



Department
for Work &
Pensions

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[DWP Website](#)

Our Ref: FOI2021/19011

1 April 2021

Dear Owen Stevens,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (FoI) request received on 5 March. You wrote:

“On 3/2/21 the Permanent Secretary at the DWP, Peter Schofield, told that Work and Pensions Select Committee that:

"We are making further changes to make it even more visible to an agent that a claimant has additional support needs. That will now, from later this month, become a watermark in the package, in the IT, so that you can see it on the screen very, very clearly."

<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/1630/pdf/>

It appears, from a subsequent FOI response (see [https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/723856/response/1722574/attach/3/Reply 2021.09414..pdf](https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/723856/response/1722574/attach/3/Reply%202021.09414..pdf)<<https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/723856/response/1722574/attach/3/Reply%202021.09414..pdf>>), that this change only applies to PIP systems.

Please send me information on how many PIP claimants have a watermark indicating additional support needs.”

DWP Response

I can confirm that we hold information relating to your request.

At 28 February 2021, 523,800 claimants receiving Personal Independence Payment (PIP) were recorded as either having had Additional Support Requested or Confirmed on the PIP Computer System (PIPES), which generates a watermark on their PIPES record.

The watermark is a cosmetic change to increase the visibility of the additional support information already held on a claimant's record. Information on a claimant's additional support needs is first collected when a new claim to PIP is made and is reviewed at every stage of the PIP customer journey to determine if the correct additional support marker is held or required, and updated where necessary.

The watermark appears on the records of all claimants who have an additional support needs marker recorded, and not just on claims that have been made or updated since the watermark was implemented on 15 February 2021. The digital change on the PIPES to implement the watermark has not changed any of DWP's existing procedures and policies,

decision making guides for how we identify claimants who require the additional support marker or how to add the marker onto the PIPCS for individual cases.

Notes

Source: PIP Atomic Data Store (ADS)

- This is unpublished data. It should be used with caution and it may be subject to future revision.
- Data is for claimants receiving PIP only and includes normal and special rules and new claims and reassessments. There will be claimants on the PIPCS not receiving PIP, for example those who have had their claim disallowed, and they are not included here.
- Additional support information, and therefore whether the additional support watermark appears on a claimant's record, can be updated at any point during the customer journey.
- Figures are for Great Britain only.

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

Yours sincerely,

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team
Department for Work and Pensions

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@dwp.gov.uk or by writing to: DWP Central FoI Team, Caxton House, 6-12 Tothill Street, London, 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.
Website: [ICO Contact Information](#) or telephone 0303 123 1113.