

Example cases

Case 1

A 42 year old woman accepted a caution for failing to declare that her wages had increased resulting in Housing Benefit of £1,305 being overpaid between August 2013 and January 2014.

This case was referred for investigation after the increase was identified by the Benefit Team. The customer had previously been sent a letter reminding of the importance of reporting changes as they take place as a result of a previous similar referral.

When interviewed under caution the customer admitted that she knew that she should have reported the change sooner.

The overpayment is being recovered through deductions from on-going benefit entitlement.

Case 2

A 43 year old man was jointly prosecuted with the DWP for failing to declare capital of almost £140,000 which he had received as a compensation payment and for claiming Disability Living Allowance (DLA) by claiming that he was virtually unable to walk after his condition had considerably improved. This investigation began after a referral was received from a member of the public and was initially passed to the DWP to investigate the DLA aspect with a view to working jointly overall.

This resulted in a successful surveillance operation being carried out, recording the customer playing football at a local Sports Centre leading on to the DLA claim ending.

Evidence of the undeclared capital was obtained and the customer admitted offences resulting in overpayments of £5,081 in Housing Benefit, £1,102 in Council Tax Benefit, and £7,829 in Income Support between December 2009 and December 2013 and £6,495 DLA from May 2012 to July 2013.

The customer pleaded guilty to dishonestly claiming benefit and was sentenced to a 3 year conditional discharge. He was also ordered to pay £100 towards the prosecution costs and a victim surcharge of £15.

The overpayment is being recovered through deductions from on-going benefit entitlement.

Case 3

Prosecution of a 43 year old woman for failing to declare that she was living with a partner was rejected by the Crown Prosecution Service as the evidence was not considered sufficient to prove the offences beyond all reasonable doubt.

The investigation into this claim was started by the DWP who invited joint working on this case.

Overpayments of £8,576 in Housing Benefit, £1,944 in Council Tax Benefit, £947 Income Support and £9,270 Employment and Support Allowance were calculated and the case was considered as suitable for prosecution.

The customer disputed the decision that she was living with a partner and went to appeal where the decision that had been made was upheld.

Action is currently underway to recover the overpaid Housing and Council Tax Benefit.