

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES - 21 NOVEMBER 2013 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Human Services

Topic: Restricted Servicing Arrangements

Question reference number: HS 65

Senator: Siewert

Type of question: Written

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Number of pages: 2

Question:

- a) How many people were on “restricted servicing” arrangements during 2012-13? Describe the range of options provided, and the numbers of people under each option.
- b) How is the Department ensuring that those who need help are getting it, if they are under restricted service arrangements?
- c) Are there any plans to re-visit these arrangements? Is so, how will the review be conducted?

Answer:

- a) The department’s Restricted Servicing Arrangements Policy enables restrictions to be placed on persons who display inappropriate or unreasonable customer conduct in either the face-to-face service delivery or call environments.

There are eight levels of restrictions described in the Policy, ranging from a warning letter to the withdrawal of face-to-face and call services. A description of the levels of restrictions may be found at Attachment A.

The Restricted Servicing Arrangements Policy was implemented on 24 September 2012. Data is collated each month as a point in time measure and as such a total number of restricted servicing arrangements for the 2012-13 period cannot be provided.

As at 31 October 2013, there were a total of 473 persons placed on restricted servicing arrangements across the Department of Human Services.

- b) Persons on a restricted servicing arrangement are provided contact details of dedicated departmental staff to facilitate any business requirements while on a restricted servicing arrangement. Restricted arrangements are reviewed regularly.
- c) The Restricted Servicing Arrangements Policy was reviewed during 2013. The outcome of the review saw the development of a Preventing and Managing Unreasonable Customer Conduct Framework for the department, with the Restricted Servicing Arrangements Policy forming a guideline of the overarching policy. The new guideline will be implemented before 31 January 2014.

**RESTRICTED SERVICING ARRANGEMENTS POLICY:
LEVELS OF RESTRICTED SERVICING ARRANGEMENTS**

The following arrangements are available when deciding the most appropriate way of managing the provision of service to a person who has displayed inappropriate or aggressive behaviour, or demonstrates a communication barrier. If a serious incident of inappropriate or aggressive behaviour is displayed, refer to section 7.3.

Restricted Servicing Arrangement (RSA) Level	Description
1 – Warning letter (pre RSA)	Warning letter is sent to the person to advise that their behaviour is inappropriate, any future incidents of displaying inappropriate or aggressive behaviour will result in a RSA Level 3 or above.
2 – 24 hour exclusion period (pre RSA)	Person is directed to leave the location and not attend any location again for at least 24 hours. This can be used in conjunction with RSA Level 3, 4 and 7.
3 – One Main Contact RSA	The person is assigned an appropriate one main contact in a location that provides access to the department's services. The one main contact can be face-to-face and/or over the phone.
4 – Direct to attend nearby location RSA	The person is directed to attend a specific nearby location that offers access to the department's services and not any other location.
5 – Withdrawal of face-to-face services RSA (5 business days)	In the event of a serious incident and police are called, face-to-face services can be withdrawn for up to 5 business days (refer 7.3).
6 - Withdrawal of face-to-face services RSA	The person is assigned a one main contact over the phone. This arrangement can be varied to limit the number of contact times and duration of each contact, during specific times on specific days if appropriate.
7 - Withdrawal of call services RSA	The person is assigned a one main contact over the phone and/or in a face-to-face location and this arrangement can be varied to limit contact times and durations during the day if appropriate.
8 - Withdrawal of face-to-face and call services (write only) RSA	This is a last resort RSA. The person can only conduct their business via mail, e-mail, fax, Self Service or appointing a third party.