant is vulnerable it is important to talk with them. Vulnerability is not a static state associated with a particular circumstance or situation, it is determined as part of a measured assessment, which may need to be conducted in a matter of seconds.
5. When talking to the claimant assess whether they are, for example:
  - distressed
  - not understanding
  - giving monosyllabic answers
  - upset
  - frustrated.
6. Use the skills acquired from the learning and development events you should have attended. Focus on your questioning and listening techniques and avoid making assumptions about the claimant.
7. Your experience of dealing with claimants will inform your opinion but ensure this is based on behavioural evidence, which shows the claimant is unlikely to be able to use self help services. Some claimants have disabilities that may need extra personal support or adjustments to enable them to access services. Others may have less obvious conditions.
8. The following may be relevant to identifying vulnerable claimants where they have/are (not an exhaustive list):
  - mental health conditions
  - sensory impairments
  - drug/alcohol dependency
  - physical disabilities
  - learning disabilities
  - diagnosed as Terminally Ill
  - literacy Levels
  - language Skills
  - difficulty in communicating
  - just left prison
  - just left hospital

- homeless
  - recently bereaved
  - behaviour that might be a risk to the health and safety of other claimants and/or staff
  - claimants who have suffered domestic violence or threats
  - claimants who have recently been a victim of crime.
9. We also have legal responsibilities to ensure our services are accessible to people needing language support because of limited English/Welsh. See guidance on [Dealing with Welsh Speakers](#) and [Dealing With Non English Speakers](#).

### **16/ 17 Year Olds**

10. Do not automatically deem 16/17 year old claimants as needing help in using our services but be sensitive to the needs of this client group. As with other claimants, those who are considered to need help in using our services, is a matter of judgement, and all staff, irrespective of their role must be aware of the help that is available for this particular claimant group.
11. The process which has been agreed for engaging with 16-17 year old ESA claimants is as follows:
- agent gathers data over the phone
  - during call wrap up Agent advises the claimant that they have the option to see a Specialist Adviser in their local Jobcentre to discuss their personal circumstances
    - If the claimant's parents are in receipt of Working Tax Credit, this discussions would include working out whether they might be "better off" allowing their parents to continue claiming it
  - agent transfers ESA claim to BDC for processing
  - [optional] Claimant contacts local CSD to discuss personal circumstances with Specialist Adviser
  - depending on the outcome claimant may opt to withdraw ESA claim in favour of Working Tax Credit (payable to parents)
  - Learning Focused Interview (LFI) carried out by Local Authority Youth Services at or after week nine.
12. (Also see Work Focused Interviews)

### **Handling Contacts with Vulnerable Claimants**

13. We have to ask our claimants and their representatives very personal questions at times, and need to do so in a sensitive way. The type of question you ask determines how useful the answer is. The skill is to use/ask the correct type of question to obtain the information you need.
14. When giving information present it in a clear, concise way and ensure the claimant is clear about what they have been told and what to do next. Consider their reactions to be sure they understand what you are saying to them. Use language they can understand, and pitch what you say at a level that suits them without being patronising.

**Note: See the Vulnerability Hub for further guidance on the DWP approach to vulnerability.**

## **ESA50 completion for claimants who need help to use our services or claimants requiring additional support**

15. When a claimant asks for assistance in completing an ESA50, advise them to telephone the Centre for Health & Disability Assessment (CHDA) which is the Department's Assessment Provider. CHDA will only help with the completion of an ESA50 by telephone. They will not provide this service in person.
16. Claimants should be asked to call 0800 2888777 and press 1 if they wish to conduct the conversation in English, then press 2 for help with the questionnaire (ESA50).
17. This is a standard rate telephone number and the lines are open from 09:00 to 17:00 Monday to Friday. If a claimant requires help with the cost of the call they will need to ask the CHDA adviser for a call back. Welsh speaking claimants can also use this number.
18. Vulnerable claimants, especially blind and deaf claimants, should still be offered a home visit by a DWP visiting officer to help with the completion of an ESA50 in their own home.

## **Providing Extra Support**

19. For claimants who are unable to use our preferred channel and need face to face assistance, ensure that you take into account their individual needs. Generally, the claimant knows best what these are so ask them rather than assume what they might need. Offer or arrange another appropriate service as appropriate.
20. For claimants who have physical disabilities or sensory impairments, take account of their relevant health/disability issues or other individual needs.
21. See further guidance in Claimant Need Details Applet.
22. Some claimants are capable of using our preferred channels but choose not to. It is important to stress to these claimants the simplicity and advantages of using preferred channels. Explain the use of the Internet and the telephone services. If the claimant still insists that they require face to face services try to establish why this is necessary before booking an appointment with the relevant team/colleague.

## **Useful Information/ Links**

- [Access to Jobcentre Plus Services](#)
- [Blind or Visually Impaired Claimants](#)
- Hearing Facilities
- Jobcentre Plus Diversity & Equality - Reasonable Adjustments
- Claimant service – helping you to deal with claimants with different needs
- Hidden impairments
- Vulnerable Claimant Hub

## **Dealing with Welsh Speakers**

23. If it becomes apparent that the claimant's preferred language is Welsh, advise them that a Welsh Language contact number (0800 01 21 888) is

available which would allow the claimant to speak to a Welsh speaking CS Agent.

## Dealing with Non English Speakers

### *Dealing with Non English Speakers (Face to Face)*

24. If the claimant indicates that they are not comfortable with English ask the claimant their preferred language of contact.
25. If the claimant is unable to speak English attempt to find a suitable in-house Interpreter who can assist with the enquiry. If no in-house translation is available, direct the claimant to the warm phones.
26. Assist the claimant through the **IVR journey** (see Contact Centre guidance for more information) on the warm phone to connect them to the Contact Centre (CC). The Agent receiving the call at the CC arranges an Interpreter and deals with the enquiry see Contact Centre guidance on Dealing with Non English Speakers for more information.
27. If a face to face (F2F) interview is required, e.g. for a vulnerable claimant or WFI action, the **F2F First Contact Officer (F2F FCO)** or the **Claimant Support Officer, Interviews (CSO (I))** arranges an Interpreter through [the bigword](#) if the claimant is unable to bring someone to act as Interpreter.

Page/Screen	Action
1	<p>At the interview, contact Interpreter Services on 0800 321 3015:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Using the buttons on the handset, enter <b>99</b> followed by your <b>six digit Cost Centre Code</b> - 99 is DWP's access number into the system and your Cost Centre Code verifies your authorisation to access the system.</li><li>• Using the buttons on your handset, enter your <b>eight Digit Staff Number</b> – your Staff Number is the final part of the authorisation process.</li><li>• Using the buttons on your handset, enter the <b>Language Code</b> to take you to required Language code page – each language you wish to communicate with has a unique language code. If you have a desktop reference chart, this also lists the main languages. You may also listen to the menu of frequently requested languages and select the required code.</li><li>• Using the buttons on your handset, press <b>0</b> to connect to a <b>Claimant Care Representative</b> for assistance at any time, they can help with any queries or assist you in the process.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using the buttons on your handset, press <b>700</b> for a <b>Language Identify Agent</b> – after listening to your claimant, the LI Agent will put you through to the required language.</li> </ul>
2	<p>Wait on the line. When you are put through to an Interpreter, identify yourself and outline the nature of your call.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> If Interpreter services are unavailable or it is not an appropriate time for the call (for example Interpreter services do not have a Translator with the required language available) attempt to resolve the situation in consultation with the Team Leader and depending on the individual circumstances, for example if the claimant can speak enough English to understand, agree a suitable time with both the claimant and the interpreter service and arrange another interview.</p>
3	Conduct the interview by three way conversation with the claimant and Interpreter.
4	Where the claimant requires the use of an Interpreter, note the details of the Interpreter and how to contact them on the claimant's record in Labour Market System (LMS) 'Notes'. This is to assist with any future contact with the claimant.

### ***Dealing with Non-English Speakers (Call Handling)***

28. If the claimant indicates that they are not comfortable with English ask the claimant their preferred language of contact.
29. If the claimant is unable to speak English attempt to find a suitable 'in-house' interpreter to whom the call can be transferred. Put the claimant on hold whilst searching for an available member of staff with the appropriate language skills to take the call.
30. If no 'in-house' translation is available, you should use interpreting services to bring a translator on to the call.
31. See [the bigword guidance](#) for information about using the service:

Page/Screen	Action
1	<p>Explain to the claimant that they need to wait a moment whilst an interpreter is made available, and put them on hold</p> <p>Use the three way call functionality and Contact Interpreter Services on 0800 321 3015:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using the buttons on the handset, enter <b>99</b> followed</li> </ul>

	<p>by your <b>six digit Cost Centre Code</b> - 99 is DWP's access number into the system and your Cost Centre Code verifies your authorisation to access the system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using the buttons on your handset, enter your <b>eight Digit Staff Number</b> – your Staff Number is the final part of the authorisation process.</li> <li>• Using the buttons on your handset, enter the <b>Language Code</b> to take you to required Language code page – each language you wish to communicate with has a unique language code. If you have a desktop reference chart, this also lists the main languages. You may also listen to the menu of frequently requested languages and select the required code.</li> <li>• Using the buttons on your handset, press <b>0</b> to connect to a <b>Claimant Care Representative</b> for assistance at any time, they can help with any queries or assist you in the process.</li> <li>• Using the buttons on your handset, press <b>700</b> for a <b>Language Identify Agent</b> – after listening to your claimant, the LI Agent will put you through to the required language.</li> </ul>
2	Wait on the line. When you are put through to an Interpreter, identify yourself and outline the nature of your call. If an interpreter is available, click the Hold button to bring the claimant into the conversation and continue the call as normal. Speak to the claimant rather than addressing the interpreter during the rest of the call.
3	Where the claimant requires the use of an Interpreter, note the details of the Interpreter and how to contact them on the claimant's record in Labour Market System (LMS) 'Notes'. This is to assist with any future contact with the claimant
4	If Interpreter services are unavailable or it is not an appropriate time for the call (for example Interpreter services do not have a Translator with the required language available) attempt to resolve the situation in consultation with the Team Leader and depending on the individual circumstances

32. For further information on the process to follow see the Standard Operating Model.