

4 December 2023

DWP staffing crisis

The following are testimonies taken from the recent dossier submitted to ministers detailing the staffing crisis that we face

While these words are our member's own, I have done some slight editing to remove any identifiable information, and I will include a link to the full submissions at the bottom of the article.

We are also hosting a wide series of members' meetings regarding the staffing crisis both locally and nationally. If you haven't seen the all-members meeting called for Wednesday, 20 December, then please speak with your local branch and find out what is going on in your area.

"I am currently a work coach and staffing levels in the job centre is at an all-time low. Staff are leaving due to workload pressure and more flexible working arrangements other departments offer and I myself am applying for elsewhere as a result of the pressure. The steer being given to work coaches at the moment is to prioritise WFMA appointments only, we simply do not have the capacity to see all claimants on our workload. As we have a heavy ESOL caseload we are being told to not book these people in at all momentarily. Whilst we have had some new staff in training this simply will not make a dent in our workload for quite some time. We are constantly pressured into offering video appointments however regardless of the channel the appointment still has to be done therefore this is not taking any pressure off work coaches it is simply creating bad habits from claimants when we eventually expect them to attend face to face interviews."

"At the jobcentre where I work the lack of staffing isn't the issue. It's the constant revolving door of people leaving matching what is being brought in. We are at the same crisis level, sometimes even worse off because of the amount of time it takes to train new starts.

Staff leave for two reasons; because they aren't happy, or they find a better offer elsewhere. At this stage DWP should be showing us that's this IS the better offer. There are no incentives to continue working so hard, the reward is absolutely not worth it when other departments offer more for less work.

Quality staff are effectively 'jumping ship' this level of work is not sustainable and all the DWP seem to do is create more work, more complicated processes and then make us feel like it isn't enough because we are having to push back lesser priorities. We feel undervalued.

The announcement of the CS recruitment ban is weighing heavily on our shoulders. The work is only going to get harder and on top of this the already severely unhappy staff are now effectively trapped.

What part of any of this are we supposed to "Be Proud" about?"

"I have worked for DWP for 40.5 years and to be honest I am totally worn out physically and mentally. My health has suffered enormously. Having to struggle with always being understaffed. Why is that because of ongoing pressure, poor pay and staff leaving to go better jobs with better pay and less stress.

So, I have resigned although the department are calling it retirement. I still have 5 years until I can claim my state pension so I will have to struggle on my DWP pension until then. I felt I had no other option.

From a worn out DWP member of staff soon to be ex member of staff."

"I am finding I am not having a morning or afternoon break, and this is now the norm where we work"

"I am a Compliance officer. The amount of work I have had put on me over the last 3 years has gone up tenfold. Nobody in senior management in CFCD has attempted to listen to my complaints and worries over my mental health. I have a medical condition, but they don't listen or care. It's all about targets it's sickening."

"I am working on Leap State Pension correction exercise.

I have told due the project coming to end at the end of the year. A lot of staff have moved away from the exercise.

I now have to work on the remaining customer cases for three days a week and work on own work for the other two days of the week.

For me to keep nearly on top of my work I now doing 9+ hours for days I can look at my existing customers.

I cannot do this much longer.”

[Read the testimonies in full.](#)