

Local Assistance Award Scheme Policy Guidance – Stopping Awards

Customers are expected to engage in their programme of support. Where customers don't, we must make every effort to re-engage before we make any recommendations to stop a current award or recommend that further awards are declined until they engage. It is essential that the process is fair and reasonable for all customers, regardless of their personal circumstances. We will have an overarching set of principles that we will all adhere to however decisions will have to be made on a case-by-case basis to allow for individual circumstances.

Where a customer does not engage a contact process will be followed to make every attempt to re-engage them.

If the contact process is unsuccessful then the case should be referred to the Welfare Reform Manager to be closed with recommendations made relating to any ongoing awards/payments. When making these recommendations, attention should be paid to any mental health issues, drug or alcohol dependency and any other vulnerability that the customer has. We must also look at prior engagement, prior awards and their current situation.

Where prior engagement has been good or there are mental health issues or a drug or alcohol dependency, consideration will be given to the likelihood of relapse or temporary periods of ill health. There must also be consideration given to the impact of any award ending.

When making recommendations to stop awards, we will use a vulnerability risk assessment and provide a copy of this alongside any recommendations when referring to the Welfare Reform Manager for a decision.

No case for closure or recommendations to suspend or stop an award will be considered without the vulnerability risk register being completed fully.

Where a customer has had referrals to other support services we will also be monitoring their engagement with those appointments. Where we have received an update relating to non engagement with support services, we will be following the same process as set out above but amending the contact to reflect non engagement with support services.