CHALLENGING POVERTY
MEETING NEEDS
TRANSFORMING LIVES

Norwich Foodbank
Together with Trussell

PROVIDING EMERGENCY FOOD FOR LOCAL PEOPLE IN CRISIS

Referral Agencies Handbook

Norwich Foodbank
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Website: norwich.foodbank.org.uk

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. All information provided can also be found on our referrer page on our website at https://norwich.foodbank.org.uk/home/referrers-information-page/

It is our aim to provide emergency food to local people in crisis. Without the assistance and input of agencies such as yours, this would not be possible. The goal of Trussell is to end the need for Foodbanks and we hope to do this together with agencies such as yourself.

Last updated November 2026

PROVISION OF EMERGENCY FOOD BY VOUCHER

1. The Foodbank gives emergency food parcels to individuals and families in crisis. The parcels include cereal, long-life milk, fruit juice, soup, pasta, tinned meat, tinned fish, tinned fruit, pudding and tinned vegetables, providing balanced and nutritional meals for approximately 3 days. The Foodbank distribution centres stock pre-packed food parcels as well as additional items such as baby wipes, nappies, toiletries, pet food and extra treats and snacks.

2. As a registered Foodbank Referral Agency you will be able to issue E-vouchers to clients who you assess to be in crisis or dire need, online at data.Foodbank.org.uk. You are responsible to give either the voucher code or printed voucher direct to your clients. The vouchers can be redeemed at any of our distribution centres for a food parcel within 7 days of it being issued regardless of where the voucher is nominated for if there are no specific requirements[2a]. Anyone can collect the food on behalf of the client if this is necessary, so long as they have the voucher or voucher code. We do not have the capacity to deliver food parcels.

    a. If a client has any particular requirement e.g., gluten free, allergies or needs nappies (we need to know the size), then do ring or email us and we will endeavour to assist where we can.

3. If a client is unable to cook – whether this be a lack of facilities (oven / hob / etc) or lack of funds to pay for gas / electricity – we can provide a 'Kettle Box' which includes items that can be eaten cold or that just need hot water adding. We can also provide a 'Cold Box' which contains items that can be eaten as they are, with no preparation / cooking / additions at all. These are not kept as standard at our distribution centres and would need to order in advance, as with point 2, by calling or emailing the office prior to the client accessing a distribution centre so we can get the right food to the right centre.
4. Food is donated by the general public, churches, schools, organisations, groups, supermarkets and businesses. This is a project that involves the whole community. We are not government funded and we are very mindful of how our funds and donations are used.

5. **NUMBER OF VOUCHERS ISSUED PER CLIENT**

   The Foodbank has been established to provide **short term emergency food to an individual or family in crisis while a longer-term strategy is developed.** Normally enough food for three days (one voucher) should be sufficient to cover an immediate crisis while the normal support agencies arrange to meet the client(s) needs. In the event that this takes longer, then up to 2 more vouchers may be issued without further reference to the Foodbank. If the crisis is still not resolved or re-occurs, you can contact the Project Manager to discuss if an additional voucher can be issued. This will only be considered if you are working closely with the client and **you, and your client have made every effort to get solutions in place for the client**.

    a. Occasionally some clients obtain vouchers from more than one source. Using the e-voucher system, you will be able to see if this is the case. If a client is engaged with multiple agencies, one of them might have good reason not to issue any more vouchers.

We are aware and concerned that clients have played services off against another. We are always happy to discuss options for clients over the phone.

6. **SIGNPOSTING**

   In addition to distributing food, all our distribution centres also offer refreshments – hot and cold drinks, biscuits, a friendly chat and signposting support by directing clients towards other places of help and wellbeing. All volunteers in the Foodbank have signed a Confidentiality Agreement.

   a. In addition to volunteer signposting, we have partnerships in place with Citizen's Advice, Shelter, Age UK and British Red Cross who are present at different centres throughout the week. They offer advice and guidance on a range of topics, including referring into the Citizen's Advice debt and Universal Credit teams, housing, money management and advocacy.

7. **QUERIES and OPENING HOURS**

   See front page for contact details. Norwich Foodbank has several distribution centres and details can be found on our website Norwich.Foodbank.org.uk 'locations' tab. Foodbank vouchers are issued to clients in an emergency food poverty situation and therefore are to be redeemed within 7 days of issuing.

8. **Norwich Foodbank has a zero tolerance policy for abuse. If your client is known to be aggressive, violent or intoxicated it is then your responsibility as the referrer to make arrangements for the food parcel to be collected safely (either someone else collects the parcel or the client is escorted by a professional).**

9. **Distribution Centres:**

   Mondays - Witard Road Baptist Church (Heartsease) 2pm - 3.30pm
   Tuesdays - Oak Grove Community Church (Catton) 6pm - 7.30pm
   Wednesdays – Chantry Hall (city behind MAP and Wagamama) 10am - 12.00pm
   Wednesdays - New Hope Christian Centre (Lakenham) 12pm - 2pm
   Thursdays - St Elizabeth's Church (Earlham) 11am - 12.30pm
   Thursdays - Wroxham and Hoveton United Reformed Church (URC) 10.30am –12pm
   Thursday - Mile Cross Methodist Church 1.30pm - 3pm
   Thursdays – NCBC (Colegate) 1.30pm - 3pm
   Fridays - Alive! (off Dereham Road) 10am - 12pm
   Fridays - Bowthorpe Church Centre 10:30am - 12pm
   Fridays - Wymondham Baptist Church 11am-12pm
   Saturdays – Chantry Hall (city behind MAP and Wagamama) 10am - 11.30am

   a. Alive on a Friday offer a free hot meal at the same time as the Foodbank service operates and New Hope on a Wednesday runs a community café 10am – 2pm, which includes the Foodbank opening hours.

Any questions or queries, please do get in touch. We want to work together to end the need for Foodbanks and can only do this by understanding how each other works.

Norwich Foodbank key principles

To receive Foodbank assistance –

1. The client should be in a state of actual food poverty, having minimal food and insufficient means to purchase adequate food in the immediate term; or demonstrably be at imminent risk of being in that situation.

2. The client's situation should be the result of an identifiable, current crisis.

3. The client's circumstances should be known directly to the referring agency, or the referrer will immediately signpost to the more appropriate supporting agency.

4. The client has not already received Foodbank assistance three times for the specific crisis unless arrangements for further support have been made with Norwich Foodbank

5. The client is actively engaging with support, advice or help with your agency to help address their situation.

We always want to ensure the effective stewardship of Norwich Foodbank's resources e.g. public donations.