Withdrawn

Department for Work and Pensions

Work Programme Live Running Memo

To: Work Programme Providers

Cc: Category Management Team - Labour Market
National Provision
Senior Performance Managers
Performance Managers

From: Change, Policy and Planning Division

Memo Serial Number: LR183

Date: 4 March 2015

Subject: Sharing of the Claimant Commitment

Action: For information

Timing: Immediate

Background

Since 14th October 2013, new jobseekers have been required to sign a Claimant Commitment.

The Claimant Commitment was introduced to make it clearer to claimants what they need to do in order to receive state support and providing clear information about the consequences of failing to meet requirements.

JobCentre Plus Work coaches help claimants set out a detailed statement of what they will do to find work using a new personal work plan. Claimants also use the plan to record what they have done and renew their Claimant Commitment on a regular basis.

Claimants have to provide evidence to prove they have met the requirements in their Claimant Commitment. Those who fail to do so without good reason, risk losing their benefits.

In September 2013 Matthew Oakley was appointed by the Minister for Employment to undertake a review and to prepare a report on the operation of the sanctions system for failures to participate in mandatory employment schemes.

His report makes a number of recommendations including improving the sanction process (the new version of the WP08 is part of the resolution) and

improving closer working with our partners, particularly Work Programme providers.

Changes have been made to DWP guidance to strengthen the message to claimants about the joint responsibility that DWP and providers have in helping them into work. DWP will, where appropriate, provide the claimant with supplementary information, for example, the importance of responding to Labour Market Decision Makers request for information, how to apply for Hardship, etc.

Action

From the 23rd March 2015, we have agreed that it would be beneficial for Work Programme Providers to potentially have sight of the Claimant Commitment at the first point of contact.

Sharing of the Claimant Commitment is voluntary but is encouraged with a view to offering claimants the best support possible to help them move into employment. If the claimant refuses to share their Claimant Commitment you should not take any further action to pursue.

Requesting to see a copy of an individual's claimant commitment will provide you with:

• A useful starting point to help you understand the level and type of activities a claimant had previously committed to undertake;

• Information that you can use for comparison purposes following your own assessment of claimant capability;

• Information on messaging around a claimant's non-compliance with work related requirements

• Any adjustments that may have been made for the claimant so you may consider these   when agreeing activities and participation whilst on the Work Programme.

Guidance will be revised for DWP staff to ensure they highlight to claimants the importance of sharing their Claimant Commitment with their provider at first contact.

If appropriate, DWP may contact you to clarify activity/s that the participants wants to add to their Claimant Commitment. The benefit of co-operating with JCP, will ensure that the participant has an update/accurate Claimant Commitment, which will enhancing their time on the programme.

If you are unable to provide clarification when JCP contact you, JCP will continue with the change based on the information given to them by the claimant.

The Work Programme Provider Guidance will be updated on 23rd March 2015.

Please ensure that all of your suppliers are made aware of this important message.

Further information contact details

All enquiries on the subject of this memo should be raised with your Performance Manager in the first instance; they will endeavour to provide you with an answer as soon as possible.