
RECONSIDERATIONS AND APPEALS

This is your chance to explain why you think the sanction is wrong. Explain why there was 'good cause' for what happened. You can make a phone call to do this, but it is best to write and make a **written statement**.

IF YOU DON'T CHALLENGE AN UNFAIR SANCTION, THE NEXT COULD BE LONGER!

If the decision is changed in your favour, you will get a new decision letter and be paid any benefit you lost due to the sanction.

If the decision isn't changed, you will get two copies of a decision letter telling you why not.

You can appeal to an **independent tribunal** within one calendar month of the reconsideration decision.

You must send an appeal form and a copy of your reconsideration decision to the Tribunals Service.

Contact us for more advice.

It can take a long time for your appeal to be heard. Don't let that put you off.

OVER HALF OF APPEALS ABOUT SANCTIONS ARE SUCCESSFUL AND IF YOU WIN, YOU GET YOUR BENEFIT BACK!

HOW DO I SURVIVE A SANCTION?

Ask the Jobcentre for form JSA10 to claim **Hardship Payments**.

You may be able to get emergency food from a **Foodbank**.

If your JSA stops, your **Housing Benefit** may stop too. Make a new claim.

Don't borrow money from high-interest 'pay-day' lenders and **don't** borrow from illegal lenders or loan sharks.

Our **Potteries Gold** "Guide to avoiding sanctions" will help you make a Claimant Commitment you can keep.

Our **Potteries Gold** "Guide to surviving sanctions" will help you manage if you are sanctioned.

Get more help and advice from our
CITIZENS ADVICE HELPLINE

03444 111 444



If you think you may be involved with a loan shark,
call the team in confidence on
0300 555 2222

Text 'loan shark + your message' to 60003
E-mail reportaloanshark@stoploansharks.gov.uk

Potteries Gold

Guide to...

Fighting Sanctions

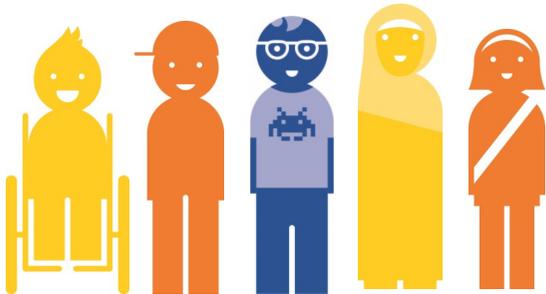


CLAIMING JOBSEEKER'S ALLOWANCE

To get JSA, you must be 'Available for Work' and 'Actively seeking Work'. To prove this, you have to make a contract called your **Claimant Commitment** with your 'Work Coach' at the Jobcentre.

You cannot be sanctioned for breaking your Claimant Commitment, but the Jobcentre may use that as evidence that you are not fully available for or actively seeking work.

SANCTIONED MEANS YOUR JSA STOPS!



ONLY ABOUT 1 IN 50 PEOPLE WHO ARE SANCTIONED ASK FOR THE DECISION TO BE LOOKED AT AGAIN.

MANY SANCTION DECISIONS ARE WRONG

MORE PEOPLE SHOULD CHALLENGE THEM.

THIS LEAFLET WILL TELL YOU WHERE TO START.

WHY HAVE I BEEN SANCTIONED?

You can be sanctioned if you fail to follow some instructions from your Work Coach. The Jobcentre can also sanction you in some other circumstances. Your Work Coach should warn you if a problem with your claim could lead to a sanction. S/he cannot sanction you, but can send a recommendation to a Decision Maker to stop your benefit.

If your Work Coach says there is a problem, ask for the full reasons **in writing**. For example, 'Failed to follow a Jobseeker's Direction' doesn't tell you what you were told to do, or why you 'failed'.

Without clear information, you cannot decide if the sanction is unfair, and it will be harder for you to avoid future sanctions.

Ask if your JSA will be suspended while the Decision Maker looks at your case so you know if you will get your next payment.

IF YOU ARE SANCTIONED AND YOUR JSA STOPS, YOU MUST STILL 'SIGN ON' AND LOOK FOR WORK AS USUAL OR YOUR CLAIM WILL END.

HOW LONG WILL THE SANCTION LAST?

The length of time you can be sanctioned for depends on the type of sanction you're given. Most **first sanctions** are for 4 weeks, perhaps for not doing something your Work Coach told you to do to find work. **High level sanctions**, which apply if you leave a job when you don't have to, get sacked for bad behaviour or turn down a job offer or a place on a 'mandatory' Work Programme course last **13 weeks, 26 weeks** or **3 years** if you have been sanctioned before.

IF YOU DON'T CHALLENGE AN UNFAIR SANCTION, THE NEXT COULD BE LONGER.

You should never be sanctioned if you have 'good cause' for your action. For example, if you missed a Jobcentre appointment because you were ill or you had a job interview.

HOW DO I APPEAL?

If the Decision Maker says you should be sanctioned, you must be sent a formal decision letter.

You have *one calendar month from the date on your decision letter* to ask for it to be looked at again. This is **mandatory reconsideration**.
