

Easement of Labour Market regime interventions

First published: 10 April 2017

In some circumstances claimants may need additional support if their ability to undertake work-related requirements is disrupted for a temporary period of time due to their personal circumstances.

See Switching off work availability and work related activities for more details.

Compulsory easements

Easement	Duration	Information
Unfit for work	Work search and availability requirements must be switched off for up to the first 14 days of a period of sickness, when it is the first or second episode of sickness in a rolling 12 month period	WFI and work preparation requirements may be set at any point, if this is reasonable based on the claimant's health condition. Currently, while claimants have a valid fit note, they are not expected to take up a new job, so have no availability requirements. If the claimant reports a third episode of sickness in a rolling 12 month period or the sickness continues beyond 14 days this does not warrant an automatic lifting of work search requirements. Discretion should be used to decide whether to switch off or tailor work related requirements to reflect the claimant's health condition and capabilities.

'Treated as' Limited capability for work or Limited Capability for work and work-related activities (including terminally ill)	Until outcome of WCA.	For claimants treated as LCW work search and work availability requirements must be switched off (WFI and work preparation may still be set if reasonable based on the claimant's health condition) pending outcome of work capability assessment. For claimants treated as LCW/WRA, all work-related requirements must be switched off pending outcome of work capability assessment.
Temporary absence to receive medical treatment abroad	Up to 6 months	Switch off requirements if receiving medically approved treatment abroad or accompanying partner or child.
Bereavement of partner or child	6 months	Mandatory work related requirements are switched off for all claimants subject to them. Claimants should be exempt from conditionality for the first 3 payment periods following the loss of a partner or child. After the initial 3 months, optional support, such as re-introduction of Work Focused Interviews (WFI) may apply for a further 3 months without sanctions.
Domestic violence	3 months, extended to 6 if the claimant is the main carer of a child	Those in the Intensive Work Search and Light Touch regimes will be offered voluntary WFIs after the first 13 weeks (where they have children and are eligible for the 26 week easement).
Responsible carer	One month in any 6	Switch off requirements if there is

for a child in considerable distress	month period for a maximum of 2 years	<p>a need to provide additional support to a child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • following the death of a parent, sibling, previous responsible carer or a person living in the same household as the child (excluding lodgers) • if the child witnessed or experienced violence or abuse
Drug/alcohol dependent	Up to 6 months	Work related requirements will not be applied so long as the claimant remains in structured recovery orientated treatment for drug or alcohol dependency. A claimant may only have one such period in any rolling 12 month period, calculated from the last day of any previous drug or alcohol related switch off.
Carrying out public duty	Period covered by the circumstances	<p>Examples of public duty include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • volunteer fire fighter • lifeboat crew member • volunteer coastguard • councillor • Armed Forces reservist • attending Jury service • core participants in a public inquiry (see “Switching off work availability and work search” for more information)
Witness protection	Up to 3 months	For claimants for whom arrangements have been made under section 82 of the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005.

Discretionary easements

Easement	Duration	Information
Homeless	Normally up to one month	For recently homeless, need to determine if it's unreasonable to impose work related requirements. If so, switch off requirements temporarily so long as the claimant moves to resolve their accommodation issues
Domestic Emergency	No defined duration but normally up to one month	Covers a wide range of circumstances not defined in legislation allowing us to respond appropriately on a case by case basis.
Temporary childcare responsibilities	No defined duration but one month used as a guideline	<p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • usual carer is unavailable • paternity leave • legal order to provide care for child.

[Back to contents](#)