



Policy relating to the Issuing of Food Parcel referrals

Aim

Canterbury Food Bank CIO (the Charity) is a charitable incorporated organisation registered with The Charity Commission in England, with the registration number 1153791.

The Charity's mission is to provide relief to individuals and family groups in short term financial crisis through the provision of non-perishable food, education and support.

Food parcels are provided to people living within the Canterbury City Council District. This area covers Canterbury, Herne Bay, Whitstable and the surrounding villages.

The Charity serves people living in the Canterbury district who contact the food bank directly because they have no support networks, or are referred by organisations (agencies and support groups) that they are working with to change their situation. The Charity also offers signposting to a variety of organisations for additional help when required.

At the date this policy was approved, the charity is working with over 100 organisations across the district.

For the purpose of this policy the Charity identifies as an '**Agency**' as each organisation that offers a programme with which their clients can engage to work towards changing their circumstances. Other organisations that support those in financial crisis but who do not offer a programme for their clients to engage with are identified as '**Support Groups**'.

Organisations providing advice and assistance such as Citizen's Advice, Christians Against Poverty, social workers and other organisations, and care professionals such as doctors, health visitors, and school family liaison officers identify individuals and family groups who are experiencing financial crisis and complete a referral on their behalf. This referral entitles those identified to receive a food bank parcel for each individual containing three days' nutritionally balanced, non-perishable food.

Why do people need help?

People need support from the Charity for a variety of reasons which include the following:

Benefit changes • Benefit sanctions • Delay in payment of benefit • Unexpected significant bills or financial outlay • Illness, especially sudden illness or serious injury • Debt • Loss of employment, reduced working hours or low income • Bankruptcy • Becoming a refugee • Domestic violence • Addiction • Depression and inability to cope with finances • Homelessness • Release from prison.

Issuing referrals

The agency or support group should complete the online form on the CFB website <https://canterburyfoodbank.org/agencies/>

The food parcels are sufficient for short term financial crisis support. Guidance to agencies or support groups is to issue up to 5 food parcel referrals to each individual or family group in a rolling 12 month period. However, should organisations feel further support is needed in that time they can issue additional referrals as required.

The organisation can consult with the Charity by ticking the relevant box on the referral form or by telephoning a member of the signposting team on 01227 936450 option 1.

The agency worker should specify on the referral form if they wish to make an appointment to collect the parcels on behalf of their client from the CFB warehouse, if they wish the parcels to be dropped off at the agency offices (or another office location in the Canterbury City Council district) or if their client will pick up the parcel from a local pick up point. A member of the signposting team will then contact the agency worker to make the necessary arrangements.

Churches, volunteer groups and community organisations can request voucher packs to issue to their clients instead of making an online referral. Each request will be considered by the Signposter Team Leader.

Self referrals

Clients with no support network can contact the food bank directly by calling 01227 936450 option 2, by completing the contact box on our website or by making contact via WhatsApp. The signposter will arrange the delivery of the food parcel and help direct to other organisations so clients receive the right help. This may also include referrals to the food banks benefit adviser.

Signposters will issue up to 5 food parcels in a rolling 12 months (more at the discretion of the team leader if ongoing support is not yet available). During this time the signposter will work with the client to help access the support required.

Monitoring

The Charity is aware that food parcels are issued to some of the most vulnerable people in our society, including individuals with little or no resources in terms of money, no family network, with mental or other disability, age or illness issues and who are unable to take care of him or herself.

Food is just part of what vulnerable individuals need, which is why the Charity refers people to other organisations that offer support with the many issues that can affect people who are struggling; for example - mental health, homelessness, housing issues, benefits advice, substance misuse and lack of employment.

The Charity will endeavour to ensure that the individual or family group is receiving the support needed with a view to changing their financial circumstances. The Charity's staff maintain a close working relationship with key Agencies.

Street Homeless

In the case of street homeless, appropriate referral Agencies would be Porchlight, Catching Lives, Forward (East Kent Community Drug and Alcohol Service) and NHS Mental Health teams, Canterbury City Council housing solutions team and Community Safety Services. Anyone contacting the signposting team who is street homeless, or on behalf of anyone who is street homeless, will be referred on to one of these charities.

Special requests

On occasions the organisation issuing a food parcel referral requests changes to the contents of food parcels and the Charity will do its best to accommodate requests on an ad hoc basis.

This could include individuals with special diets and those with limited access to cooking facilities.

Clients who self refer can also speak to the signposter about their special dietary requirements.

What other help is available?

The charity funds a benefit adviser provided by citizens advice.

The charity works in partnership with the fuel bank foundation and can make referrals in certain circumstances.

Along with the food parcel the charity can help with household cleaning items, toiletries, nappies, baby food and pet food when available. Baby formula is available in certain circumstances (please speak to a member of the signposting team).

The charity has staff who have completed the ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) program, which has equipped them with the skills and knowledge to provide suicide intervention support to individuals in crisis.

Failure to comply

Failure to provide a fully completed food parcel referral for each food parcel or group of food parcels required, or the careless issuance of referrals, may result in access to the service being withdrawn.

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Canterbury Food Bank is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO).
Registered with the Charity Commission in England and Wales with number 1153791.
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