

# **Care Leavers Protocol**

## **Stockport Family**

### **Stockport Local Assistance Scheme**

#### **Stockport Jobcentres**

**Hyde Benefit Delivery Centre (JSA)  
Burnley Benefit Delivery Centre (IS)**



**STOCKPORT**  
METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

**jobcentreplus**

## Aim

To make it easier for young people leaving care within Stockport applying for benefits prior to their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. It is recognised that when care leavers first enter the benefit system; the complexity of the system combined with the complex issues faced by care leavers often resulted in lengthy payment delays for the young person and financial cost to the Local Authority in 'holding payments' paid to bridge the gap until benefits are in place.

## BENEFIT CLAIM PROCESS

The following process will be available to all care leavers for claiming job seekers allowance and Income support (FTE)

- Up to 6 Weeks prior to young persons 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. The Social Worker/ Personal Adviser/ will ring the named contact (**Helen Tomlinson / Vicky Williamson**) at the appropriate Job centre to arrange for the appropriate claim forms to be issued.
- The Social Worker/ Personal Adviser will ensure that the young person has their National Insurance number or acceptable identification or evidence if a National Insurance number interview will be required.

Acceptable identification includes:

- valid passport (UK or foreign)
- national identity card (UK or foreign)
- residence permit or residence card including biometric immigration residency documents
- full birth or adoption certificate
- full marriage or civil partnership certificate
- driving licence (UK or foreign)

Further information can be found at the Directgov website:

[Applying for a National Insurance number: Directgov - Money, tax and benefits](#)

- The Social Worker/ Personal Adviser will also ensure that the young person has a basic bank account/post office account to enable their benefit to be paid into.
- The Social Worker/ Personal Adviser will ensure benefit claim forms are completed fully. The claim form will then be sent to named contact at the Benefit Delivery Centre along with a covering letter (Appendix 1) advising them that the young person is making an advance claim as they are leaving care and completed mandate for disclosure of information. (Appendix 2).

**(Note:** Each enquiry will be dealt with on an individual basis)

- Claiming Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) and Income Support (IS): up to 6 week before the young persons 18<sup>th</sup> birthday The Social Worker/ Personal Adviser contacts the named contact at the appropriate Jobcentre to book a Work Focused Interview at the Jobcentre.

**(Note:** Work focused interviews may be required if claiming benefits other than JSA - this will be discussed when claim forms are requested this interview can be made for after the young person's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday)

- Claiming JSA: The young person must attend their Work Focused Interview on time and must bring with any other evidence requested (nominated officer at the Benefit Delivery Centre will liaise). The Job Centre Plus (JCP) Personal Advisor completes all relevant details and faxes/ scans to the nominated contact at the Benefit Delivery Centre to confirm attendance at the Work Focused Interview and signing details (Appendix 3).

(**Note:** Any ID evidence e.g. birth certificate, passport must **not** be sent to Benefit Delivery Centre but taken to the local Jobcentre for the Adviser to view and record.)

- The Jobcentre Personal Adviser will complete any relevant notifications in non-JSA claims if the young person was required to attend Work Focused Interview.
- The named contact at the Benefit Delivery Centre ensures that claims for JSA or Income Support are assessed as priority, providing all evidence requirements and conditionality to entitlement are met.
- Any problems with processing entitlement or payments can be discussed between the Social Worker/ Personal Adviser and appropriate named contacts at the Benefit Delivery Centre providing a disclosure mandate is held. Contact details shown at Annex 1.

### Universal Credit

- Universal Credit is a new benefit for people living on a low income or who are out of work. It will make it easier to start a new job or work more hours, so will be better off in a job than you will be on benefits. You can check if you can get Universal Credit by going to [www.gov.uk/universalcredit](http://www.gov.uk/universalcredit) . If you don't have a computer at your home you can use the computer in your local Jobcentre.
- When you have made your claim you will be invited to an interview with your Work Coach in your local Jobcentre. At your interview you will sign a *Claimant Commitment* which sets out your responsibilities that you have agreed to carry out in return for receiving Universal Credit.

## SUPPORT FOR EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING

Jobcentre Plus and Stockport Social Care will work together to maximise the opportunities for all care leavers.

### Stockport Children's Social Care will:

- ensure that all care leavers have an effective and up to date CV
- prepare young people to engage with their Job Centre Plus work coach ensures that the appropriate data sharing form is completed in full and a copy is given to the relevant JCP work coach
- notify the JCP work coach when a young person makes a claim for benefit
- liaise with the named JCP work coach if the young person does not appear to be making progress
- Utilise bespoke job-seeking support provided by DWP at Central house, drop in dates are subject to change, discuss with your personal adviser.

### **Jobcentre Plus work coach's will:**

- Liaise with the Social worker/ Personal Adviser to obtain job goals and update claim and commitment. Check an up to CV is available for matching against
- maintain a record of care leavers to prioritise access to opportunities
- liaise with the Social worker/ Personal Adviser if any issues or concerns arise
- Offer extra support to care leavers by;
  - ❖ voluntary entry to work programme at 3 months
  - ❖ 'Second chance learning' enabling 'estranged young people up until 21 yrs to claim Income Support and Housing Benefit if returning to full time, non advanced education to make up for missed qualifications
  - ❖ Recording a flag care leaver status on JCP ICT system to track outcomes for care leavers
  - ❖ Care leavers will be able to get support under Universal credit including alternative payment arrangements

## **SUPPORT FOR EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FOR CARE LEAVERS**

### **Awaiting payment of a new claim**

When young people have made a new application for benefit and are awaiting their first payment. A request should be made for Short Term Advance of Benefit (STBA) is by contacting 0345 608 8545

NB- a STBA cannot be applied for prior to the 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Once 18 years old a claim can be applied for.

### **Benefits Sanctioned or Suspended**

If a care leaver receives a sanction or suspension of their benefits for any reason from job centre plus young people should be advised to;

- seek welfare rights advise and make a claim for hardship payment
- notify their Social worker/ Personal Adviser
- present to SLAS for an assessment for emergency assistance (to be agreed with Social worker/ Personal Adviser)

### **Emergency Assistance**

Should care leavers require 'Emergency Assistance' they need to be supported to make a referral to Stockport Local Assistance Scheme using the SLAS Online Application Form on the website [www.stockport.gov.uk/slas](http://www.stockport.gov.uk/slas) .

If the young person completes the application before 1pm it is likely that the application may be processed that day. The Social worker/ Personal Adviser may contact the Scheme manager for advice and the young person would need to present at Fred Perry Office.

If the young person completes the application after 1pm it is likely to be the following day before that the application may be processed. In these cases social care may need to provide emergency assistance for food / utility until the morning if the young person is in immediate need of food or gas/ electric. This needs to be assessed by the Social Worker/ Personal Adviser and request assistance until the next day.

Should a young person make more than 2 subsequent applications to SLAS for emergency assistance then SLAS will notify the Social Worker/ Personal Adviser and this should trigger the need for a planning meeting to be arranged to consider the young person's needs and pathway plan. The Social Worker/ Personal Adviser should attend at Fred Perry Office to assess the immediate presenting need of the young person and arrange a planning meeting as soon as practicable. The Personal Adviser will need to consider whether a pathway plan review meeting is required.

## NAMED CONTACTS

To enable this process to work efficiently named contacts are vital. Named contacts are listed below

### Stockport Family

NAME	EMAIL	TEL NUMBER
Deborah Woodcock Director of Operations Stockport Family	<a href="mailto:Deborah.woodcock@stockport.gov.uk">Deborah.woodcock@stockport.gov.uk</a>	0161 475 6700
Jeanette Warburton Principal Lead Social Care	<a href="mailto:Jeanette.warburton@stockport.gov.uk">Jeanette.warburton@stockport.gov.uk</a>	0161 475 6843
Karen Bazell Team Manager Leaving Care Team	<a href="mailto:karen.bazell@stockport.gov.uk">karen.bazell@stockport.gov.uk</a>	0161 475 6790

## JOB CENTRES

### Stockport Jobcentre Plus

NAME	EMAIL	TEL NUMBER
Helen Tomlinson, JCP Troubled Families	<a href="mailto:helen.tomlinson@stockport.gov.uk">helen.tomlinson@stockport.gov.uk</a>	07789 271377
Vicky Williamson Under 18s Adviser	<a href="mailto:Vicky.williamson@dwp.gsi.gov.uk">Vicky.williamson@dwp.gsi.gov.uk</a>	0161 429 2157
Sally Ambrose UC	<a href="mailto:Sally.ambrose@dwp.gsi.gov.uk">Sally.ambrose@dwp.gsi.gov.uk</a>	0161 429 2009

## BENEFIT DELIVERY CENTRE

NAME	EMAIL	TEL NUMBER
Diane Jeynes Hyde JSA	<a href="mailto:diane.jeynes@dwp.gsi.gov.uk">diane.jeynes@dwp.gsi.gov.uk</a>	
Rachel Holt Burnley IS new claims	<a href="mailto:rachel.holt@dwp.gsi.gov.uk">rachel.holt@dwp.gsi.gov.uk</a>	

## STOCKPORT LOCAL ASSISTANCE SCHEME

NAME	EMAIL	TEL NUMBER
Jennie Neill	<a href="mailto:Jennie.neill@stockport.gov.uk">Jennie.neill@stockport.gov.uk</a>	0161 474 4159
James Rowlands	<a href="mailto:James.rowlands@stockport.gov.uk">James.rowlands@stockport.gov.uk</a>	

## ISSUE RESOLUTION

In the event that an issue cannot be resolved by the named contacts, please contact:

NAME Jenny Stanton  
Employer and Partnership Manager- JCP MANCHESTER MIDDLETON

Tel No: 0161 429 2108 / M 07818011707

Email: [JENNY.STANTON@DWP.GSI.GOV.UK](mailto:JENNY.STANTON@DWP.GSI.GOV.UK)

NAME Jeanette Warburton  
Principal Lead Social Care and Commissioning

Tel No: 0161 475 6843 / M 07866 999502

Email: [jeanette.warburton@stockport.gov.uk](mailto:jeanette.warburton@stockport.gov.uk)

NAME Alison Blount  
Chief Revenues and Benefits Manager

Tel No: 0161 474 5107

Email: [alison.blounnt@stockport.gov.uk](mailto:alison.blounnt@stockport.gov.uk)

**Appendix 1**



**Private and Confidential**

To: DWP

Customer details:

Name:.....

Address:.....

Date of Birth:.....

National Number:.....

I am writing to confirm that the young person named above has been looked after by the Local Authority and will be leaving care on their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

The young person has made a claim to Jobseeker's Allowance *on line/phoned the Contact Centre (delete as appropriate)* and an appointment has been made to attend their local Jobcentre to make a claim for benefit.

The Young Person has been paid their Personal Allowance up to \_\_\_\_\_

Documents will be provided at the interview to confirm the young person's identity.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

ID for JCP appointment \_\_\_\_\_

Evidence to take like Learning Agreement \_\_\_\_\_

Current housing situation is:

- Local Authority Accommodation
- Private rented Accommodation
- Other accommodation (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

*Please ✓ tick your situation*

If more information is needed please contact Leaving Care Personal Adviser, name and contact details provided below.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Personal Adviser \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Number:.....

Duty Number: 0161 474 2300 (9.30am to 4.30pm)

## Appendix 2

The logo for Jobcentreplus, featuring the text "jobcentreplus" in a white sans-serif font on a red rounded rectangular background.

Young Person's name:  
Address:  
Date:

To whom it may concern,

We would like to share some of your personal details with the Leaving Care team at Stockport Council. We want to do this so that we can give you more help in finding a job or getting some training. We will keep a record of what information we have shared and you can ask for details of this.

We can only do this if you agree that we can. You can change your mind at any time. If you do not agree or if you change your mind it will not affect your entitlement to support from DWP or your Support Worker now or in the future.

If you change your mind get in touch with your Personal Adviser.

We will only share your personal information to:

- support your claim to benefits
- meet your needs and improve your chances of finding work or getting training
- help the Leaving Care Team to improve their services to you to help you live independently and get benefit and employment support

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I agree that my details can be shared between JCP and Stockport Council Leaving Care Team.

I understand that I can change my mind about the sharing of information at any time. This will not affect my entitlement to support from DWP or my Personal Adviser now or in the future.

I have had details of this form explained to me.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name  
(print) \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Care Leaver DWP Officer: Helen Tomlinson

Contact details: 07789 271377

DWP Adviser Name (print): Vicky Williamson

DWP Adviser (signed):.....Date:.....

Personal information we will share:

- Name
- Address
- National Insurance number
- Date of Birth
- Telephone Number
- Care leaver Legal status
- A copy of your Jobseeker's Agreement/Action Plan. This will help you and your support worker to prepare an individual plan that reflects actions agreed with your DWP adviser.
- Details of any time you do not go to your Jobcentre interviews. This will help the Care Leaving Care team to support you if you have any difficulties in going to interviews.

If you want us to stop sharing you details then please get in touch with you Personal Adviser.

**NB please note that a copy of this document should be retained by the following: the Customer, Benefit Centre, Jobcentre and the customer's Leaving Care Team.**

**Appendix 3**



**CARE LEAVER PRIORITY CLAIM**

Any questions or queries relating to customers leaving care or the communication process, please contact Jenny Stanton, JCP Manchester/ Middleton: E: [jenny.stanton@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:jenny.stanton@dwp.gsi.gov.uk) T 0161 429 2108: M: 07818011707

To:.....

From Stockport JCP

Attached is JSA claim from:

Name:.....

NINO:.....

Address:.....

The customer is supported by the Leaving Care team. Please arrange to Process the claim, with benefit payments to start on the customers 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday:date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed Adviser Helen Tomlinson.

Tel: 07789 271377

Date:.....