

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team

e-mail: [freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gsi.gov.uk)

Our Ref: Fol 3145

DATE: 27 September 2016

Dear Ms Harriman,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request of 28 August 2016. You asked:

*I understand there is a DWP letter- UC183 – which asks a UC claimant for their consent to get evidence from their landlord of their housing costs, so they can determine a Housing Cost Element.*

*Could you please provide guidance / regulations to answer the following:*

- 1. Is it possible for a landlord to provide this evidence without claimant consent? For example where landlord has Trusted Provider status? Or under Data Sharing rules?*
- 2. Is the form the same under the Full Service or is it a separate system/procedure?*
- 3. What happens if the claimant does not provide consent?*

*Please respond for both Live and Full Service.*

**1.** For a claim to Universal Credit, legislation provides for the Secretary of State to require a landlord to provide information or evidence. The relevant legislation is Regulation 37(6) of The Universal Credit, Personal Independence Payment, Jobseeker's Allowance and Employment and Support Allowance (Claims and Payments) Regulations 2013:

“(6) The Secretary of State may require a landlord or a rent officer to supply information or evidence in connection with a claim for universal credit that may include in the calculation of an award an amount in respect of housing costs, and any information or evidence so requested must be supplied within one month of the request or such longer period as the Secretary of State considers reasonable.”

This legislation does not apply outside the new claim process so where a claimant has changed address, for instance, and information is required from the landlord to correctly assess the Universal Credit entitlement, the request is made with the consent of the claimant.

Evidence gathering for calculating for claims is not in the scope of the Trusted Partner Pilot. This pilot relates only to putting Alternative Payment Arrangements in place.

**2.** I can confirm that the UC 183 is not used in full service. We have attached the Social Rented and Private Sector Rent Verification Forms that are used in full service areas.

**3.** If the claimant does not provide consent where it is required, the Department will not contact their landlord to request information or evidence. The onus remains with the claimant to supply any information or evidence required to correctly assess their Universal Credit claim.

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

Yours sincerely,

DWP Strategy Fol Team  
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**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@dwpgsi.gov.uk](mailto:freedom-of-information-request@dwpgsi.gov.uk) or by writing to DWP, Central Fol Team, Caxton House, Tothill Street, 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 [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)