

Reference: 02013666

Information Requests
information.requests@ofcom.org.uk

11 July 2025

Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information concerning Government impersonation scams targeting pensioners.

We received this request on 13 June 2025 and we have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("the FOI Act").

Your request & our response

- 1. The number of reports or complaints received regarding scam attempts impersonating DWP or any other Government Agency, specifically targeting pensioners, for each month between July 2024 to now (whatever month you have the most recent data available for)*
 - 2. A breakdown of these reports by:*
 - * Type of scam (e.g. phone call, email, text message, social media)*
 - * Nature of the impersonation (e.g. winter fuel payments, state pensions)*
 - 3. A geographic breakdown of these reports, preferably using these local identifiers: police force area, local authority, postcode district.*
 - 4. Details of any enforcement actions or interventions taken to disrupt such scams.*
 - 5. Any public communications or campaigns led by Ofcom to raise awareness of these types of scams.*
- Please provide the data in electronic format, preferably CSV or Excel, if available.*

Our response

We have some information on scams but the exact information you are after is not in an easily extractable format. We obtain scams data from a variety of sources and this may include complaints raised via our Consumer Contact Team (CCT) and in MPs letters and data from reports consumers make to the 7726 service about suspected scam text messages and phone calls - more information about this service can be found [here](#). While the data we hold via our CCT might be categorised into general categories such as scams or nuisance, it does not have a category specifically for DWP or Government agency impersonating scams. The other data we hold is not saved in categories that would enable us to search for the information you are after. Also, we do not generally collect complainant's ages or have a category for scams that were targeting pensioners, and therefore any data we hold might not indicate whether such a scam was targeting a pensioner.

To search for the specific information you are after, particularly relating to questions 1 to 3, we would need to go through each case/complaint we have from various sources to determine if it related to the type of scams you are after. We estimate that it would take over 18 hours to search for, identify and extract the information and we are not obliged to comply with a request for information if we estimate that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the “appropriate limit”. The appropriate limit is set out in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 (the “Regulations”), and is, for Ofcom, £450. That sum is intended to cover the estimated costs involved in determining whether Ofcom holds the information requested, locating, retrieving and extracting the information from any document containing it. The Regulations provide that costs are to be estimated at a rate of £25 per person per hour, which equates to 18 hours of time.

We have provided some background information and links to our website below.

Tackling scams is a priority for Ofcom and we have in recent years been undertaking steps to address this – you can find further information on this on our website here: [Tackling scam calls and texts - Ofcom](#).

For background, communications providers are subject to certain rules set out in the General Conditions of Entitlement including rules under General Condition B1.6, B1.8 and B1.9 that are aimed to prevent numbers being misused e.g. to facilitate scams. We have provided [guidance](#) to CPs on how to comply with these rules including setting out measures such as “know your customer” (KYC) checks, to take before transferring numbers. When Ofcom is made aware of or discovers any misuse of numbers, or non-compliance with the legislation, it may choose to open an investigation, in accordance with our [enforcement guidelines](#).

In February 2024, we launched an enforcement programme into the use of numbers (including misuse of numbers to facilitate scams): [Enforcement programme into phone and text scams - Ofcom](#) and we have opened a couple of investigations so far: [Ofcom launches investigation into Primo Dialler](#) and [Ofcom launches investigation into Tismi](#).

In July 2024, we also published this call for input: [Call for input: Reducing mobile messaging scams - Ofcom](#).

Ofcom has published advice for consumers to drive awareness of fraud and scams, including impersonation scams, which is available on our website - see for example [Seasonal scams to watch out for](#).

If you have any further queries, then please send them to information.requests@ofcom.org.uk – quoting the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely,

Information Requests

Request an internal review

If you are unhappy with the response you have received to your request for information, or think that your request was refused without a reason valid under the law, you may ask for an internal review. If you do, it will be subject to an independent review within Ofcom. We will either uphold the original decision, or reverse or modify it.

If you would like to ask us to carry out an internal review, you should get in touch within two months of the date of this letter. There is no statutory deadline for us to complete our internal review, and the time it takes will depend on the complexity of the request. But we will try to complete the review within 20 working days (or no more than 40 working days in exceptional cases) and keep you informed of our progress.

Please email the Information Requests team (information.requests@ofcom.org.uk) to request an internal review.

Taking it further

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our internal review, then you have the right to [complain to the Information Commissioner's Office](#).