

Withdrawing from the scheme

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For recent changes to this guidance, please see the [bottom of the page](#).

Note: With effect from the 2021 round, any reference to EU legislation is to be read as referring to the version of the legislation as it exists in domestic law

If you want to withdraw from a scheme option that has a five year undertaking, you must write to your local area office immediately explaining why.

However, unless you can meet the force majeure or exceptional circumstances criteria, you will normally need to repay any payments you have already received plus interest.

You can find out more about force majeure or exceptional circumstances below.

Force majeure or exceptional circumstances

If you find you are no longer able to meet the conditions of your contract, you should write to your Rural Payments and Inspections Division area office or case officer within 15 days of being able to do so.

You must explain the reason why and supply any relevant evidence.

You may have to pay back some or all of the payments we have made to you, plus interest.

However, we would not seek recovery where you can provide evidence that the reason for the failure meets the strict conditions of force majeure or exceptional circumstances.

The criteria for this is set out in European Commission Regulation (EC) No 1306/2013 – Article 2.2 – and could be one of the following:

- the death of the beneficiary
- long-term professional incapacity of beneficiary
- a severe natural disaster gravely affecting the holding
- the accidental destruction of livestock buildings on the holding
- an epizootic or a plant disease affecting part or all of the beneficiary's livestock or crops respectively
- expropriation of all or a large part of the holding if that expropriation could not have been anticipated on the day of lodging the application

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