



Cardiff Foodbank

e-referral Training for agencies

Updated March 2024



Introduction

Thank you for adopting “e-referral” as a way to refer your clients to Cardiff Foodbank for emergency food assistance. Without the help provided by agencies like yours, Cardiff Foodbank would be unable to help people in need in our local community.

We believe that e-referral will help more of your clients receive the help they need, at the time they need it most; and will make referral easier for your staff.

What is e-referral?

If you are an existing referral agency, you may have used printed red vouchers, which your staff filled in and gave to a client to take to the foodbank. E-referral is a way to refer a client without the need for a pre-printed red voucher. It uses a bespoke data system shared by all foodbanks in the Trussell Trust network, and can work in two ways:

1. Printed e-referral vouchers

The client’s details are captured into a computer (or other connected device) and a personalised voucher is printed for them to take to the foodbank.

2. “Code-only” referrals

The client is not given a voucher, but just a voucher code to take to the foodbank.

However, it must be noted that not all foodbank centres can accept “code only” referrals, and this may restrict where a “code only” client can visit.

Cardiff Foodbank **can** currently accept “code only” referrals at all of its distribution centres; if this changes you will be notified as soon as possible.

Why use e-referral?

There are multiple benefits to be gained from using e-referral, such as:

- Your staff will not need to carry red vouchers, nor need to re-order them.
- Your staff will be able to see the client’s history of foodbank referrals. They will be able to see if the client has not used previous vouchers, which might mean they need help to visit the foodbank. They will also see if the client has been getting vouchers from other agencies (though they won’t see the agency name) in case you need to take that into account.
- Staff will be able to see the foodbank centres nearest to the client’s postcode and their opening times. These will be printed with the personalised voucher, or given verbally for “code only” referrals. This should help clients get to the foodbank centre most accessible to them.
- Clients can be given a “code only” referral over the phone if they are supported remotely, or after a worker has returned from a visit (always conditional upon local foodbank centres being able to accept “code only” referrals).
- You will be able to see which of your staff are making referrals.
- The client details you enter into the system will be immediately accessible to the foodbank when the client visits. This will improve our ability to help your clients, and will reduce the errors that arise when transcribing entries from hand-written vouchers.

Your responsibility

Your principal responsibility remains to make sound judgements about your clients' need for emergency food. We rely upon your judgement, and trust you either because the situations of your clients are well known to you, or because your staff are skilled in assessing the needs of members of the public and determining how best they may be helped.

We ask you to be alert to potential abuse, particularly where a client appears to be getting vouchers from multiple sources, or multiple vouchers in a short period (though there can be circumstances where this is justifiable).

When using the e-referral system, your staff will have ready access to our phone number and email, and we welcome them contacting us if they have any uncertainties.

Signing up for e-referral

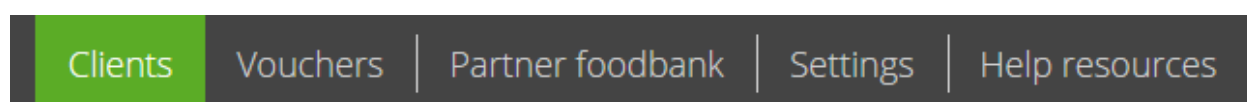
Responding to the invitation

E-referral is not automatically available to all referral agencies, but only to those invited to use it. The invitation will come to you as an email with a link labelled "Accept invitation". By clicking on the link, you indicate that you wish to use e-referral instead of red vouchers. You will be asked to agree to a Data Protection Statement, and given the opportunity to set your password, which you will need to retain along with your login identity.

Accessing the data system

The foodbank client data system is accessed on-line via <https://data.foodbank.org.uk>. On arrival in the system, you will be asked to enter your username and password.

Once you are in the data system, you will see a menu bar with five main options:



To prepare for use of the system, you will first need to visit **Settings** and carry out two tasks:

1. Check your **Agency details** are correct.
If your details change in the future, please edit them here. The foodbank will then always have your latest contact details. (In the same way, the latest contact details for the foodbank will always be available to you via the **Partner foodbank** screen).
2. Click **Users** to give staff access to e-referral:

Your Agency Team

You will be registered on the system under an agency profile and your account will be linked with other users in your agency. There are two types of users:

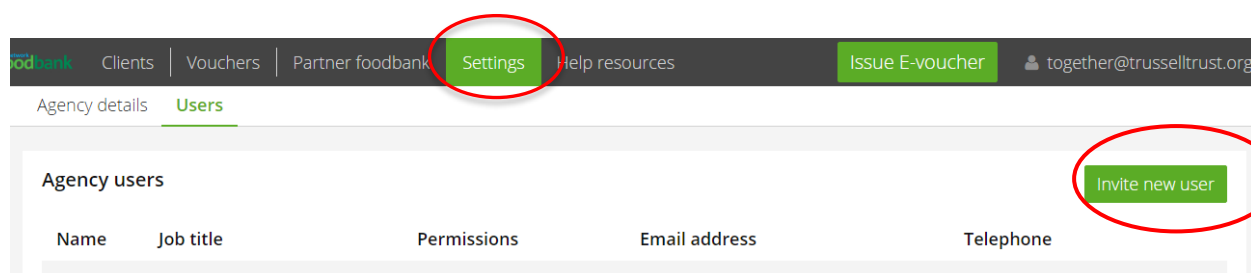
- Agency Managers – Can issue vouchers, manage users and update agency details
- Agency Users – Can only issue vouchers

You can have as many Agency Managers or Agency Users as needed registered under your agency. If you are an agency manager, you can check and update these details in the Settings tab.

Please make sure you keep your details and user accounts up to date and make sure you delete any users who have left your agency to protect data on the system.

Adding Users

You will need to add into the system the details of staff that you want to have access to e-referral. To do so, click on the **Invite new user** button.



You will be asked for the following details of the new user: their name, job title, a unique email address, phone number (optional), whether they are a “user” or “manager” and whether they have signed a data protection statement. Managers have the ability to add, edit and remove users, and amend the “agency details”, as well as all the other functions available to all Users.

If your agency has several teams, we recommend putting the team name in brackets after the job title. This helps with management of the user accounts. You may wish to consider having someone with Manager access for each of the teams, with responsibility for keeping team account details up to date.

Once you have entered a user’s details, click the **Send invitation** button. The user will then receive an email similar to the one that invited you to e-referral.

E-referral to other local foodbanks

Your agency may have a footprint that touches on other foodbanks. We suggest that you let them know that you will be starting to use e-referral, and check that they are happy to receive clients with printed e-referral vouchers (the system will automatically show if their foodbank centres are able to receive “code only” clients).

Stopping e-referral

If at any point it looks like e-referral isn’t working for you, please let us know. We can turn off your access to it.

To remove access for one of your staff, just go to **Settings/Users**, find their name, click **Edit details**, and click **Delete** at the bottom of the screen.

Additional items

Reporting problems

Please contact Cardiff Foodbank if you are unsure about when and how to make e-referrals. We are always very happy to discuss this with you.

Please also contact us if you find a technical problem in the system, which we will report for you, or you can use the green question mark at the bottom of the screen to contact the IT team directly.

Further Training

Clicking on the **Help resources** tab will take you to a suite of training options broken down into individual tasks. This can be used after an individual user's account has been created, either as a main training source or as quick reference when using the system.

Data security

Like all foodbanks in the Trussell Trust network, Cardiff Foodbank takes data security seriously. Cardiff Foodbank is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office, and expects all its data system users to sign up to standards that protect client personal data. All personnel are also required to sign a confidentiality agreement.

It is important that your agency adopts equivalent standards and rules of behaviour and confidentiality.

Client data in the system is fully encrypted, both when stored and when being communicated across the internet.

In order to prevent abuse of the system, you will see the dates of all the foodbank vouchers issued to your clients, not just those issued by you. This visibility of client voucher history means that you can be confident that a client is not "doing the rounds" to get multiple vouchers. You will also see if other people from your client's postcode have been getting vouchers, since different members of the same household will sometimes try to get vouchers separately.

To make clients aware of this, printed vouchers contain the following statement:

"To help prevent misuse, the date and location of client's foodbank visits may be visible to other foodbanks and some referral agencies".

Making referrals

To issue an e-voucher:

Click on the green **Issue e-voucher** button in the top right-hand corner

Step 1 of 6: search for client

Search for client records across Trussell Trust Network

Enter at least a surname and full postcode or select as having no fixed address.

First name	<input type="text" value="Bob"/>
Surname	<input type="text" value="Brown"/>
Address	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Postcode <input type="text" value="CF24 2XX"/>
	<input type="radio"/> No fixed address
	Clear <input type="button" value="Search"/>

1. If the client record is found, click the **Issue voucher** button next to their name. Or click on the hyperlink "Expand details", to see details of vouchers already issued to the client.
2. If the client record is not found, click **Create new client record**

Results found for "Bob Brown" - "CF24 2XX"

If you cannot identify the correct client please [create new client record](#).

Name	Postcode	Last voucher issued	Last voucher fulfilled	Vouchers issued in last 6 months	
Bob Brown	CF24 2XX	21/08/2023	15/08/2023	2	Expand details

TOP TIP! – make sure you search using the person's full name and postcode with the correct spelling. If you only search part of the name or spell it differently, you will be able to see a past record but not click on it. If the name is spelled incorrectly on the initial record, use that spelling, and then correct it in Step 2.

Step 2 of 6 - Check and enter the details of the person being referred

If the client already has a record on the system, you will now see the Fair Processing Notice – please read this to your client and then select the option that says, "The person being referred has been offered this fair processing notice and/or full privacy statement". If the client is not with you and you are not able to read it to them, please select the option that says, "Person referred is not present". You can then click Continue to next step.

You can now check and amend it here if needed, by clicking **Update client details**.

If the record is new, you can now enter their details. Please take care when entering these details, as spelling mistakes can cause problems further down the line.

Once you have entered and checked the client details, click **Continue**. You will then see the Fair Processing Notice and can proceed as above.

Step 3 of 6 – Referral information

You can now enter details about the circumstances of the referral. Information recorded in this step includes:

- **Referral agency information** - please make sure your contact details are correct in case the foodbank needs to contact you.
- **Ethnicity**– Read out the options, ask the person which one best describes their ethnicity and then select that option. You need explicit consent to collect this information and so if the person is not present, please select “Not asked”. If the person has given their ethnicity in the past, you won’t see the past answer and won’t need to enter it again, but you can re-enter it if needed.
- **Number of people the voucher is for** – This pre-populates with information from Step 2, but you can edit this now if there is a temporary guest in the house who also needs food.
- **Client contact details** – These details will only be used to help the food bank process the voucher. Please ensure that you get their consent to collect this before entering them. **Notes regarding parcel requirements** – a space to give the foodbank more information about what the person needs. Please make sure you only enter dietary information into the **Dietary requirements** box as this is classed as special category data and you must have express permission to collect it. All other notes can go into the **Additional parcel notes** box. Please note that these notes will appear on the printed e-voucher.

Once you have entered and checked the referral information, click **Continue**.

Step 4 of 6 – Reason for referral

The information collected in this step helps us to understand more about why people need to come to the food bank. We can use this to work with other agencies to prevent people needing a food bank, and campaign to the Government for more help for people in difficult situations.

- **Source of income in the household** – you can select one option here.
- **Reasons for referral** – you can select up to four reasons from any of the different categories.

If you are not able to ask, the individual declines to answer or there are no applicable options, you can select one of the "No answer" options.

- **Reason for needing more than 3 vouchers in 6 months** - this will only appear if it’s applicable to the person and helps the food bank to support them with their longer-term reasons for referral. You can select one option here.
- Best practice is to contact the foodbank before issuing more vouchers. However, if you are confident that the client needs a further voucher, you can record the reason here. Cardiff Foodbank will add a note to a client’s forename (eg ‘Contact Foodbank before issuing’) to alert you to clients who **must not** receive further vouchers without contact with relevant Foodbank staff.
- We may wish to get in touch to discuss the clients’ continuing needs, and will sometimes need to put a limit on the number of vouchers a client can have.

Once you have entered and checked the reasons for referral, click **Continue**.

Step 5 of 6 – Foodbank centres

In this step, you can enter the delivery and collection information and then check the person's contact details again. If you update these here, they automatically update in Step 3 (once the voucher is issued/saved) and vice versa.

You can then search by postcode and find the foodbank centre that is closest to the client. The list will automatically filter depending on whether you chose collection or delivery* and will automatically search using the postcode in the client record, but you can change this if required using the search box at the top. Don't forget to enter any collection/delivery notes in the box at the bottom.

1. Select either **"Yes, the parcel can be collected"** or **"No, the parcel will need to be delivered"**.
***There is no delivery service for Cardiff residents so please always select "Yes, the parcel can be collected" when issuing vouchers within Cardiff.**
2. Check the client contact details and edit if needed.
3. To select a centre, check the box on the left-hand side.
4. You can enter collection or delivery notes by scrolling down to the bottom and entering them in the box.
5. Click **Confirm selection and issue e-voucher**

Step 6 of 6 – Confirm and print

In this section, the voucher code is generated, and you can view and print the voucher if required. Clicking the **View and print** button will download a PDF, which can be printed or emailed to the client.

Step 6 of 6: confirmation & print

✓ Voucher was successfully created. ✕

You have successfully issued one voucher to **Rory Motion** with a unique voucher code of **E 46601-00006**

The client can now choose to go to any foodbank centre convenient to them

Print voucher

When making a "code-only" referral, there are three things you must always tell the client:

- their voucher code (they must record this accurately and take it to the foodbank centre – ideally text it to them)
- the foodbank centre(s) that may be easiest for them to visit
- remind them to take suitable ID

If the client visits a foodbank centre that is not registered for "code only" referrals, the foodbank centre will have no way of checking the voucher code. The client is then likely to be refused. Currently all Cardiff Foodbank Centres are able to receive code only referrals.

Please ensure the client understands that the Foodbank Centre named on their voucher is just a recommendation: they may use their voucher at any of the Centres.

Clients with unfulfilled vouchers

Sometimes a client will not use a voucher, and it remains “unfulfilled” and will eventually show as “Not collected”. As a result, they may well have been issued more than three vouchers, but not used all of them. There are several possible reasons for this:

- embarrassment: the client is reluctant to visit the foodbank
- unable to travel: the client was ill or lacked necessary transport
- problem relieved: the voucher was not needed, as alternative help became available
- “timed out”: the client delayed, and assumed the voucher had become invalid
- “insurance”: the client is holding a voucher against a future time of need
- lost voucher
- stockpiling multiple vouchers

It is worth asking the client about unfulfilled vouchers. If the client’s explanation seems reasonable, your staff should feel comfortable issuing an extra voucher.

However, a new voucher should not be issued if the client has had other vouchers in the last couple of days. The food provided by the foodbank should last three days at least. A client should not need a second voucher within three days, other than in exceptional circumstances (for example, if a bank-holiday weekend meant that the client would not get essential foodbank help for an extended period).

Monitoring client use

The data system offers you several ways to monitor activity.

Voucher search

You can use “voucher search” to look up details of a particular referral.

You could just enter the client name and click **Search**. However, there are more useful options available if you click **Show more search options**.

Voucher search

Search for vouchers

Please input full voucher code even if it begins with zero.
Vouchers issued after 2nd August 2022 will require 6 digits in the second part of the voucher code.

Client first name

Client last name

Client address

☒ Postcode ☐ No fixed address

Voucher code

E

[Show fewer search options](#)

[Clear](#)

For example, you could search for all referrals for a named client, or referrals related to a particular post code; or you could see all referrals made (vouchers “issued”) in a given period.

The search results will show, for each matching record, the voucher code, client name, issuer name, date of issue and status (“fulfilled” or “unfulfilled”).

Vouchers issued by STAGING agency

Filter by status All 

Voucher code	Client name	ID	Issuer name	Issued to client	Status	
E 46601-00006	Rory Motion		tim partridge	03/11/16	Unfulfilled	Edit
N 46601-00008	Rory Motion		tim partridge	03/11/16	Unfulfilled	Edit

Click the **Edit** button if you want to check or amend the “Voucher information”.

Alternatively, click on the client’s name if you want to check or amend the “Client details”, such as address.




E-voucher list

The “E-voucher list” screen also gives you access to the “Voucher search” facility.

More importantly, it lists the e-referral vouchers that your agency staff have issued.

Vouchers issued by STAGING agency

Filter by status All 

Voucher code	Client name	ID	Issuer name	Issued to client	Status	
N 46601-00008	Rory Motion		tim partridge	03/11/16	Unfulfilled	Edit
N 46601-00007	Maplin Blend		tim partridge	17/10/16	Unfulfilled	Edit
N 46601-00006	Maplin Blend		tim partridge	17/10/16	Unfulfilled	Edit
E 46601-00006	Rory Motion		tim partridge	03/11/16	Unfulfilled	Edit
N 46601-00005	bob brown		-	24/08/16	Fulfilled 24/08/2016	

This will help you to monitor activity, showing when vouchers are issued and by which staff members. It will also show when vouchers are being used (“fulfilled”).

If it helps, you can filter this list just to see “fulfilled” or “unfulfilled” vouchers.

Additional Information and Support for Completing an E-Referral.

Introduction – collecting ethnic group information

Many foodbanks have expressed a desire to understand more about who they are helping, and how this compares to the population of their area.

We know that food insecurity is more prevalent amongst people from black and minority ethnic backgrounds than amongst people who would describe their ethnicity as white (for more information, please read the report by Runnymede Trust – [Link available on website](#)). In addition, we know that poverty rates are experienced differently by people from different minority ethnic backgrounds.

Collecting ethnic group information will enable foodbanks and the Trussell Trust to have a richer picture of who is coming to a foodbank for support, demonstrate how this compares to the population of the local area, and provide evidence to influence local and national policy and help foodbanks to tailor provision to suit local communities.

What access will foodbanks, referral agencies and the Trussell Trust have to people's ethnic group information?

Once a voucher has been issued, there is no way for foodbanks, referral agencies or the Trussell Trust to see the ethnicity of an individual. Working with the system developers, the Trussell Trust has developed a process that ensures ethnicity information is not visible in a client record. Once a voucher is fulfilled, the ethnicity data is stored in a separate encrypted data-table.

The data will be available to foodbanks in aggregated reports, with the first report available from October 2023, in line with the release of mid-year stats. Reports which display ethnicity data are anonymised so that it cannot be used to identify an individual.

The report will show total vouchers fulfilled for each ethnic group ethnicity by foodbank centre and referral agency each month. The data will have a minimum aggregation level of five, which means if there are fewer than five people in a certain ethnic group, the data will not be shown so individuals cannot be identified. After this, ethnicity reports will be updated once a month.

What ethnic groups are available to select on the e-voucher?

We have ensured that the data that we collect on ethnicity is comparable with data from the Census and is suitable to be used across the United Kingdom. There might be situations where somebody does not feel their ethnicity is represented on the voucher or may not feel comfortable answering the question, or occasions where the referrer may not be in a position to ask the question. In these scenarios, either 'prefer not to say' or 'not asked' should be selected.

White	White
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	Mixed/multiple ethnic groups
Asian	Indian Pakistani Bangladeshi Chinese Any other Asian background
Black	African Caribbean Any other Black background
Other ethnic group	Irish Traveller Arab Any other ethnic group
No answer	Prefer not to say Not asked

Guide to collecting ethnic group information

Before the question is asked, it is important to make clear that the information will only be used for reporting purposes and their ethnic group will not be linked to them as an individual. An individual should never be pressured into providing this information, and it should be made clear they can choose for their ethnic group not to be recorded by selecting 'prefer not to say'.

Key principles to keep in mind:

- The reason for collecting the information should be made clear
- It should be made clear that the data will be anonymised and will not be sold on
- It should be made clear that the question is optional
- It should be asked in a nice tone

Referrers may wish to read aloud the help copy which will appear with the question: *the ethnicity entered here is not visible to the foodbank or the Trussell Trust after the voucher has been issued, and individuals are not identified in any reports. Collecting this data enables the foodbank to look at trends and create reports on the ethnicity of people referred to them in relation to the local area.*

We would recommend that the question is asked in this way:

“Based on the following categories, how would you describe your ethnicity?”

Then read the top-level categories, including prefer not to say:

- White
- Mixed or multiple ethnic groups
- Asian
- Black
- Other ethnic group
- Prefer not to say

Depending upon the response, read through the subcategories. For example:

Q: “Based on the following categories, how would you describe your ethnicity?” [read top level categories and ‘Prefer not to say’]

A: Black

Q: Okay, and from the following categories: ‘African’, ‘Caribbean’, ‘Any other Black background’?

If the person does not feel that their ethnicity is captured in the categories, then the referrer should select ‘Any other ethnic group’ under ‘Other ethnic group’ rather than the referrer choosing on their behalf.

It is very important that all top-level categories and ‘Prefer not to say’ are read out to the person, even if they have pre-emptively given an answer. This is to make sure that they are aware of the full range of categories and that there is a ‘prefer not to say’ option.

What if someone no longer wants to provide their ethnic group information?

A person’s ethnic group information will only be collected once, so if they need another voucher, the display will say ‘In the past, the individual provided their ethnic group, therefore we are not asking for this information’. If the person is no longer comfortable with this information being recorded, the referrer will also have the option to permanently remove any association with their ethnic group information from the system.

Once it has been removed, the next time a voucher is issued, the ethnic group section will say ‘This person has opted not to give their ethnic group information. However, if they have changed their mind, you can add ethnic group information.’

What should I do if someone complains about collecting ethnic group information?

The decision to provide ethnicity data is entirely optional. Collecting ethnic group information will enable foodbanks and the Trussell Trust to have a richer picture of who is coming to a foodbank for support, demonstrate how this compares to the population of the local area, and provide evidence to influence local and national policy and help foodbanks to tailor provision to suit local communities. This information may also be used to help foodbanks better meet the needs of particular ethnic groups in local communities. For example, it can help a foodbank to identify if a particular group is either over or underrepresented at the foodbank compared to the local population, or demonstrate the need for providing more culturally appropriate food parcels.

Working with the system developers, the Trussell Trust has developed a process that ensures ethnicity information is not visible in a client record. Once a voucher is fulfilled, the ethnicity data is stored in a separate encrypted data-table. Reports which display ethnicity data are anonymised so that it cannot be used to identify an individual.

If someone chooses to provide their ethnicity, but later changes their mind, they can withdraw their consent and we will stop using ethnicity data linked to them. If they are issued with a new voucher, the referrer will be able to see that they have previously declined to provide this information and they will not be prompted to ask the question.

Reasons for the Referral

We recognise that source of income and reasons for referral can be sensitive topics for people needing the support of a foodbank. An empathetic approach is needed when discussing the answers to these questions. If the person does not want to answer, you can select “Declined to answer” for any question.

Source of income in the household

This is the income that the recipients of the food parcel has / have access to. You can only select one option.

Source of Income	Description
Earning, no benefits	<p>This is if the household has a source of income that is not from the state (except for the state pension, which is included in this category as ‘earnings’).</p> <p>For example, someone is working in a salaried role, on a zero-hour contract with variable shifts, or is working cash-in-hand. They do not have to declare where their earned income comes from.</p>
Earning and benefits	<p>This is if the household has a mixture of income that is from the state, and some that is not from the state.</p> <p>For example, someone is receiving payment from a job, but is also in receipt of Universal Credit.</p>
Benefits, not earning	<p>This is if the household’s sole source of income is from the state.</p> <p>For example, someone is receiving PIP and other benefits, but no ‘earned’ income.</p>
Income but no or insufficient access to it	<p>This is if the person has income or money that is theirs, but for whatever reason they do not have access to it.</p> <p>For example, someone may have money in an overseas bank account which they do not have access to at the moment. Or someone may be a victim of domestic abuse and has no access to their bank account.</p>
No income	<p>This is if someone says that they have no income whatsoever.</p> <p>For example, someone may be in the process of accessing state benefits, or has been recently made unemployed.</p>

Reasons for referral

The options are grouped by financial, personal circumstances and health. Financial is broken into three subcategories as detailed below. We would encourage you to select one or two reasons for referral, but you can select up to four reasons for referral, if needed to describe the person's situation. The reasons for referral can be selected from any category.

Reasons for referral – financial, earnings related

Reason for Referral	Description
Change in work hours	<p>This is if a reduction in hours worked has led to a fall in income.</p> <p>For example, someone may be on a zero-hour contract, or be self-employed but has had less work this month than they would need to be able to afford the essentials.</p>
Unemployment following permanent work	<p>This is if someone is unemployed following a permanent role, either through their own choice or the choice of the employer.</p> <p>For example, someone has been made redundant from a long-term or permanent role, e.g. they were working in a factory but have been made redundant. Or someone chosen to leave their role but has since struggled to find work.</p>
Unemployment following temporary work	<p>This is if someone is unemployed following a temporary role, either through their own choice or the choice of the employer.</p> <p>For example, someone was working in a seasonal job but has since struggled to find work. Or someone was doing cash-in-hand jobs, but this work has stopped.</p>
Delay in or awaiting other income	<p>This is if someone knows they are likely to have 'earned' income coming, but there is a delay in receiving it.</p> <p>For example, someone was doing cash-in-hand jobs but will get paid in a lump sum.</p>

Reasons for referral – financial – benefits related

Reason for Referral	Description
Benefit delay	<p>This is if someone is expecting to receive a benefit payment (that is not their first payment) but it has been delayed for whatever reason.</p> <p>For example, someone reports a change in their eligibility, and this has caused a delay in their next benefit payment being received.</p> <p>Or there has been an administrative error and someone is awaiting their next benefit payment.</p> <p>Please note, this category is not for people who are awaiting their first benefit payment.</p>
Benefit deduction due to overpayment or benefit advance	<p>This is if someone has had deductions made from their benefit payment(s) to 'recover' a previous overpayment or advanced payment that was provided.</p> <p>For example, there may be an 'official error' (e.g. not the fault of the claimant) and benefits are overpaid.</p> <p>This money will then be 'recovered' from future payments. Or someone received a Universal Credit Advance payment which is now being 'recovered'.</p>
Benefit reduction due to change in eligibility	<p>This is if someone's circumstances have changed, and it has meant that their benefit payment(s) has reduced in value.</p> <p>For example, benefit eligibility may have changed following a change in, for example, employment status; family circumstances; other benefit claims.</p>
Benefit reduction due to sanction	<p>This is if someone's benefit payment has been stopped or reduced as they were deemed to not meet the conditions outlined in the 'claimant agreement'.</p> <p>For example, someone may have had their benefit payments reduced as they didn't apply for a job that the Jobcentre expected them to apply for, or they missed an appointment with their Jobcentre Work Coach.</p>
Awaiting first benefit payment for less than a month	<p>This is if someone has been waiting for their first benefit payment, and they think they have been waiting for less than a month. This is irrespective of whether they have received an advance payment.</p> <p>This would normally mean one month from the date that the person finished their application by having an interview, typically with a Jobcentre Work Coach. Whilst we would like this information to be as accurate as possible, it is okay for it to be an approximate answer.</p>
Awaiting first benefit payment for more than a month	<p>This is if someone has been waiting for their first benefit payment, and they think they have been waiting for more than a month. This is irrespective of whether they have received an advance payment.</p> <p>This would normally mean one month from the date that the person finished their application by having an interview, typically with a Jobcentre Work Coach. Whilst we would like this information to be as accurate as possible, it is okay for it to be an approximate answer.</p>

Reasons for referral – financial – debts, costs and expenses

Reason for Referral	Description
Priority debt	<p>This is if someone says they need the support of a foodbank as they have been paying off debts which would cause them serious problems if they didn't do something about them.</p> <p>Priority debts include rent, mortgage or secured loan arrears; council tax arrears; gas, electricity, internet, or phone bills; court fines; a debt owed to and being enforced by DWP (beyond a benefit deduction).</p>
Non-priority debt	<p>This is if someone says they need the support of a foodbank as they have been paying off debts which, whilst serious, are not classed as priority debts.</p> <p>Non-priority debts include credit card or store debts; unsecured loans such as payday loans; unpaid water bills; money owed to family and friends.</p>
Cost of dependents has increased	<p>This is if the cost of caring for / supporting adults or children has increased and this is viewed as a contributory factor to requiring the support of a foodbank.</p> <p>For example, if someone is also supporting an elderly relative and is having to make their income go further. Or if costs go up due to it being the summer holidays and children are not receiving meals at school.</p> <p>This is different from, but may be linked to, 'change in dependents' below, which is explicitly referring to a change in the number of dependents.</p>
Rising cost of essentials	<p>This is if not a great deal has changed in somebody's life, but they are finding that they are struggling to make their income go as far as it once did.</p> <p>An increase in the cost of rent and transport means they now are unable to afford food after everything else. Or they are finding that food costs have increased and therefore they are able to buy less food than previously.</p>
Other unexpected expense	<p>This is if there has been an additional expense that is separate from normal day to day costs.</p> <p>For example, someone has had to pay for the cost of a funeral, or their car has broken down.</p>

Reasons for referral – personal circumstances

Reason for Referral	Description
Insecurely housed	<p>This is if somebody does not have a secure and stable place to live, and this is a direct or indirect factor in the person needing the support of a foodbank.</p> <p>For example, someone may be sleeping rough, staying with friends, living in a refuge or other form of temporary accommodation, squatting, or living under the threat of eviction.</p>
No access to financial support due to immigration status	<p>This is if somebody's designated immigration status, or their current position in the immigration or asylum process, means that they are unable to access financial support from the state (benefits) and other sources.</p> <p>This is a broad category and will capture a wide range of scenarios, including both people who do and do not have No Recourse to Public Funds status. Unless you feel that the foodbank is able to provide further support (e.g. signposting on to a law centre), it is best to not discuss somebody's immigration status in depth.</p>
Loss of support from friends or family	<p>This is if somebody was previously receiving informal support, such as from friends or family, which has since been withdrawn for whatever reason.</p> <p>For example, somebody may have been staying with and being fed by a relative who is now unable to support them. In addition, a friend might have been giving the person informal financial loans, but they could only do this for so long.</p>
Change in relationship status	<p>This is a broad category, but it is to be used when someone feels that a change in their personal relationship status has meant that they require the support of a foodbank.</p> <p>For example, somebody has broken up with their partner or is going through a divorce and this means they are experiencing financial hardship.</p> <p>This is different from, but may be linked to, domestic abuse (see below).</p>
Domestic abuse	<p>This is if somebody is a victim of domestic abuse. This is to be self-identified by the person being referred, but would normally apply to instances where there is threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial, or emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality.</p> <p>For example, someone may have recently fled or is currently experiencing an abusive relationship where access to money was controlled and / or restricted by the perpetrator. Or someone may be unable to work due to formerly or currently being in an abusive relationship.</p>
Change in dependents	<p>This is if the number of dependents has increased, and therefore they are now requiring the support of a foodbank. For example, somebody may have had a baby, or is now caring for a relative.</p>

Reasons for referral – health

Reason for Referral	Description
New physical or mental health condition or issue	<p>This is if somebody has developed a health condition in the past six months or so which has led to them ultimately requiring the support of a foodbank.</p> <p>For example, a builder has badly broken their leg and is unable to work. Or someone has started experiencing panic attacks and is unable to regularly leave the house, and therefore cannot work.</p>
Ongoing impact of existing mental or physical health condition	<p>This is if somebody has an ongoing or long-term (longer than the past six months) health condition which has led to them ultimately requiring the support of a foodbank.</p> <p>For example, someone has been unable to work due to a health condition for the past two years, but they have now run out of their savings and so are in the process of applying for state support, which they are yet to receive.</p>
Change in existing mental or physical health condition	<p>This is if a change in a health condition has led to them ultimately requiring the support of a foodbank.</p> <p>For example, someone has a progressive condition which meant that whilst they could previously work before, they now are unable to. Or, someone is experiencing a bipolar episode, and is unable to attend their Work Centre appointments, and has therefore been sanctioned by DWP.</p>

Other options

Reason for Referral	Description
Unable to ask	<p>This is for if you are in a situation where you are unable to ask about the Reason for Referral. You may not be in immediate contact with the person, or exercise your professional judgement and decide that it is not a suitable question to ask at that point in time.</p> <p>This category would not be read out, given that it is for use in a situation when the referral agency is unable to ask about the reason for referral.</p>
Declined to answer	<p>This is if the person being issued the voucher declines to give a reason for referral from the options listed. This can also be used if the person does not wish to engage with the process more generally, of which reason for referral is a part.</p> <p>This should not be read out as an option, but the referral agent should be aware that it exists in case somebody declines to answer.</p>
None applicable	<p>If you have been through the options listed as a reason for referral and none of them accurately capture the situation of the person being referred.</p> <p>This can be read out after the other options have been considered, and you (or the person being referred) feel that none of the categories above accurately capture the situation of the person being referred.</p>

Reason for needing more than three vouchers

Foodbanks in our network work on a three-voucher guideline, not a rule or restriction. If someone is referred to a foodbank more than three times in six months, it is flagged on the system so the foodbank can talk to the referral agency about what they can do to help resolve the underlying reasons for referral.

The referrer will be prompted to select an additional option to provide some more information about why the individual needs further support from the foodbank. There is some overlap with the options in 'Reason for Referral', but it doesn't matter if the same answer or different answers are given for both. The immediate reason that someone may visit a foodbank might differ from the long-term reason for experiencing financial hardship.

Reason for needing more than three vouchers	Description
Long term unemployment	This is if someone has been unemployed for longer than six months.
Drug or alcohol dependency	This is if someone has a drug or alcohol dependency, and this is the underlying reason for them experiencing financial hardship.
Long-term health condition	This is if someone has a mental or physical health condition which has lasted longer than six months, and they identify this as the leading reason for requiring more than three foodbank vouchers.
Homelessness	<p>This is if somebody is insecurely housed, and they identify this as the reason for requiring more than three foodbank vouchers.</p> <p>For example, someone may be sleeping rough, staying with friends, living in a refuge or other form of temporary accommodation, squatting, or living under the threat of eviction.</p>
No access to financial support due to immigration status	<p>This is if somebody's designated immigration status, or their current position in the immigration or asylum process, means that they are unable to access financial support from the state (benefits) and other sources.</p> <p>This is a broad category and will capture a wide range of scenarios, including both people who do and do not have "No Recourse to Public Funds" status. Unless you feel that the foodbank can provide further support (e.g. signposting on to a law centre), it is best to not discuss somebody's immigration status in depth.</p>
Domestic abuse	<p>This is if somebody is a victim of domestic abuse. This is to be self-identified by the person being referred but would normally apply to instances where there is threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial, or emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality.</p> <p>For example, someone may have fled or is currently experiencing an abusive relationship where access to money was controlled and or restricted by the perpetrator. Or someone may be unable to work due to formerly or currently being in an abusive relationship.</p>

Reason for needing more than three vouchers	Description
Awaiting first benefit payment	<p>This is if somebody is waiting for their first benefit payment after having completed a claim.</p> <p>By completing a claim, we mean after somebody has finished their application by having an interview, typically with a Jobcentre Work Coach.</p> <p>This field would typically be used alongside one of the two 'awaiting first benefit payment' options in Reason for Referral.</p>
Benefit delay/sanction	<p>This is if somebody identifies that the reason for them requiring more than three foodbank vouchers is due to either a delay in receiving their benefits, or because of a benefit sanction and reduction to the value of their benefits.</p> <p>The benefit delay should be to an existing benefit claim, and not a new one, as with 'awaiting first benefit payment' above.</p>
Debt	<p>This is if somebody identifies that their personal debt (priority or non-priority debt) is the underlying reason for them requiring more than three foodbank vouchers in the past six months.</p>
Other - low income	<p>This is if somebody has no identifiable long-term reason for referral, other than their income not being sufficient to meet their basic needs.</p> <p>This is listed as an 'Other' option to indicate that it should be used only if the other options have been considered and this is the best description of the person's situation.</p> <p>If there are confounding or additional factors, then they should be described in the 'Other write in box' below</p>
Other – write in box	<p>This is if there is no other description above that captures the reason behind needing the support of a foodbank for more than three times in six months, and the situation is more complex than just 'low income'. Or this is to be used if the person either does not wish to respond to this question, or you are unable to ask it.</p> <p>Please give a description of the long-term reason for needing the support of a foodbank.</p> <p>If the question has not been asked, or the person being asked did not wish to say / respond, then please say so here.</p>