

Guidance for AtW Advisers about Communication Support Workers (CSWs)

[Darren Townsend-Handscomb](#) made this Freedom of Information request to [Department for Work and Pensions](#)

The request was **successful**.

From: Darren Townsend-Handscomb

21 July 2014

Dear Department for Work and Pensions,

AtW Advisers are currently including funding for Communication Support Workers (CSWs) for some Deaf people as part or all of their hours support.

AtW Guidance v24, I believe the current version, contains no information about CSWs. It does contain information about apparently similar terms “communication support” and “support workers”, but neither of these are in fact about CSWs.

I would like to request the written information and any summary of training that is made available to AtW Advisers in order to allow them to assess whether a CSW is the appropriate support for a Deaf AtW customer, including but not limited to the following areas:

1. What a CSW is.
2. What their skills and competencies are.
3. The criteria, issues or circumstances that mean a CSW is the appropriate level of communication support to award.
4. The criteria, issues or circumstances that determine the proportion of time for which a trainee or qualified interpreter will be awarded versus a CSW.

I have checked previous FoI requests and responses and this information is not provided in any of those. I have also searched the DWP website, and the information is not available there.

Could you please send me a copy of this written information, as well as any other information that AtW Advisers have about Communication Support workers.

Yours faithfully,

Darren Townsend-Handscomb

**From: DWP freedom-of-information-requests
Department for Work and Pensions**

21 July 2014

This is an automated confirmation that your request for information has been accepted by the DWP FoI mailbox.

By the next working day your request will be forwarded to the relevant information owner within the Department who will respond to you direct.

If your email is a Freedom of Information request you can normally expect a response within 20 working days.

Should you have any further queries in connection with this request do please contact us.

For further information on the Freedom of Information Act within DWP please click on the link below.

[1]<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/freedom-of-informa...>

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References

Visible links

1. <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/freedom-of-informa...>

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**From: Operations FOI Requests
Department for Work and Pensions**

5 August 2014

3261 Response.pdf

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Please see attached response to your Freedom of Information request.

DWP Freedom of Information Team.

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From: Darren Townsend-Handscomb

14 August 2014

Dear Operations FOI Requests,

Thank you for your reply.

My FoI request was for "the written information and any summary of training that is made available to AtW Advisers in order to allow them to assess whether a CSW is the appropriate support for a Deaf AtW customer, including but not limited to the following areas (listed on the original FoI request)".

The FoI request ended "Could you please send me a copy of this written information, as well as any other information that AtW Advisers have about Communication Support workers".

The response you provided appears to answer the question about what a CSW is, and what their skills are, but it does not provide the documentation that I requested.

To be clear, I am requesting any documents given or made available to AtW advisors and other relevant staff for the purpose of assessing whether a CSW is appropriate.

This documentation might be an evaluation form, part of a training manual, part of written guidance, or any other material that you hold which is for this purpose.

If you do not hold any material because AtW Advisers and other staff are not given written information on CSW's, on how to assess CSWs' appropriateness, or to determine what proportion of time an AtW customer should receive an interpreter and/or CSW, then please confirm that you do not hold any such material as would be expected under Section 1 of FOIA."

Yours sincerely,

Darren Townsend-Handscomb

**From: Operations FOI Requests
Department for Work and Pensions**

14 August 2014

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12 September 2014

IR405 WDTK Response Townsend Handscomb.pdf

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Dear Mr Townsend-Handscomb,

Please find attached the reply to your recent Freedom of Information review request reference number IR405:

Thank you

DWP Freedom of Information Team

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