

PLP Sanctions Project

Who are PLP?

The Public Law Project ('PLP') is an independent, national legal charity which aims to improve access to public law remedies for those whose access is restricted by poverty, discrimination or other similar barriers.

Why is PLP working on sanctioning issues?

Changes to the benefits system, particularly with the continuing roll-out of Universal Credit, have brought renewed focus on the idea of conditionality in benefits claims. For example, the introduction of 'in-work' conditionality in Universal Credit has increased the risk of claimants being sanctioned even when they are already in employment. PLP is also concerned that there are certain types of claimants who may be particularly likely to be sanctioned, or who may be especially vulnerable if their income is reduced, for example disabled people or those with caring responsibilities.

What is PLP doing?

The overarching aims of PLP's project are that:

- (i) Sanctions are imposed fairly, lawfully and in a non-discriminatory manner
- (ii) Benefit claimants have effective access to appropriate and timely remedies when things go wrong

This work is kindly funded by The Baring Foundation.

How can PLP help?

As part of our work on this issue, we are able to take referrals of individual cases where there are concerns that a person is being – or is at risk of being – unfairly or unlawfully sanctioned. We can provide advice on the range of remedies available: MRs, appeals, complaints and judicial review. In some cases we may be able to provide an advocate for a hearing. Issues on which we may be able to assist include:

- Challenging decisions to sanction, including assisting with requesting reconsiderations and representation for appeals
- Problems relating to interim payments or hardship payments
- Assisting to modify or amend claimant commitments (for example due to disability or caring responsibilities)

PLP is also able to deliver training on sanctions and related issues, including public law remedies, access to legal services, and funding for legal advice. To refer a case to us, or to contact us about any other issue relating to sanctioning, please email sanctions@publiclawproject.org.uk or call 020 7843 1260.

PLP is a small charity with limited resources. We may not be able to take on every case referred to us. We aim to respond to all referrals within 7 days, and try to respond more quickly in urgent cases.