



Department
for Work &
Pensions

Department for Work and Pensions -
Child Maintenance
Freedom of Information Act Focal Point
PO Box 61791
London
SW1P 9NT

E foi.focalpoint@childmaintenance.gsi.gov.uk
W www.dwp.gov.uk

Our Ref: VTR 3303 and VTR 3304

N J Plant

[request-168743-](#)

[xxxxxxxx@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx.xxx](#)

Date: 09 August 2013

Dear N J Plant

Thank you for your emails of 14 July. Your request has been considered under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

Your request

- 1. Since 1993 to the present day how many deaths have there been of non-resident parents during the period which the non-resident parent is considered liable to pay child maintenance to the parent with care?*
- 2. What proportion of those deaths are attributable to suicide, drug or alcohol abuse, accidental death, or other preventable cause?*
- 3. How many deaths of parents with care occur during the period which the non-resident parent is considered liable to pay child maintenance to the parent with care?*
- 4. What proportion of those deaths are attributable to suicide, drug or alcohol abuse, accidental death, or other preventable cause?*
- 5. What is the incidence of mental illness amongst non-resident parents?*
- 6. What is the incidence of mental illness amongst the parent with care?*
- 7. How do the above figures compare to the general population for age/demographic etc. If the figures show there is an increased risk of death or mental illness in either the non-resident parent or the parent with care, what steps have/are the CSA and C-MEC taking to protect the welfare of the parents and reduce the risks? What duty does the CSA and C-MEC owe to parents in these circumstances?*
- 8. Are there any circumstances where the CSA and C-MEC might regard the mental health and welfare of the non-resident parent as being more important than the financial responsibility to their children and the parent with care? For example, where*

the parent with care is earning substantially more than the non-resident parent, neither party is on benefits and the children are well provided for.

9. *Of all the cases dealt with by the CSA and C-MEC under the three systems (1993, 2000 and 2012) what is the ratio of mothers to fathers as the non-resident parent?*
10. *How many cases do you currently have involving claims against mothers as the non-resident parent for child maintenance? Has this figure changed since 1993 and, if so, how has it changed?*
11. *In cases involving claims against mothers as the non-resident parent in what proportion is the father, as the parent with care, receiving benefits?*
12. *In cases involving claims against mothers as the non-resident parent in what proportion is the mother as the non-resident parent receiving benefits?*
13. *In cases involving claims against mothers as the non-resident parent what information do you have, or can you provide on the impact that maintenance payments have on her ability to maintain contact with the children, her general standard of living and ability to pay?*
14. *In cases involving claims against mothers as the non-resident parent what information is available on whether the father's as parents with care are also working and whether they are earning more than the mother as non-resident parent?*

Our response

1 & 3. Information showing the closure reason is only available for 2003 scheme cases, from March 2003. The table below shows, the number of child support agency cases that were closed following a calculation for the reason of 'non-resident parent death' or 'parent with care death'.

Quarter Ending	Closure due to Non Resident Parent Death	Closure due to Parent with Care Death
Jun-03	-	-
Sep-03	5	-
Dec-03	5	5
Mar-04	20	5
Jun-04	20	10
Sep-04	25	10
Dec-04	25	10
Mar-05	35	15
Jun-05	40	20
Sep-05	50	25
Dec-05	75	30
Mar-06	80	35
Jun-06	115	35
Sep-06	115	35
Dec-06	115	35
Mar-07	200	55
Jun-07	165	65
Sep-07	200	65
Dec-07	170	60
Mar-08	215	75
Jun-08	295	90
Sep-08	420	150
Dec-08	400	120
Mar-09	400	150
Jun-09	440	140
Sep-09	335	110
Dec-09	310	105
Mar-10	325	110
Jun-10	235	115
Sep-10	280	100
Dec-10	290	120
Mar-11	405	150
Jun-11	290	140
Sep-11	450	130
Dec-11	315	120
Mar-12	265	130
Jun-12	265	120
Sep-12	275	130
Dec-12	460	120
Mar-13	385	150

Notes:

1. A closure is defined under the following circumstances; an application has been cancelled or withdrawn, a parent with care has been identified as claiming Good Cause or is subject to a Reduced Benefit Decision; or the application has been closed or terminated.
2. Closures as above, though completed by case worker, can be initiated by either the system or the user themselves. Where case workers initiate closures, the closure reason is selected from a pre-defined list. As this is subjective, in some instances the selected reason may not reflect the actual reason for closure.
3. Figures do not include performance of cases processed off system.
4. Figures only include cases closed after a maintenance calculation has taken place.

2 & 4 - 7 Unfortunately, we are unable to provide you with the information you have requested as it is not centrally recorded for management information purposes.

8. The 2003 and 2012 schemes are based on the amount that the non-resident parent, would have contributed to the child(ren) had both parents stayed together. As this amount reflects the ability of the non-resident parent to pay, the assumption is that there is no implication for mental health or welfare.
9. As of March 2013;
96.9% of 1993 scheme live and assessed cases involved a male non-resident parent and 3.0% involved a female non-resident parent.
A small number of cases do not have the gender of the non-resident parent recorded.

94.8% of 2003 scheme live and assessed cases involved a male non-resident parent and 5.2% involved a female non-resident parent.
Management information is not held to show the gender of the non-resident parent on off system cases, therefore these figures have been rated to account for off system performance.

Information on 2012 scheme cases is not yet published. Please see the 2012 scheme publication strategy to show when information will be published.
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/223513/2012_scheme_public_info_strategy.pdf

10. As of March 2013 there were 880,700 cases where child maintenance was due. 36,300 (4.1%) of these include a female non-resident parent.

Management information is not available showing this information back to 1993.
As of March 2003 there were 538,400 cases where child maintenance was due and 14,500 (2.7%) of these included a female non-resident parent.

- 11 & 12. Of the 36,300 cases where maintenance was due from a female non-resident parent, 8% have a male parent with care who is in receipt of benefits.
28% of these female non-resident parents are in receipt of benefits.

The benefit status of parents can only be obtained by matching CSA caseload information against benefits information supplied by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). In the available benefits information, non-resident parents on cases administered on the 2003 computer system are classified as being on benefit if they or their partner is in receipt of Income Support, JSA or Incapacity Benefit. For cases administered on the 1993 computer system the non-resident parent is classified as being on benefit if they are in receipt of Income Support, JSA or Incapacity Benefit (partner information not included).

- 13 - 15. Unfortunately, we are unable to provide you with the information you have requested as it is not centrally recorded for management information purposes.

If you have any queries about this letter please contact us quoting the reference number above.

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Act Focal Point Department for Work and Pensions – Child Maintenance

Your right to complain under the Freedom of Information Act

If you are not happy with this response you may request an internal review by e-mailing FOI.FocalPoint@childmaintenance.gsi.gov.uk or by writing to Department for Work and Pensions - Child Maintenance, Freedom of Information Act Focal Point, PO Box 61791, London, SW1P 9NT. Any review request should be submitted within two months of the date of this letter.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review you may apply to the Information Commissioner's Office for a decision. Generally, the Commissioner prefers you to try and resolve your complaint with the Department using our own complaints procedures before referring the matter to his office. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF www.ico.gov.uk.