Department for Work & Pensions Procedures ▸ CES - View Benefit Info

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CES - View Benefit Info

The Common Enquiry Service (OpStrat) is a real time interface and gives 'read only' access to enquiry screens for certain benefit systems. For further information on how to use OpStrat, select the following link: OpStrat Guide

If assistance is required to understand the information held in OPSTRAT, liaise with your line manager in the first instance and then the OPSTRAT Champion.

This service is accessed via a browser on the desktop and is available for all caseworkers to use.

OpStrat can be used to confirm benefit on a number of occasions, including when there is no obvious income for the paying parent. It can also be used to confirm if a paying parent is part of a benefit household following a change of circumstances.

For more information refer to the Policy, Law and Decision Making Guidance:
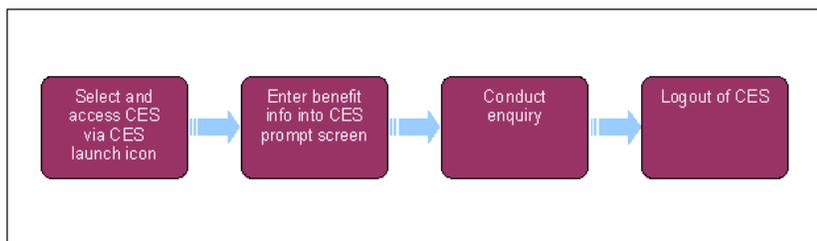
This procedure uses the terms receiving parent and paying parent.

The receiving parent is the parent who receives or who is expected to receive child maintenance, known as the parent with care (PWC) or person with care (PeWC) on the system and in legislation. The paying parent is the parent who pays or who is expected to pay child maintenance, known as the non resident parent (NRP) on the system and in legislation.

Select and Access OpStrat via CES launch icon

1. Select the Common Enquiry Service (OpStrat) launch icon:

   If the OpStrat icon is not displayed on the desktop, select the circular **Windows icon** in the bottom left corner of the screen (also known as the Start button). Select **All Programs**, then select **Legacy 6.5**. Select **OpStrat Access** from this menu to open the system.
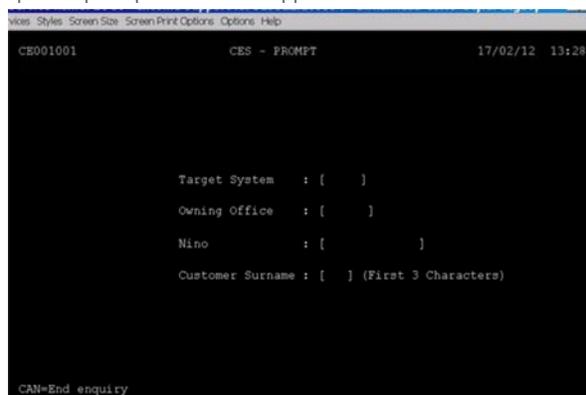
2. A window called MFS-RENG appears on the screen:

3. Select **Services** and the dialogue menu will appear:

4. Move the cursor along to next dialogue by pressing the **tab** key on the keyboard, insert **CE001** and then press **Enter**. The OpStrat prompt screen will appear.

Enter benefit info into OpStrat prompt screen

5. Enter the following in the OpStrat prompt screen:

   - Target system (select the following for details of benefit codes needed to find information via OpStrat: CES Guidance)
   - Benefit office ID (you will find this information in the Benefit Summary view. If you are unable to locate the client's office ID, generic office codes can be found in the OpStrat guide)
   - Paying parent national insurance number (NINO)
   - Paying parent surname (first 3 letters)

Conduct enquiry

6. The screens relating to the specific benefits will be displayed. For more information on the screens and details available via OpStrat, select the following: OpStrat Guide and CES Guidance.

7. The notes held within OpStrat are often abbreviated. For a list of the most commonly used abbreviations within the benefits directorate, see the JCP glossary of abbreviations.

8. Make relevant Notes of the information provided, as you will not be able to copy and paste from the screens.

Log out of OpStrat

9. Log out of OpStrat by pressing the **control** (Ctrl) and **minus** (-) keys on your keyboard, at the same time.

If you make an incorrect enquiry in OpStrat, keep a record of the referral to validate your access to the system. You must keep records of incorrect access for eighteen months.

Application Overview

DFB - Set Up

Gather Paying Parent Information