

Fail to attend – good reason

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Introduction

Universal Credit claimants are required to attend Initial Evidence Interviews and Commitment meetings. Claimants may also be required to attend work-focused interviews as part of their work related requirements for Universal Credit. Work-focused interviews are to discuss the claimant's progress against activities agreed on their Commitment and agree further appropriate actions. If claimants fail to attend these interviews or meetings, a sanction may be applied. Sanctions only apply to mandatory work-focused interviews (including the self-employment gateway interview). Sanctions do not apply for failure to attend the following types of interview:

- Initial Evidence Interview
- First Commitments meeting
- Habitual Residency Test interview

See Fail to Attend.

When a referral to a Decision maker may be required

Good reason cannot automatically be applied if a claimant fails to attend (FTA) a mandatory interview due to an event, which they already knew about in advance. This is because claimants are expected to notify DWP in good time if they cannot attend an interview. These cases should be referred to a Decision Maker (DM).

A claimant's past history of failures should also be taken into account when considering if good reason should be applied. This is because repeated failures, without supporting evidence, may cast doubts on the genuineness of the reason given.

It is important that where there is any doubt on whether good reason can be accepted, it should be referred to the DM. A clear explanation of why the case is not being decided locally should be included with the referral.

When good reason can be accepted

In some circumstances claimants who FTA a mandatory interview, can be treated as having good reason, without making a referral to a DM.

A claimant can have a maximum of 3 consecutive locally allowed good reason decisions. After that, any further FTA good reason decisions should be referred to a DM.

Only those reasons listed below can be accepted and only if the event occurred unexpectedly.

Good reason	Further information
Claimant was suffering a temporary period of sickness or medical emergency	The claimant has shown that the nature of their illness/sickness is temporary, which can include a physical or mental condition. Examples include where the claimant underwent a medical emergency or dental treatment which prevented them attending.
Claimant was attending a funeral of a close friend or relative on the day of the appointment	Claimant must have only been notified of the funeral on the day before the appointment (at the earliest)
Serious illness, death or emergency affecting a relative or close friend	Claimant was required to assist relative or friend in dealing with their emergency or is not in a correct emotional state to attend appointment due to the death or serious illness of the relative/friend
Death of someone for whom the claimant is caring	Note: work related requirements can be temporarily switched off (see Switching off work availability and work related activities)
Claimant was detained in police custody for 96 hours or less, then released	
Claimant was required to attend court or tribunal in any capacity	Notification to attend was only received the day before they were due to attend their appointment and claimant has provided evidence
Claimant has attended a job interview	Claimant can provide sufficient

	evidence, including full details of the interview and it was not reasonable to have attended both the interview and the appointment
Adverse weather conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it was not reasonable and/or possible for the claimant to attend the office • their usual mode of transport was adversely affected by the weather for example cancellation of trains, roads closed • no other reasonable method of travel was available
At the time of their appointment the claimant was undertaking duties in any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • crew member on a lifeboat • part-time firefighter • working for the benefit of others in an emergency, for example special constable, reservist, member of St Johns ambulance 	
Claimant was at work or travelling to work	Claimant was offered work at short notice
Claimant was temporarily looking after a child full time, because the normal carer is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ill • temporarily ill • temporarily absent from home • looking after a family member who is ill 	Alternative care could not be arranged
National or local transport industrial action	It was unreasonable for the claimant to make alternative travel arrangements to attend at the time and date specified due to the disruption.
Claimant has a recorded mobility issue and there was an unforeseen issue with transportation	Either due to a failure in means of transport or a disruption caused as a result of their mobility aid or there was an unforeseen failure of their only means of transport (such as a wheelchair/mobility vehicle/car).