

Initial Action

1. Where a District Manager or the District Partnership Manager identifies a local foodbank they wish to work with, they should put the necessary arrangements in place by using the Jobcentre Plus Foodbank Signposting Service (FSS) model. The Foodbank Signposting Service Checklist details the activities which should be carried out prior to the introduction of the FSS
2. It is recommended that each Jobcentre has either a single point of contact or a named officer to ensure effective communication with the local foodbank. Although Jobcentre Plus worked with Trussell Trust Foodbank Service to develop this process, the generic design of the FSS allows the District Manager discretion to expand the signposting service to other foodbanks or local organisations offering help to our claimants
3. The District Partnership Team is responsible for keeping the list of local support organisations up to date as part of the District Provision Tool (DPT) process. This should include details of the local foodbanks where a FSS arrangement is in place.

When to issue a Foodbank Signposting Slip

4. Where a FSS arrangement is in place with a local foodbank and the claimant wishes to access the organisation's services the Jobcentre should, where appropriate, issue the nationally produced signposting slip (English version / Welsh version).
5. Any decision to award goods or services lies with the external organisation, **not** Jobcentre Plus, and this must be made clear to the claimant
6. Some foodbanks may have specific parameters for using their service. Arrangements should be made locally to take these into account. For example, some foodbanks will only award a limited number of food parcels over a period of time. If the foodbank contacts Jobcentre Plus to confirm that a claimant has exceeded this limit, their LMS Conversations record (where an LMS record exists) should be noted: "Contact Foodbank before signposting Plus".

Completion of a signposting slip

7. Jobcentre staff must access the claimant's LMS conversations record (if they have one) to check if it is noted "Contact Foodbank before signposting". If this applies, the foodbank must be contacted before a signposting slip is issued
8. If a signposting slip cannot be issued because of specific instructions from the foodbank and the claimant questions this, they should be directed to the foodbank for an explanation
9. If a signposting slip can be issued the Jobcentre must complete the nationally produced signposting slip (English version / Welsh version). No other signposting slips or Foodbank Vouchers should be used:
 - Insert Jobcentre name and address (an address stamp is preferred)

- Ask the claimant the number of adults and children who require food and enter these on the signposting slip
- Using information from the DPT and the claimant's address, confirm the most appropriate foodbank location to signpost the claimant to. Complete the address, opening times and contact details including website address (if available)
- Advise the claimant that:
 - They should take the signposting slip to the foodbank within three days from the date of issue.
 - Any decision to award goods or services lies with the foodbank or other external organisation, not Jobcentre Plus.

10. There is no Jobcentre Plus requirement to record the issue of signposting slips. However, if the foodbank has specifically asked that Jobcentre Plus authenticate the issue of a signposting slip, the Foodbank Sign Posting Slip Record can be used for this purpose. Note that this record should only be used to authenticate the issue of signposting slips at the request of the foodbank, it is not to be used for any other purpose, including to count/monitor the number of signposting slips issued

11. All available Jobcentre Plus support (e.g. benefits due or eligibility for a STBA) must be explored and exhausted **before** considering signposting to other organisations. A signposting slip is not appropriate when assistance/support is available from Jobcentre Plus

12. If a claimant may have benefit due or could apply for a STBA but insists on being issued with a signposting slip, direct them to the foodbank for further information

13. The signposting slip must not be referred to as a Foodbank Voucher. Jobcentres should not hold stock or issue any foodbank vouchers provided by any foodbanks. The decision to award a food parcel is ultimately made by the foodbank and not Jobcentre Plus.