

Business Action on Homelessness - Ready for Work programme

1. The aim of the Ready for Work programme is to equip homeless people, or those at risk of homelessness, with the confidence and skills to re-enter the job market. The Ready for Work programme is part of the Business Action on Homelessness campaign for people who have experienced homelessness and those at risk of future homelessness. The programme operates in partnership with local businesses, hostels and other agencies delivering pre-employment training, work placements and post work placement support.
2. The Ready for Work programme consists of four elements which normally take place over a five week period. Please note that the Ready for Work programme is not a five week course but a series of part-time activities which includes a two week employment-related course. The four elements are:
 - [Introduction and Registration](#);
 - [Pre-placement training](#);
 - [Work placement](#); and
 - [Post-work placement support](#).

Element 1 – Introduction and Registration

3. The jobseeker attends a half-day course which introduces them to the overall programme and registers them on the programme. The registration day may be treated as part-time study and as such form [ES567SJP](#) should be completed and retained in the Labour Market Unit (LMU) or sent to the Labour Market Decision Maker (LMDM) if appropriate.

Element 2 – Pre-placement training

4. This element consists of two days of pre-employment training, with sessions on self-esteem, motivational skills, CV preparation and workplace etiquette. The pre-placement training element of the programme may be treated as part-time study. However, the registration and pre-placement training elements of the programme should not be undertaken in the same week (a period of seven consecutive days). Form [ES567SJP](#) should be completed and retained in the Labour Market Unit (LMU) or sent to the Labour Market Decision Maker (LMDM) if appropriate.

Element 3 – Work placement

5. Jobseekers who are participating in an employment-related course can be treated as available and actively seeking employment for a maximum of two weeks in any 12 month period.
6. A week in this case is a period of seven consecutive days starting on the first day of the course. Attendance on the course must be agreed with a work coach before a jobseeker starts the course.
7. An employment-related course is a course which will help a jobseeker acquire or enhance the skills needed for:

- Employment;
 - Seeking employment;
 - A particular occupation, for example, a deep-sea diving course or a large goods vehicle driving course;
 - A trial period before employment begins.
8. For a course to be accepted as employment-related it is not necessary for it to be the type of work that is recorded on the Jobseeker's Agreement or Claimant Commitment but it must improve their chances of getting a job.
9. If the jobseeker is participating in an employment-related course:

Step	Action
1	Ask the jobseeker to complete form JSA460 with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The details of the course. • Dates of attendance. • The name of the course.
2	Check whether there has been an earlier occasion where they have been treated as available whilst attending an employment-related course.
3	If not, record the details on Labour Market System (LMS) 'Client Conversations' screen and form ES675.

10. The jobseeker can be excused attendance if they are participating as a full-time student in an employment-related course on the day they are expected to attend:

Step	Action
1	On form ES673JP : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tick box 'E'. • Enter the period of attendance on the course.
2	Attach the form to the Labour Market Unit (LMU) to show attendance has been excused.
3	Pass details to the benefit centre to input Dialogue JA091: Maintain Claim Details :
4	Payment of Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) will be made automatically without the need to confirm attendance.
5	Tell the jobseeker to attend on their next usual attendance day to avoid their claim being terminated.

11. Refer any doubt to the Labour Market Decision Maker (LMDM).

Element 4 – Post-work placement support

12. This element consists of an action day where the jobseeker meets their Job Coach (business volunteer) and discusses next steps into work. The post-work placement support element of the programme may be treated as part-time study. Form [ES567SJP](#) should be completed and retained in the Labour Market Unit (LMU) or sent to the Labour Market Decision Maker (LMDM) if appropriate. The Job Coach is partnered with the jobseeker for a period of six months where they may meet for an hour each week or fortnight. Each meeting with the Job Coach may be treated as part-time study with form ES567SJP completed for each attendance.
13. Jobseekers are also invited to attend their local Ready for Work club as frequently as they require to meet with business volunteers and their local Ready for Work manager to get further job search support. These sessions typically take place once a week for two hours.

Homelessness – support in the labour market

Instructions queries and help

The 'Email page owner' and 'Page information' links at the bottom of each page of guidance must only be used to report broken hypertext links.

Purpose of this guidance

This guide informs work coaches of some of the problems homeless people, and those at risk of becoming homeless, encounter and provides information on the support available through Jobcentre Plus to help homeless claimants move into work.

Background

A homeless person might be affected by difficult life circumstances, for example, relationship breakdown, financial difficulties, violence or abuse within their home environment. People with drug and/or alcohol issues, experience of the criminal justice system or mental health problems are more vulnerable to homelessness. For further information, see: [Mental Health issues and/or learning disabilities](#).

Whatever the reason they will have been compelled to leave their home.

Some might have friends and family to turn to in the short-term; others may wish to hide their circumstances and might not be prepared to seek help locally.

Social stereotypes still apply to the homeless, leading to intentional or unintentional discrimination and isolation. It is important that a homeless person is seen as, and treated as, an individual.

For statistical data on homelessness please see the Department for Communities and Local Government's [homelessness and rough sleeping statistics](#).

Legal definition of homelessness in England and Wales

A person will be classed as being legally homeless if they:

- have no home in the UK or anywhere else in the world;
- have no home where they can live together with their immediate family;
- can only stay where they are on a very temporary basis;
- do not have permission to live where they are;
- have been locked out of their home and are not allowed back;
- cannot live at home because of violence or abuse or threats of violence or abuse which are likely to be carried out against them or someone else in their household;
- it is not reasonable for them to stay in their home for any reason, for example, their home is in very poor condition;
- cannot afford to stay where they are;
- live in a vehicle or boat and have nowhere to put it.

Legal definition of homelessness in Scotland

A person will be classed as being legally homeless if they:

- have no home in the UK or anywhere else in the world;

have no home where they can live together with their immediate family;
have no rights to stay in the place where they are living;
the place they are living is unsuitable or unsafe.

Local Authority assistance

Legally, local authorities in England and Wales are only required to house people who are in priority need, for example, pregnant women, families with children, 16 and 17 year olds and those who are vulnerable due to old age, mental or physical disability. For further information see: [Mental Health issues and/or learning disabilities](#).

Single people and childless couples have a right to receive advice and assistance from the local authority but are expected, thereafter, to help themselves. Local authorities have no duty to provide housing to this group.

In Scotland, priority need was abolished by the Scottish Government. All local authorities across Scotland now have to provide 'settled accommodation' to anyone who is unintentionally homeless.

Types of homeless living

Jobcentre staff are likely to encounter claimants disadvantaged by different types of homelessness. Likely examples would be:
living in temporary accommodation arranged by a local authority, for example, bed and breakfast accommodation;
hostel residents, including those in direct access/emergency hostels or longer term accommodation;
sleeping rough;
sleeping on friends' sofas (sofa surfing) and/or floors;
living in squats.

Homeless people are likely to move between different types of homeless living over time and this can result in an erratic lifestyle where they have no consistency or routine.

Role of Work coaches

The role of a work coach is to provide advice and help related to jobs, training and the receipt of benefits, and to help the jobseeker break the cycle of 'no job, no home: no home, no job'.

It will be advantageous for work coaches to familiarise themselves with details of their local authority housing team and the process for signposting claimants to them for assistance.

For working age claimants, Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) focus is on supporting individuals whose lack of accommodation is a barrier to employment or training. Whilst homeless people may have some common problems, each person must be treated as an individual case. The difficulties which the individual faces will vary depending on their housing circumstances and any other personal problems they may have, for example, drug and alcohol misuse, experience of the criminal justice system, or mental health issues. For further information, see: [Mental Health issues and/or learning disabilities](#).

When a claimant with one or more of these barriers to work is identified by a work coach, they must be referred to appropriate provision.

The [District Provision Tool](#) should assist in identifying appropriate provision that focuses on the needs of ex-offenders/offenders, homeless and drug/alcohol misusers in your district. [Get Britain Working Measures](#) provide support to help claimants prepare for and find work.

A work coach is not equipped to counsel homeless people or to take on the role of a social worker. However, having an insight into some of the problems that homeless people face might assist with building a rapport, showing understanding/empathy and result in the claimant's self-disclosure or the identification of an individual's circumstances and barriers to work.

Because their circumstances are compounded by other problems, homeless people, and those at risk of becoming homeless, are instantly at a disadvantage in the labour market. Volunteering is a critical step individuals can undertake to move towards finding sustainable employment. It helps improve self-belief and confidence in addition to developing new skills. See the [Ready for Work programme](#) for further information about their voluntary course

Rough sleepers may find it difficult to look clean and presentable. This can discourage potential employers and may also deter jobseekers from applying for jobs.

Homeless people may also be suffering from one or more of the following:

cold;

hunger;

depression;

poor diet;

ill health;

loneliness;

frustration;

embarrassment at their predicament;

a feeling of isolation;

stress;

lack of sleep.

The lack of security, privacy and a place to go are likely to have a serious effect on self esteem, morale and motivation.

Addresses for temporary bed and breakfast accommodation may be well known to work coaches and may help in identifying a homeless person. Hostel addresses can be checked through the [Homeless Link](#) database.

Once their homeless status has been identified, any advice offered by a work coach to a claimant will depend on what the individual considers to be a barrier to work and the specific factors affecting their job search. The [Homeless Claimant Checklist](#) should be completed

It is worth remembering that a homeless person might not consider they are homeless unless they are actually roofless.

Claimant declares they are homeless

The claimant should volunteer the information that they are a homeless person but we know that some may be reluctant to do this. Failure to disclose increases a claimant's disadvantages and can lead to sanctions being inappropriately applied; therefore it is important to encourage disclosure. The work coach may be able to prompt disclosure by asking questions about their current circumstances, for example, presenting a list of disadvantages and asking if any apply, or specifically asking about their accommodation status, especially if they are living in communal accommodation (see [If you suspect Human Trafficking](#))

Where claimants are known to be homeless on release from prison it is important that work coaches work closely with colleagues providing support within prisons and with the Probation Service. See [Employment and Benefit Advisers in Prison](#) guidance for additional information.

Once homelessness has been identified, the work coach must ascertain the impact this is likely to have on the claimant obtaining and retaining employment or training.

The work coach will also need to consider any other barriers to work the claimant may have, for example, mental health problems, alcohol and drug issues, and/or a history of offending, etc. See the [Vulnerability instructions](#) for further information. Also see: [Mental Health issues and/or learning disabilities](#). If you suspect that the claimant may be a victim of human trafficking please refer to the following [If you suspect Human Trafficking](#) advice.

On the Labour Market System (LMS) the person without accommodation (PWA) marker **must** be set for any claimants identified as homeless. An address or lack of an address is not classed as personal sensitive information and therefore consent is not required. See [How to set the LMS PWA marker](#) within this guidance.

Although consent is not required prior to setting the PWA marker, it will be required prior to recording barriers considered to be sensitive personal information, see [LMS Data Protection Compliance Guide](#) for further information. Where consent is given, consider [setting the disadvantaged marker](#) where appropriate. This will ensure the claimant is identified in relation to appropriate support. The Performance Team Leader Manual - [Chapter 06 LMS Markers and Hotspots](#) contains more information on the use of markers and hotspots.

For claimants who are also dependent on drugs and/or alcohol consider the voluntary referral process. This provides an opportunity for an individual to voluntarily attend a discussion with an appropriate drug or alcohol treatment provider and investigate the treatment options available. Further information can be found in the [Voluntary referral to Treatment Providers](#) guidance.

Encourage the claimant to refer themselves to specialist help available through external organisations. Support such as housing advice, debt advice and counselling may be available within hostels and day

centres. This type of advice/support could be an appropriate alternative to standard Jobcentre Plus provision. See [Sources of help and information](#).

Assess the implications of the individual's circumstances and decide with the claimant whether they feel able to cope with employment or training.

Claimants attend specialist or treatment provision on a purely voluntary basis. As such it is not appropriate to mandate attendance via a Jobseeker's Direction.

It must be made clear that all claimants must comply with the requirements of the benefit they claim. However an easement of conditionality can be applied to newly homeless Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) claimants for whom homelessness can be considered a domestic emergency and a barrier to employment.

Securing and maintaining employment may help in resolving the problem of homelessness, possibly in conjunction with specialist help. Where claimants are too far removed from the labour market and would be unable to cope with employment or training consider discussing claiming other benefits which might be more appropriate to their circumstances.

Once the barrier to work has been assessed consider referral to appropriate provision including [Get Britain Working](#) measures.

The JSA Claimant Commitment

A Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) claimant must satisfy the conditions for entitlement to JSA by being available for and actively seeking employment, as well as taking the steps detailed in their Claimant Commitment.

The work coach will need to establish how the need to find accommodation is affecting the claimant in relation to their job search or employment and training goals.

When drafting the Claimant Commitment, consider the implications of the claimant having no accommodation and the steps that the claimant needs to take to find accommodation.

The precise barriers to employment faced by homeless people will vary depending on:

- previous employment history;
- skills and educational achievements;
- issues such as drug/alcohol misuse;
- any [convictions](#) or [employment restrictions](#);
- the reasons for homelessness;
- their particular homeless state.

The Claimant Commitment must take into account any support/encouragement the claimant might need. This could be help to challenge themselves to overcome perceived barriers as well as help to tackle the actual barriers affecting their move towards or search for employment.

For some homeless people the only problem will be the lack of a stable home and a job. Others may need additional help with:
basic welfare, benefits and housing advice;

training needs analysis;
coaching in job search skills, self presentation and interview techniques.
Sleeping rough may limit the steps a jobseeker can take because:
employers might be alerted to their homelessness through the lack of a contact address;
they will be unable to make speculative applications or be recruited by employers keeping lists of past applicants;
they are unable to fill in application forms other than on the employer's premises and may not be able to receive telephone calls or messages.
People living in short-term accommodation and hostels may find it difficult to overcome prejudices of certain addresses as some employers could discriminate against applicants from those addresses.
Consideration must be given to all these factors when agreeing what steps are reasonable for a claimant with no living accommodation to take in any week.
For further information on completing a Claimant Commitment see [JSA Claimant Commitment guidance](#).

JSA conditionality easements for recently homeless claimants

Work coaches can treat some homeless Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) claimants as meeting job-seeking conditions for a short period, dependent on the claimant taking steps to find accommodation.
Allowing these homeless claimants time to focus on finding sustainable living accommodation is an appropriate and reasonable step towards the stability that will better enable them to find work in the future.
The easement is likely to be most suitable for rough sleepers or those staying in direct access/emergency hostels, but work coaches have the discretion to decide whether it should also be applied to other recently homeless claimants. See the [JSA>>Labour Market Conditions Guide>>Treated as Available/Actively>>Seeking Employment Domestic Emergencies - homeless claimants](#) for further details.

Other benefit claimants

Homelessness applies to people of all ages; not all homeless people will be of working age or capable of work.
People who claim other benefits and particularly those not on working-age benefits, for example, pension and/or disability benefits may not be used to attending the Jobcentre.
A homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless, individual is likely to require additional time and support. Standard benefit processes readily accommodated by other claimants may be daunting to them and may have prevented engagement in the past.
It will be for individual districts to decide how they wish to support and direct or signpost these individuals to available local provision.
Where districts choose to record the claimant's details, the process and implications must be explained to them and consent must be obtained to allow the creation of a Labour Market System (LMS) record and to record personal, sensitive information. See [Disclosure of sensitive](#)

[information by a claimant in the office](#) and [Non- benefit claimants and those without an LMS client record](#)

Recording sensitive information on LMS

The following information gives a general guide to how Jobcentres record sensitive information on the Labour Market System (LMS). Further information can be found in the [LMS Data Protection Compliance Guide](#).

Disclosure of sensitive information by a claimant in the office

Benefit claimants

The claimant may ask what will happen to the information if they give consent to information being recorded. Explain that:

Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) is the data controller for purposes of the Data Protection Act (DPA) 1988 and we need consent to hold information of a personal and sensitive nature on LMS;

LMS is used by Jobcentres to hold details about people using our services as well as details about jobs, training and other available opportunities; information of a sensitive nature will only be used for the purposes of a claim to benefit or to support efforts to find work;

DWP would like to hold this information to help make sure we provide the best possible service by taking into account a claimant's particular circumstances;

only specific staff within DWP have access to a claimant's personal information;

sensitive information of a general nature, for example, the number of people who may have a health problem that affects their day-to-day activities, may be shared with other government departments to help inform the development of services and in such circumstances, the information shared will be anonymous figures only and will not refer to a claimant personally;

by completing form [DPA1](#), a claimant is providing consent for DWP to hold personal information of a sensitive nature and to use it in the ways described above;

refusal to give consent will not affect any entitlement to benefit but may mean work coaches need to repeat questions already answered previously.

Non- benefit claimants and those without an LMS client record

Under the DPA, non-benefit claimants must be made aware of their rights before an LMS claimant record can be created to store their personal details. This could be to submit them to vacancies and create interviews where required. Where they agree, verbal consent must be obtained.

However, for other types of sensitive information, for example health problems, a criminal record, drug/alcohol dependency or disabilities, form [DPA1](#) must be completed.

The same will apply to older people and those claiming benefits which would not routinely be dealt with in Jobcentres, for example, pension and/or disability benefits.

Non-benefit claimant agrees

Where the non-benefit claimant agrees to their information being recorded, they must complete form [DPA1](#).

Non-benefit claimant disagrees

If a non-benefit claimant chooses not to consent to DWP holding sensitive personal information:

accept the decision;

ensure that sensitive information is not recorded or where consent is withdrawn that it is removed from LMS records.

Any submissions to provision associated with the individual's barriers to work would need to be made clerically and clerical records kept supporting this.

Sensitive information already held on LMS

Where sensitive information is being held on LMS and form [DPA1](#) has not been previously completed, then it must be completed retrospectively to comply with the Data Protection Act.

If a claimant refuses to provide retrospective consent all sensitive information must be removed from LMS immediately.

Disclosure of sensitive information by claimant not in the office

Benefit claimant

If a claimant discloses sensitive information over the telephone we may obtain interim verbal confirmation. However, the claimant must complete a [DPA1](#) when they next attend the office.

Non-benefit claimant

If a non-benefit recipient contacts DWP by phone, you must seek verbal consent before entering any details onto LMS.

Take the usual action and inform the non-benefit claimant that an LMS record is being created and that a [DPA 2: Storing your personal information](#) will be issued when they next attend a Jobcentre.

If the non-benefit claimant agrees, record details on LMS (including any information volunteered about health problems or disabilities).

LMS conversations must be noted that a DPA2 must be issued when they next attend a Jobcentre.

DWP cannot refuse to help non-benefit claimants who, after being told why we want to record their details on our database do not agree to us holding their information. Therefore, any submissions to vacancies must be made clerically.

Third party disclosure

Any disclosure of personal sensitive information must have prior consent from the individual concerned. In the case of disadvantaged groups,

Jobcentre staff may need to consider obtaining consent for the purposes of case conferencing.

A standard text is provided in the [Model Consent Form](#).

Further information on third party disclosure can be found on Information Exploitation and Security Directorate intranet site under [Disclosure Matching Sharing>>Disclosure](#).

How to set the LMS PWA marker

The person without accommodation (PWA) marker is available on the Labour Market System (LMS) to record a claimant who is homeless. The work coach can set the PWA marker with or without the claimant's permission (this is not considered sensitive personal information – claimant consent is not required).

NB: There is also a 'no fixed abode' (NFA) marker on Jobseeker's Allowance Payment System (JSAPS) which relates to the benefit claim and **must not** be set or changed by Work Coaches. These systems record a person's accommodation status for different reasons and it must not be assumed that one must mirror the other.

If the work coach is satisfied that the claimant is homeless, then the PWA marker **must** be set.

The PWA marker will appear in the sub-form as a check box accessed via the 'Address/Tel No' hotspot on the 'Client Details' window. The default setting is 'No'.

The marker can be set at the Initial Work Search Interview (IWSI) and at any other intervention. It can also be set when the 'Client Details' window is in the [Amend] mode.

When the 'PWA' marker is set to 'Yes' it can be viewed by clicking on the green 'DIS GP' or the 'Address/Tel No' hotspots. You can also view from the drop down list 'Disadvantaged Group' within the 'Other Function' tab.

Further information can be found in [LMS User Guide Chapter H Part 1 - Claimant Record Functions, including Hotspots and Claims Not Pursued \(CNP\) – Person Without Accommodation \(PWA\)](#).

An example of the LMS 'View Client Details' is below:

The screenshot shows the 'View Client Details' window for client ADF No. 315962. The window title is 'View Client Details - A ADF No. 315962'. The menu bar includes 'File', 'Edit', 'Hotspots', 'Function', 'Other Function', 'Initiatives', and 'Help'. The toolbar contains buttons for 'New', 'Amnd', 'IntHist', 'Actns', 'Conv', 'Case', 'Sub', 'Hist', 'Keep', 'Spec', 'ActPln', 'JSAg', 'NoDir', 'NoDec', 'Save', and 'Close'. The main form area is divided into several sections:

- Personal Details:** NINo/RefNo: AB789456A, Title: Mr, Forename: ALAS, Surname: ADF, Tel No: [empty], DOB: 30/11/1965, Age: 44, YP: No, Sex: Male, ExIB: No, PWD: No, Joint Claim: No.
- Address/Tel No Section:** Postcode: [empty], Alt Address: No, Hide, Address: [empty], Tel No: [empty], Oth No: [empty], PWA: Yes, CRM: No.
- Hotspots:** 'DIS GP' (green) and 'Address/Tel No' (red) are visible next to the Tel No field.
- Other Function Tab:** 'Int' and 'Prds' are visible in the dropdown menu.
- Buttons:** 'JP Exit' and 'ADF' are at the bottom left.

When the PWA marker is set the address field will be blank or contain the claimant's Jobcentre address. LMS will allow a correspondence address to be recorded where the claimant provides one. A PWA marker **must not** be amended without first establishing the claimant's accommodation situation. It must never be assumed that a PWA marker on LMS must be amended if the JSAPS NFA marker is not set.

Management information

Accurately recording the person without accommodation (PWA) marker and keeping it up to date for claimants is an important process so that we can measure the impact of our services on the homeless.

Both Labour Market System (LMS)/MIS and Business Information System (BIS)/ BOXI provide solutions for collecting management information. In particular BIS/BOXI offers a bespoke reporting style which enables a license holder to create a more flexible reporting picture. This can be a valuable tool for not only planning strategies to tackle homelessness at a local level but also for assessing the impacts of carrying out those strategies.

National management information is available as a snapshot count of the PWA marker via BIS/BOXI and is available to holders of an appropriate license. Holders of licenses are likely to be group/district performance teams who may also have the expertise to create tailored local reports from LMS information.

Work Programme referral

For the purposes of Work Programme referral homeless Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) claimants are a disadvantaged group and have voluntary access from the thirteenth week of their JSA claim. It is crucial that the PWA marker on Labour Market System (LMS) is set prior to any referral to Work Programme so that the Work Programme provider is aware of the claimant's situation and is able to consider a level of support appropriate to their circumstances. Homeless JSA claimants leaving prison will be mandated to the Work Programme at day one or if they make a claim to JSA after leaving prison will be mandated to the Work Programme within 13 weeks of their release date. See [Employment and Benefit Adviser in Prison](#) guidance for further information. Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) claimants fall within their own specific groups, see [ESA Work Programme Referral Guidance](#) for further information.

Where accommodation is an immediate issue to a claimant, the work coach's discretionary deferral may be appropriate. See [Work Programme deferral guidance](#) for more information.

There are no formal arrangements in place for a 'warm hand-off' to Work Programme due to restrictions on the transfer of personal sensitive information and complexities of random allocation. However given the circumstances around homelessness, and subject to obtaining consent to disclose personal sensitive information, districts may wish to develop arrangements which will support claimants during the transition to the Work Programme.

Good practice

It is considered good practice to caseload homeless claimants where district flexibilities allow. This will provide continuity and assist the building of rapport and trust between work coach and claimant. For more information see:

[Caseloading Strategy](#);

[Caseload Management Masterclass](#); and

[Caseloads and Case Conferences](#).

Familiarise yourself with activity for homelessness within your district, for example, [Get Britain Working measures](#) and the [District Provision Tool](#)

Consider talking to your partnership managers about any connections they might have, or be able to make, with local charities and/or employers prepared to give a homeless person a chance, for example a [Work Trial](#). See [Partnership Products](#) for more information on partnership working.


Some groups/districts have had success in establishing additional initiatives; consider investigating the potential for adopting similar good practices with your partnership managers.

There are a number of ways that Work Coaches can practically support homeless claimants. By listening, understanding, and thinking about what being homeless – or at risk of becoming homeless – actually means, you can offer the right, tailored support to help people turn their lives around. For example:

You can signpost claimants to local organisations that can help them find accommodation. You know what is available in your local area so all you need to do is make the connection.

If a claimant is recently homeless, and their homelessness may be considered a domestic emergency and is a barrier to finding work, consider whether or not the conditionality easement should be applied. Work Coaches have the flexibility to ease work-related requirements for a temporary period while homeless claimants focus on finding accommodation. More details on this easement can be found on the Conditionality Hub and Labour Market Conditions guidance.

If the claimant is homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless, discuss with them the flexibilities available when work-related requirements are set. That includes discussing how their homelessness, and the need to find accommodation, impacts on their ability to take the reasonable steps for them to find work, as well as arrangements to keep in touch, respond to correspondence and adhere to their Claimant Commitment. Remember that being homeless, or worrying about becoming homeless, can be a real barrier to returning to work. Find out more about supporting homeless people in the Vulnerability instructions.

Many voluntary and community sector organisations work closely with JCP in the best interests of homeless claimants. Find out if the claimant has a support worker and link up with them – together you can provide greater support, and potentially prevent claimants being incorrectly or unfairly sanctioned. Find out more about Working Together, and some of the really good practices that are going on around the country by reading this [Working Together Toolkit](#) .

Many Voluntary and Community Sector organisations, including the YMCA, are making use of a [consent form \(sample\)](#) that is signed by the claimant and gives permission for the Work Coach and support worker to discuss some aspects of their claim. With this consent you can speak to the support worker about the claimant's housing position, or perhaps why they failed to attend an interview.

Staff learning and development

Where relationships have been established with third parties supporting homelessness, for example, charities or local initiatives, it may be possible to arrange awareness sessions for work coaches.

If staff wish to learn more on homelessness, publications are available on the internet, for example, [The Pavement](#) and [Homeless Link](#).

Case conferencing

Where strong working relationships have been established and district flexibility allows, it may be possible to introduce joint working on a claimant by claimant basis.

This is commonly referred to as case conferencing and would involve the claimant, the work coach and third party key worker undertaking a three-way discussion to address some of the claimant's issues and look at education, employment and training. Any agreements made within the discussion that did not impact on benefit conditionality, for example, appointments with a key worker assisting to locate and secure accommodation, could then be used to amend the Claimant Commitment.

Case conferencing can only be undertaken on a voluntary basis and the claimant must consent to the sharing of information between Jobcentre staff and a third party key worker and vice versa. See [Third Party Disclosure](#).

Outreach

Some claimants may be particularly vulnerable and appreciate discussions taking place within familiar surroundings, for example, victims of violence and/or abuse, young people and those with health/mental health issues. For further information, see: [Mental Health issues and/or learning disabilities](#).

Meetings taking place in familiar surroundings will help to put a person at ease and hostels and day centres may also have a person available as an appropriate adult or interpreter if needed.

Where districts have outreach resources this approach should be considered for homeless people.

Sources of help and information

The level and type of help and support required will vary from claimant to claimant. Some suggested sources of information are listed below.

Internal links

Information is available on the intranet:

[Work Coach Hub](#)
[Partnership Products](#)
[Vulnerability instructions](#)

External links

Social workers and other professional staff from statutory and voluntary agencies can provide counselling, support and advice for homeless people.

[YMCA England](#)

[YMCA Scotland](#)

[Shelter - England](#)

[CRISIS](#)

[Business Action on Homelessness](#)

[Homeless UK Database of hostel addresses](#)

[No Second Night Out](#)

[Homeless Action Scotland](#)

[Scottish Homelessness Employability Network \(SHEN\)](#)

[Cymorth Cymru](#)

Internet publications

[The Pavement](#)

[Homeless Link](#)

