

DWP managing customer records guide

Appendix 2.2: Retention by line of business

If any case has the following interests, they must be retained until the end of that interest. At the end of the interest the retention periods detailed below then apply.

Interests:

- **Fraud**
- **Overpayments** including: civil proceedings & Recovery from Estates
- **Debt Management** including: Compensation Recovery
- **Appeals** including: Mandatory Reconsiderations
- **Customer feedback or complaints** being dealt with by Independent Case Examiner (ICE) cases & Parliamentary Health and Service Ombudsman (PHSO) Cases only.
- **Criminal Cases Review Commission** cases
- **Child Maintenance Group**
- Cases subject to a **Performance Measurement** check

For documents stored on ECMS/DRS, the retention periods below apply.

Line of Business	Benefit Line Retention	Specific documents (if applicable)	Non-Standard Retention period	Business justification for retention period
Access to Work		Cases with payments in DISC: AtW element(s) awarded and have had a reimbursement payment from payment creation.	84 Months	Finance payment audit requirements
		Cases without payments in DISC: Customers that have had an AtW element(s) awarded but no payment – case creation Cases with a referral to AtW contracted provision case creation.	36 or 84 months	Access to Work awards are made in three-year periods. Finance payment audit requirements
		Customers that applied to Access to Work but did not have an element awarded are removed 36 months after the case was created.	36 months	Access to Work awards are made in three-year periods.
Appeals	24 months			To ensure documentation is available for audit requirements.
Attendance Allowance	24 months			To ensure documentation is available for audit requirements.

Line of Business	Benefit Line Retention	Specific documents (if applicable)	Non-Standard Retention period	Business justification for retention period
Benefit Cap	24 months			To ensure documentation is available for audit requirements.
Bereavement Benefits	24 months			To ensure documentation is available for audit requirements.
Carer's Allowance	24 months			To ensure documentation is available for audit requirements.
Child Maintenance Group	24 Months	All supporting documents	24 months for all supporting documents	To ensure documentation is available for audit requirements.
Claimant Commitments	4 weeks after live interest		4 weeks after end of claim, unless sanction, fraud, appeal, debt, or Performance	These are 'supporting' when the claim is live but are 'ephemeral' once the claim or DWP interest has ended.

Line of Business	Benefit Line Retention	Specific documents (if applicable)	Non-Standard Retention period	Business justification for retention period
			Management interest.	
Complaints and Redress Team Documents	26 months	Customer data retained by CReST.	26 months after case closure.	Retaining data for 26 months allows CReST to respond to PHSO enquiries about complaint cases.
(CReST)				
Debt Management (including CRU, arrears and enforcements)	CRU 24 months	Benefit lines must keep overpayment decision and a copy of the letter informing the claimant of the overpayment decision Debt Management (citizen debt) any relevant debt documents needed for audit purposes.	24 months after debt interest closes	To ensure documentation is available for audit requirements.
	Debt Systems and any finance or payments documents	Debt Management – DMS and CRU systems and any finance or payment documents	7 years after debt interest closes for payment related data (ledger)	Financial Audit Requirements
	24 months			

Line of Business	Benefit Line Retention	Specific documents (if applicable)	Non-Standard Retention period	Business justification for retention period
Disability Living Allowance (DLA Child & DLA Working Age Adult)				To ensure documentation is available for audit requirements.
Employment and Support Allowance	24 months			To ensure documentation is available for audit requirements.
European Social Fund (England) 2007-2013	ESFD paper records held in remote storage pertaining to the ESF 2007-2013 Programme have now been destroyed. All electronic records are being retained until 1 June 2026 in order to evidence any State Aid in accordance with Article 60 (f) of Commission Regulation 1083/2006.			
	This is covered in Action Note 107/07-13: ESF 2007 to 2013 England Programme Closure - Retention of key Documents - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) .			
European Social Fund (England) 2014-2020 Note: for ESF research & evaluation see guidance for research (link	Minimum 10 years after final payment has been made.			
	All data must be retained for a minimum of 10 years following the last project activity, expectation June 2024. Each project's data retention period is established after their final ESF claim is paid by the ESF Managing Authority.			

Line of Business	Benefit Line Retention	Specific documents (if applicable)	Non-Standard Retention period	Business justification for retention period
is external)(link is external) reports.				
European Social Fund (Wales) 2007-2013	2007-13 Programmes – Please follow this link for the confirmed document retention dates for these Programmes - EU Structural Funds 2007 to 2013: document retention periods Gov.Wales You will note that the document retention dates for both European Social Fund programmes, in Wales, have now passed. 10 years from the date of award.			
European Social Fund (Wales) 2014-2020	2014-20 Programmes – retention dates are set at the level of the operation and are dependent on when the final project expenditure is included in the annual accounts that WEFO submits to the EC. WEFO will write out individually to beneficiaries to confirm these dates once they are available. You can find more detail on this at section 5.1.4.1 of the WEFO Eligibility Rules and at question 1 of Programme Closure FAQ document (EU Structural Funds 2014 to 2020: project closure FAQs [HTML] GOV.WALES) EU Structural Funds 2014 to 2020: compliance and eligibility guidance GOV.WALES			
Finance	See Managing Finance and Procurement Records	Financial checks, payments, journals, Flexible Support Fund, New Enterprise Allowance, FF100 and Special Payments		
Fraud	See Fraud Retention Guidance			

Line of Business	Benefit Line Retention	Specific documents (if applicable)	Non-Standard Retention period	Business justification for retention period
General Matching Service (GMS)	18 months after GMS action ends	A cross department system which matches customer data for over/under payments	18 months after GMS action ends	18 months to feed into end of year reporting
Incapacity Benefit	24 months	IB55 referral files for live claims	120 months from date of decision	This is to ensure that the last two Personal Capability Assessments on form IB85 are retained
Income Support	24 months	All supporting documents	Income Support Computer System (ISCS) is used to administer both Income Support and Pension Credit cases.	System retention is 18 months (5 years archived). Clerical and ECMS supporting paper to be held for 24 months following end of DWP Interest/Case closure.
			Data on ISCS is held for 18 months after the claim closure date, last activity, or date	

Line of Business	Benefit Line Retention	Specific documents (if applicable)	Non-Standard Retention period	Business justification for retention period
			of last adjudication on the live system before being moved and placed into the archive system. Once archived data is held for 5 years.	
Independent Case Examiner (ICE) Cases	18 months	For data recorded on Respond.	18 months after ICE case closure.	Retaining electronic data for 18 months allows sufficient time for a complainant to consider the outcome of ICE examination of their complaint and exercise their right to approach the relevant Parliamentary Ombudsman
Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit (IIDB)	14 months			Retention period in place to support response to any mandatory reconsideration.

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Information provided to Support Safeguarding Adult Reviews and Domestic Homicide Reviews	6 years as involves a customer death	Initial request and any supplementary requests.	6 years	Reflects potential time period of these external reviews.
		All information provided including Legal Clearance.		
Internal Process Review Documents	6 years if involves a customer death, 14 months for cases not involving death (unless mitigating circumstances, requiring a 6-year retention period)			
Jobseekers Allowance	24 months		JSAPs stores information for 4 years HMRC (requirement) To comply with Regulation 97 of the The Income Tax (Pay As You Earn) Regulations 2003.	To ensure documentation is available for audit requirements.

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Multi Agency Public Protection Agency (Jobcentre) MAPPA J Forms			<p>Should be retained locally for the period that the restrictions apply.</p> <p>When the restrictions no longer apply the MAPPA forms should be destroyed immediately, in the same way as any other sensitive information.</p>	<p>Required to identify which offenders are MAPPA eligible and the related risk management. See MAPPA guidance for further details.</p>
National Schemes for the 1979 Pneumoconiosis Worker Compensation Act 1979 and the 2008 Mesothelioma Scheme	<p>Compensation payment made retention 8 years from the date of the last decision.</p> <p>No award for compensation standard retention period of 2</p>	<p>System records (customer details; system payments).</p> <p>In DRS the application form and supporting documents will be retained.</p>		<p>To allow DWP to make recovery of National Schemes Compensation Act from civil compensation awards.</p>

Line of Business	Benefit Line Retention	Specific documents (if applicable)	Non-Standard Retention period	Business justification for retention period
	years from the date of the last decision.			
NINO Allocation	3 years from the date of creation.	<p>NINo Allocation; successful NINo applications; the digital NINo application form and associated documents are held on the “Apply for a NINo Service(link is external).” (Link is External)</p> <p>Note: see the NINO Allocation Guide</p>	3 years from the date of creation.	3 years is required prevent Fraud or identity theft, and to prevent re-applications and to allow cross reference.
Pension Credit	24 months		<p>Income Support Computer System (ISCS) is used to administer both Income Support and Pension Credit cases.</p> <p>Data on ISCS is held for 18 months after the</p>	To ensure documentation is available for audit requirements.

Line of Business	Benefit Line Retention	Specific documents (if applicable)	Non-Standard Retention period	Business justification for retention period
			claim closure date, last activity, or date of last adjudication on the live system before being moved and placed into the archive system. Once archived data is held for 5 years.	
Personal Independence Payments (PIPCS)	24 months			To ensure documentation is available for audit requirements.
Pension Sharing on Divorce Documents	until State Pension claimed then 24 month retention period applies.		until State Pension claimed then standard retention period applies.	The calculations provide a snapshot of National Insurance which cannot be redone and include details of pension share.

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Relationship Validation Unit (RVU) Type B Cases	5 Years	All supporting documents	5 years from date of decision	These are complex cases that likely to be appealed. It would be costly or not possible for the department or claimant to collect this information again.
Social Fund	24 months			To ensure documentation is available for audit requirements.
State Pension	24 months			To ensure documentation is available for audit requirements.
State Pension Deferred Lump Sum Payments	6 years	The completed DL66 & DL67 and any evidence to support subsequent changes to this decision.	72 months (6 years) after the financial year the payment is made	HMRC, The National Archives (TNA) and National Audit Office (NAO) requirements

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Suicide and Self-harm Documents	Retain for 6 years following the date on which the incident occurred, or the declaration of intention was made.	All documents relating to suicide and self-harm.	Retain for 6 years following the date on which the incident occurred, or the declaration of intention was made.	Health and Safety Retention Document Customer Self Harm
Support for Mortgage Interest Loan (SML) Documents	14 months DRS	SML Charge Form / Loan Agreement	6 years after recovery / write-off of the SML loan	Documents should be held until the expiry of the limitation period on loan agreements.
	2 finance documents 6 years			
Universal Credit Build	24 months			To ensure documentation is available for audit requirements.
Warm Home Discount		Data from suppliers – stored electronically	18 months from date of receipt	Required for data matching in response to customer or Energy Supplier enquiries to check why eligibility was not granted in the previous scheme year. This retention 'carry

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				over' has been agreed with Energy Suppliers.
Winter Fuel Service (WFS)	24 months after the annual exercise completes (31 March)	A system identifying all Winter Fuel Payments, any offline applications should be uploaded into WFS	24 months after the annual exercise completes (31 March)	To meet NAO requirements
Working Health Programme (WHP)	5 years following the closure of the claim/PA.	WHP records	5 years	Information needed so that the Programme can effectively manage the referral and re-referral process.