



Referral Agency Guide 2025

Welcome!

Thank you for deciding to be one of our referral agencies. We are extremely pleased to welcome you to the team and look forward to working together. Without the help provided by agencies like the one you represent we would be unable to help people in the local community.

About Cardiff Foodbank

Cardiff Foodbank was founded in 2009. We are a registered charity and part of the Trussell Network of Foodbanks. Other local foodbanks cover the Vale of Glamorgan, Newport, Caerphilly and the Valleys. The food bank has been established to provide short-term emergency food to individuals and families in crisis.

We operate via a central warehouse and offices in Cardiff Bay, plus eight distribution centres across the city.



See our website for up-to-date addresses and opening times - <https://cardiff.foodbank.org.uk/emergency-food/i-have-a-food-voucher>

Our food parcels include a variety of non-perishable foods like cereal, UHT milk, long life fruit juice, soup, pasta, tinned meat & fish, tinned vegetables, and puddings, providing balanced meals for a minimum of three days. The quantity of food given is dependent upon the number of adults and children in the family.

Where stock allows, we will also give out other items like toiletries and household items as well as tin openers and pet food.

People are consulted on their basic dietary requirements such as if they are vegetarian, vegan, gluten free or require jars of baby food. We will also check with them to make sure they highlight any allergies or intolerances or medical conditions. We also cater for other requirements like religious diets – e.g. Halal.

Food is donated by local faith groups, individuals, companies, community groups or charities and by the public through collection days outside the major supermarkets in our local area. This is a project that involves the whole community!

Referral process - overview

Due to the nature of your work, we feel that you are well placed to identify people in a crisis, using your professional judgement. A food bank referral should be a last resort and we hope that you will be able to give advice and signposting that will address the root causes of the person's problem so that they don't need to access our services.

When emergency food is the best option, you will be able to login to our e-referral system as a registered referral agency and issue food vouchers online. The individual or family can then use the voucher code, PDF or printed voucher to collect the food from one of our food bank centres. We are unable to offer a delivery service to our clients, but we can usually offer free bus tickets to help with

the return journey. Please discuss with the client prior to arrival what their plan is for getting to and from the distribution centre - they may have a large number of heavy bags to carry!!

In addition to giving food, foodbank centre volunteers can also offer a free cup of tea/coffee, a friendly chat and 'help in finding help' by directing people towards further support services such as debt counsellors, advocacy etc. Cardiff Council's Money Advice Team attends these sessions wherever possible.

Getting started

Cardiff Foodbank are your partner food bank and you can find our contact details in the Partner Foodbank tab, or on our website here: <https://cardiff.foodbank.org.uk/>

We should be the main food bank that you refer to and will be your main point of contact for any questions about the system.

However, you can refer to any food bank in the Trussell network if it's better for your client and any queries about food parcels or discussions about client circumstances should be directed to the food bank you are referring to. You can find contact details for all our food banks on the Trussell website here: <https://www.trussell.org.uk/emergency-food/i-have-a-food-voucher>

For technical support, you can use the green question mark button in the bottom right-hand side of your screen.

Induction checklist

Before you are ready to start issuing e-vouchers, read through the checklist below and make sure you have completed all the actions...

Action	Completed
Undertake the online training at https://cardiff.foodbank.org.uk/e-referral-training	
Decide how you will be referring (on the phone, face-to-face etc.) and make sure you understand the referral criteria.	
Organise an appropriate device to make referrals on (laptop, tablet, phone) and an internet connection where you will be referring people.	
Get logged in for the first time - you will be sent an invite from the system asking you to login and set a password and confirm the privacy statement. Please respond to this within 24 hours if possible.	
Save the link to the system in your bookmarks or favourites: https://data.foodbank.org.uk/	
Check out the Help Resources page for technical help articles and FAQs: https://data.foodbank.org.uk/agency_help_resources	
If you are an Agency Manager, invite your colleagues to the system using the Settings tab. Please ensure they have done the appropriate training.	

Privacy and GDPR



The system holds a large amount of personal and sometimes sensitive data and so we must comply with GDPR to protect people's information. To help with this, we ask that you...

- Read and agree to the data protection statement when you first login (you will not be able to use the system without doing this).
- Do not let anyone else use your account, even colleagues in your team. Everyone must have their own individual account.
- Use a strong and secure password to protect your account.
- Do not leave the system unattended, log out or lock your screen when away from your device.

You can read more about Trussel's data security by visiting the [Help Resources](#) tab when logged into the data collection system.

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.

Managing Client Records and Issuing Vouchers

How to decide when to issue a voucher

We rely on your professional judgment: if the client's circumstances (finances, number of dependents etc.) are not already known to you, staff should make an assessment based on confirmatory evidence.

These are some criteria that should help in making the decision:

- The client is in a state of actual food poverty, with little or no food and insufficient funds to purchase enough food.
- Their situation is the result of an identifiable, current crisis such as, but not restricted to:
 - Benefit delay/changes
 - Debt – Both Priority and Non-Priority
 - Significant disruption to earnings e.g. ill health
 - Unreliable income, loss of income or long-term insufficient income



- Exceptional and unexpected bill
- Client has no recourse to public funds (e.g. refugee/asylum seeker)
- Client has no access to their money (e.g.: Domestic Abuse, Overseas Bank Account)
- The client has not already received 3 vouchers in the last 6 months. (If more vouchers are needed, please phone Cardiff Foodbank to explain the support being given before issuing more. We are happy to support some clients over a longer period if there is nothing more they can do to improve their immediate situation, and it is part of the ongoing package of care provided by the agency.)

Please note: there is no minimum age to claim food bank vouchers – if a young person is considered to be independent, they may make a claim. However, if they are under 17 you will need to add them to the voucher details as an adult (selecting the 'Not Specified' age bracket) rather than selecting their correct age bracket.

Using the Data Collection System

Access the Data Collection System (DCS) through URL:

<https://data.foodbank.org.uk/>

The first time you log in you will be asked to review and confirm that you have read the Cyber Security Document, and will create your own password.



To issue an e-voucher:

Click on the green **Issue e-voucher** button in the top right-hand corner and follow steps 1 to 6 as outlined below.

Step 1 of 6 – Search for the client

Ask the client if they have ever had a food bank voucher. If yes, then they will have an account already.

If the client is found, click the **Issue voucher** button next to their name.

If the client is not found, click **Create new client record**.

IMPORTANT! If it comes up with no results, try searching with a different spelling or previous postcode (or NFA). Make sure you search the client's full name and postcode. 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 client's details

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 their client record and amend it if needed, by clicking **Update client details** (top right-hand corner). Only the client’s current circumstances should be on the database, so please amend the existing record rather than creating a new one when a client’s circumstances change.

Check client history before issuing a voucher

Scroll down to see the client’s voucher history. Look at the number of vouchers the client has had, when they were issued, and if they were collected. If the client has had recent vouchers please ensure that you are clear as to why another one is needed before you issue a new voucher. If one has been issued within the past three days, do not issue another at this point.

If the client record is new, you will need to enter the person’s details. Please take care when entering this information, 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.

In the Household Structure section please enter the usual number of people within that household. When issuing the voucher you can alter that number to reflect temporary changes.

Important! Enter the number of people in each age band, NOT their ages. For example, one adult aged 30 should show as **1** in the **25-34** box.

Step 3 of 6 – Referral information

You can now enter details about the circumstances of the referral. This step includes:

- **Referral agency information**– Please make sure your contact details are correct in case the food bank needs to contact you.
 - The Agency Contact Telephone number will be shown on the printed voucher, so please ensure you enter a work number you are happy for clients to potentially call you on.
 - Please enter your email address. This won’t be visible to clients but is essential for food bank staff if they need to contact you.
- **Ethnic Group** – 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, for example, there is a temporary guest in the house who also needs food.

- **Client contact details** – This is only needed if the food bank is delivering the parcel. Cardiff Foodbank does not offer a delivery service.
- **Notes regarding parcel requirements** – A space to give the food bank more information about what the person needs. Please ask about specific dietary requirements such as food intolerances, vegan, Halal, or medical conditions. 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. **Please note that these notes will appear on the printed e-voucher.**
- **Additional parcel notes** – Add any other relevant information here such as what facilities the person has to cook/prepare food, and do they need any non-food or other items. **These notes will appear on the printed e-voucher.**

Once you have entered and checked the voucher 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.
- **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. If it appears that the client will need long-term support, please contact the food bank for further support and authorisation.
- **Notes** – this can be used to give the food bank more information about the person's circumstances and will only be visible to the agency and the food bank you are issuing this voucher to.

What has happened which means you need a food parcel today?

Step 5 of 6 – Food bank centres

In this step, you can enter the Delivery and Collection information and then check the client contact details again. You can then search by postcode and find the food bank 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. Remember that the closest centre may not be the most convenient, e.g. regarding opening times or bus routes. Don't forget to enter any collection/delivery notes in the box at the bottom.

- Please ensure you know that the client is clear about where and when to collect the parcel. There might be several heavy bags to carry home. Do they know how to get to the centre? Do they need transport?

How are you going to get home with the food parcel?

Although clients need to get to the centre under their own steam, free bus tickets may be available from the centre for the return journey.

- Select either Yes, the parcel can be collected or No, the parcel will need to be delivered.
Important! Cardiff Foodbank does not offer a delivery service. Parcels need to be collected from the distribution centre by the client or someone authorised on their behalf.
- Check the client contact details and edit if needed.
- To select a centre, check the box on the left-hand side. Please ensure the client knows that they don't have to attend the selected centre – they can find alternative centres and times on our website at <https://www.trussell.org.uk/emergency-food/i-have-a-food-voucher>.
- You can enter collection or delivery notes by scrolling down to the bottom and entering them in the box. Here you can add details of a person authorised to collect the parcel for the client.
- Click **Confirm selection and issue e-voucher**.


Step 6 of 6 – Confirmation & print

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

The voucher is valid for seven days but even then it may be honoured if there is a valid reason for not presenting it in time. If there is no valid reason the voucher may be cancelled, and a new one will need to be issued.

Please make sure the client knows that the code can only be used once and that they will need to come back to you (or another referral agency) each time they need a food parcel.

Example Voucher

		Issue date: 13/02/25 Please take this voucher to the selected food bank centre, ideally within 7 days.		Voucher code: E 69205-000191	
Agency name: Cardiff Foodbank,		Issued by: Jane Doe		Telephone: 07908536276	
Referred person's name: Joe Bloggs		Address: Unit G, Cardiff Bay Business Centre, Titan Road, Cardiff, CF24 5BS			
Phone number:		Email:			
Source of income in the household: No income		Reasons for referral: Unemployment following temporary work Benefit reduction due to sanction Priority debt			
Number of people the voucher is for (by age group)					
0-4yrs	5-11yrs	12-16yrs	17-24yrs	25-34yrs	
1	1	1	1	1	
Dietary requirements: Halal, Gluten intolerant					
Additional parcel notes: Would like Shampoo. Only has kettle.					
Assigned food bank centre FBC Splott			Opening hours Wed: 13:00-15:00 Thu: 18:30-20:00		
Address St Saviour's Church, Splott Road, Cardiff, CF24 2BW -					
Collection notes -					
If you are unable to go to the food bank centre above, you may be able to take this voucher to a different food bank centre. To find other food banks in your area, please check www.trusselltrust.org/get-help/find-a-foodbank					
This voucher has no monetary value, cannot be used by another person, and should be used within 7 days of issue if possible.					
We use your personal information to help understand your needs and provide you with emergency food. The food bank and the Trussell Trust are data controllers and have a legitimate interest to use information about you for statistical and research purposes, to show how food banks are being used and why they are needed.					
Access to your information is restricted and can only be seen by the agencies who refer you, and authorised people in the Trussell Trust Foodbank Network who need to do so for food bank reasons. To find out more about your rights or about how we keep your information safe, visit https://trusselltrust.org/privacy or please ask the food bank (Reg. Charity 1137450) to give you a copy of their privacy statement.					
It would help us if you could bring some carrier bags with you.					

Appendix

Further resources

Once registered on the e-referral system, you can visit the **Help Resources** section for more information. There's a range of tutorials that explain how to use the system, as well as FAQs and some guides that explain how to ask the questions and record data correctly.

Tutorials – for all users

How to issue an e-voucher

How to search for a voucher

How to edit a voucher

How to search for a client

How to edit a client record

How to cancel a voucher

How to change your account details

Tutorials – for agency managers

How to edit agency details

How to add a new agency user

How to edit an agency user

How to delete an agency user

How to restore a deleted user

Guides

Reasons for Referral – Guide for Agencies

Ethnic Group – Guide for Agencies

Further Information

If you ever have any questions, please contact us by phone for immediate attention, or by email.

Cardiff Foodbank

Unit G1, Cardiff Bay Business Centre
Titan Road
Cardiff
CF24 5BS

T: 029 2048 4120

E: vouchers@cardiff.foodbank.org.uk - for voucher and general referral agency queries; this account is usually checked on Mondays and Thursdays only.

E: info@cardiff.foodbank.org.uk - general enquiries; this account is checked during our standard opening hours.

www.cardiff.foodbank.org.uk – main website

<https://cardiff.foodbank.org.uk/referral-agency> - website pages for referral agencies only; not reachable from the main website menu.



CardiffFoodbank