

Fail to attend – good reason

Contents

[Introduction](#)

[When a referral to a Decision maker may be required](#)

[When good reason can be accepted](#)

Introduction

Universal Credit claimants are required to attend various interviews and appointments as part of their work related requirements for Universal Credit. Refer to the Universal Credit appointment list.

If claimants fail to attend these interviews or appointments without good reason, a sanction may be applied. Sanctions only apply to mandatory work-focussed interviews, for a full list of appointments and interviews which can be sanctioned refer to sanctions.

Refer to the [table of acceptable good reason](#) and 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 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.

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 decision maker. 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 fails to attend a mandatory interview, can be treated as having good reason, without making a referral to a decision maker. A claimant can have a maximum of three consecutive locally allowed good reason decisions within the life of the current claim. The next fail to attend good reason decisions must be referred to a decision maker. Once a decision maker

has made a decision following three consecutive locally allowed good reason decisions, then the clock starts again, there can be a further three locally allowed decisions.

Table of acceptable Good Reasons

Only those reasons listed in the table below can be accepted without referral 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 is temporary, which can include a physical or mental condition. This might 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 a 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 | Work related requirements can be temporarily switched off, refer to 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 |

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| | <p>the office</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 |
| <p>At the time of their appointment the claimant was undertaking duties in any of the following:</p> <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 | |
| <p>Claimant was at work or travelling to work</p> | <p>Claimant was offered work at short notice</p> |
| <p>Claimant was temporarily looking after a child full time, because the normal care is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ill • temporarily ill • temporarily absent from home • looking after a family member who is ill | <p>Alternative care could not be arranged</p> |
| <p>National or local transport industrial action</p> | <p>It was unreasonable for the claimant to make alternative travel arrangements to attend at the time and date specified due to the disruption.</p> |
| <p>Claimant has a recorded mobility issue and there was an unforeseen issue with transportation</p> | <p>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 or car.</p> |