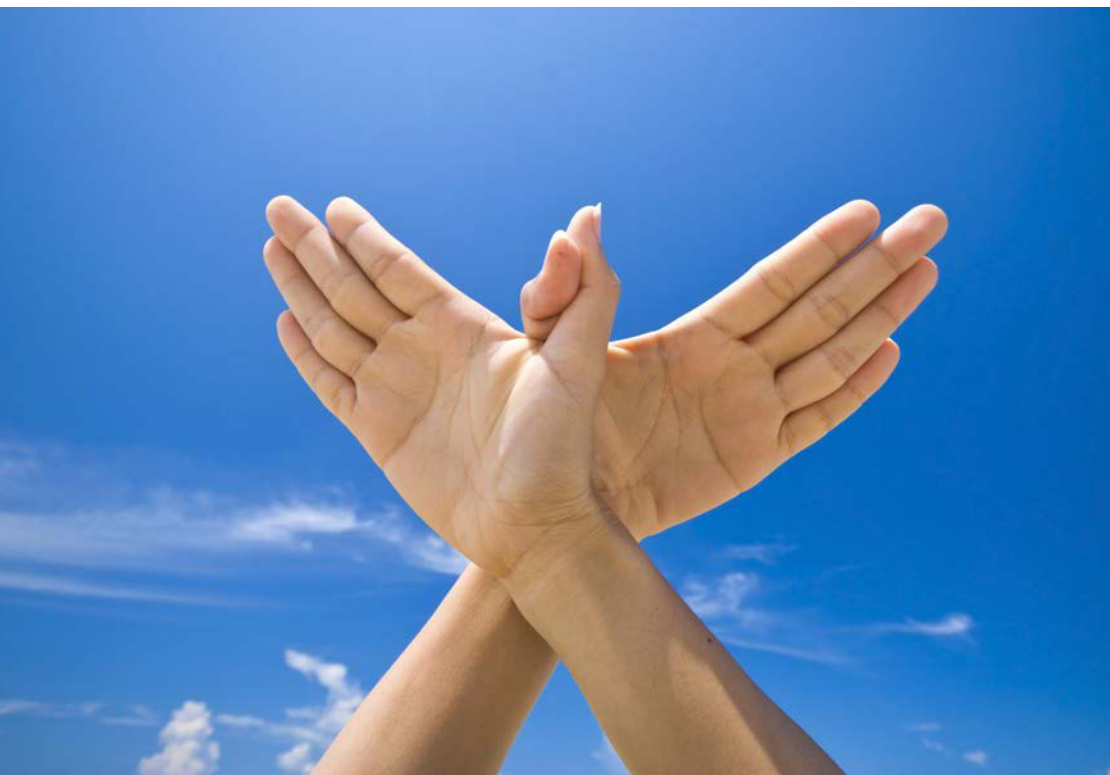




Lifeskills Reference Manual



# Welcome to Lifeskills

- Good morning and welcome to our Lifeskills room. We are pleased that you have decided to give your time here this morning as this is a very special place within the Mission. It helps people to move on, stabilise and sustain their life in a very positive way.
- We were very careful when naming this facility we provide for our service users; we did not want to be a social work room or an advice centre as this simply implies we sort out the problems for our clients. We are so much more than that.
- We provide a safe, cheerful environment that aids the people we work with to sort out their situation for themselves. We try to provide a relaxed atmosphere that gives a listening ear, and then encourage our users to think and sort out any problems using their own initiative; whether it be making a simple telephone call or engaging with outside agencies to deal with the problem in hand, benefits or court orders, bailiff letters and much more. We never know what challenges are going to come through the Lifeskills door, but you can be sure that just being there and being a mentor to help guide the person through the steps to help them through their current situation will be fully appreciated.
- Do not think that you will not be of any use or feel out of your depth, you will be hearing about situations you would normally deal with as a matter of course every day of your life. But to make you feel more comfortable, our Lifeskills co-ordinator will be with you every step of the way and will help and guide you through the morning.
- We are sure you will enjoy your time here this morning and take away with you a feeling of achievement and fulfilment.



# Introduction

## **Welcome**

Volunteers are a vital source of support for the staff and for those who use the Mission. Volunteers help with a range of activities including informally supporting centre users, serving tea, coffee and meals, sorting and distributing clothing, leading our client activity groups, fund-raising and administration.

We want to make sure you get the most from volunteering and are prepared.

Whether you plan on volunteering one hour a week, daily, one day a week, your efforts make a difference throughout the lives of the poor and homeless in London.

Thank you for your interest in Whitechapel Mission. We look forward to working with you in the future.

**Tony Miller**

Director

## Arrival

- Please arrive early and let the Mission know early if you are unable to make your session.
- Volunteers are given an induction by the Mission to go over the material contained in this booklet and to answer your questions. If you are ever uncertain about something, just ask.

## The impact you can have

Volunteers will find their role at Whitechapel Mission very rewarding. The relaxed and informal atmosphere provides opportunities for volunteers from all walks of life to play a part in helping us meet our clients' needs. Some of the benefits include:

- New experiences and having a great time
- Meeting new and like-minded people
- Gaining new skills
- Getting involved in the community
- Supporting homeless and disadvantaged people
- Gaining a qualification
- Starting on the road back to work
- Putting some structure back into the week

But don't just take our word for it...

## Testimonials

- *"Great experience; have signed up for regular slots"* – **Laura, Eversheds**
- *"This opened my eyes to the problems people face with day to day living"*  
– **Alisha, QMUL**
- *"It's great to be able to help people by showing them skills we all take for granted"* – **Olivia, RSA**



### **What can I expect?**

The services provided by Whitechapel Mission are used by a variety of people, not just the homeless. These include those who are vulnerably housed, people living in hostels, those with mental health issues and female sex workers.

Our service users use the Mission for a huge variety of reasons. These range from helping to support them in gaining secure housing to providing a hot breakfast in welcoming surroundings. Other services include:

- Health services
- Substance misuse advice
- Emergency housing
- Resettlement advice
- Women-only sessions
- Adult learning
- Creative groups

For general safety and conduct, please consult the Safety page.

### **Contacts**

Sue Miller – Day Centre Manager 020 7247 8280

Sonia Scott – Lifeskills Co-Ordinator 020 7392 2715

PLEASE ENSURE YOU HAVE HAD THE BUILDING INDUCTION – FIRE EXITS, TOILETS, HOSPITALITY

## Your Safety and Conduct

### Speaking to a client

- Please identify yourself by your first name and mention that you are a volunteer. “Good morning, I’m \*\*\*\*\*, a volunteer, what can I do for you today?”
- Try not to be too judgemental, have open body language whilst maintaining eye contact, but maintaining personal space
- Remember your personal boundaries – you are not friends having a chat, but do try to keep things informal.
- Never answer personal questions specifically; always answer generally and bring the conversation back to work, e.g. if asked where you live just answer North/South/East/West London, etc.
- Always listen carefully. SO IMPORTANT.
- Remember the client is divulging confidential information to you. So do please be sensitive and open-minded.
- Maintain your personal space but be relaxed about it.

### Dress Code

- Volunteers should be casual and conservative as business attire can be intimidating.
- Due to potential mental illness problems and potential safety issues, it is recommended that female volunteers do not wear low cut or short cut tops and short skirts.
- No valuables on display – Please use the lockers provided.





## General safety rules

- Only have one client per volunteer.
- NO volunteers will be left alone in the room with a client.
- All clients are classified by code numbers 1-5, 1 being No Risk and 5 being High Risk. As you are new, we will class everyone as a code 5 to ensure complete safety. This is just a precaution to keep you aware of your surroundings.
- Many clients will have some form of mental illness; this could be schizophrenia, depression or addiction – be aware and be sensitive.
- The aim of this room is to empower and build self-confidence among our users. We ask you to give your full attention to each person and not turn your back on them.
- Never give out your personal details, for example, telephone numbers, etc.
- First aid should only be given by staff due to H&S.
- Always sign in and out on the volunteer sheets.

## Obviously we could have an emergency

- If you feel uncomfortable or in any way in danger you should do one of two things:
  1. Excuse yourself and remove yourself from view. Go to the kitchen or toilet. See a staff member.
  2. Use the BUZZWORD. The co-ordinator will give you a word, if you use that word during the session, she will react and take over.

**Please sign and date here to indicate you have understood this information**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



## ACT Guide Index

**The ACT Database holds information on Whitechapel Mission's service users.**

**The data stored includes personal details about the service users (name, phone number), plus notes on the visits made to the Lifeskills centre, in order to track work undertaken.**

### **Logging In**

Start button → click the ACT Icon → Log On screen appears. Log on under “volunteer”.

### **Creating a New Record:**

Select the “Contact” menu → select “New Contact” → Contact screen appears.

Enter as much information about the contact as you can gather.

Id/status and sexuality are both mandatory fields (under ID/Status please select “”).

Complete the notes field with a summary of the action taken and any recommendation made to the client.

Do not forget to save the contact (select “file” → “save”).

### **Searching for a Contact:**

Select the “Lookup” menu → select “Contact” → Contact search screen opens.

Select the relevant field to search by in the “look in this field” drop down (this will usually be “Contact”).

Enter all or part of the search criteria, e.g. the first few letters of the client's name and click “OK”.

A list of clients who match the criteria entered will appear: double click on the contact you need and their contacts page will open.

### **Faxes / Printing / Webcam**

Each computer is linked to a printer on the desk, so just press print and use the default set-up.

There is one fax machine available, clients are free to come and make use of this, within reason.

Whitechapel has facilities for taking photos on a webcam (for client ID etc.).

# Whitechapel Mission client form

**(volunteers can use this form if unable to use the ACT database while talking to a client)**

Volunteers should check that the client is happy to talk and does not require a scheduled later appointment alone with Sonia.

Name:	
Known as:	Mr/Miss/Mrs/Ms/Other.....
Salutation:	
Phone:	
Mobile:	
Date of Birth:	
Gender:	Male / Female
NI Number:	
Next of Kin:	
Nationality:	

Volunteer	
Date	

Sexuality:	OPTIONS
Ethnicity:	OPTIONS
Address:	
Accommodation status:	OPTIONS / Confirmed or Evidence?
Passport number:	
Any form of ID shown:	OPTIONS / Copy taken
Chain number:	
HPU registered:	
Nationality:	

**ADDICTION, SUBSTANCE, SPECIAL NEEDS OTHER  
OPTIONS OFF ACT FRONT SCREEN**

**Why was the client here and what services did we provide?**

**What was your feeling on the general status and wellbeing of the client?**

Has this been logged on ACT?

YES / NO



### **Typical daily tasks:**

In addition to working with clients there are a range of daily tasks. The Lifeskills centre opens at 9am, please arrive 15 minutes beforehand to help check the items on this list:

- Check for phone messages by dialling #.
- Check emails.
- Check office diary and put entries on whiteboard.
- Give tickets to clients outside the door asking what support they need to prioritise, e.g. benefits, housing, homelessness, c/o addresses, etc.
  - Hostel referrals require an appointment due to time involved, usually around 11am.
  - People that wish to be seen privately can make an appointment.
- Phone up emergency night shelters (all year round) and check for vacancies; book all of them if possible and put up on the board.
- Make sure all information entered into ACT.
- Ensure all information filed or shredded.
- Log-off computer.
- Debrief with supervisor for 10 minutes at end of the session.

### **Breakfast criteria**

An emergency free breakfast can be offered in certain circumstances to a client (or to cover the weekend) if they are working with the Lifeskills on benefit issues.

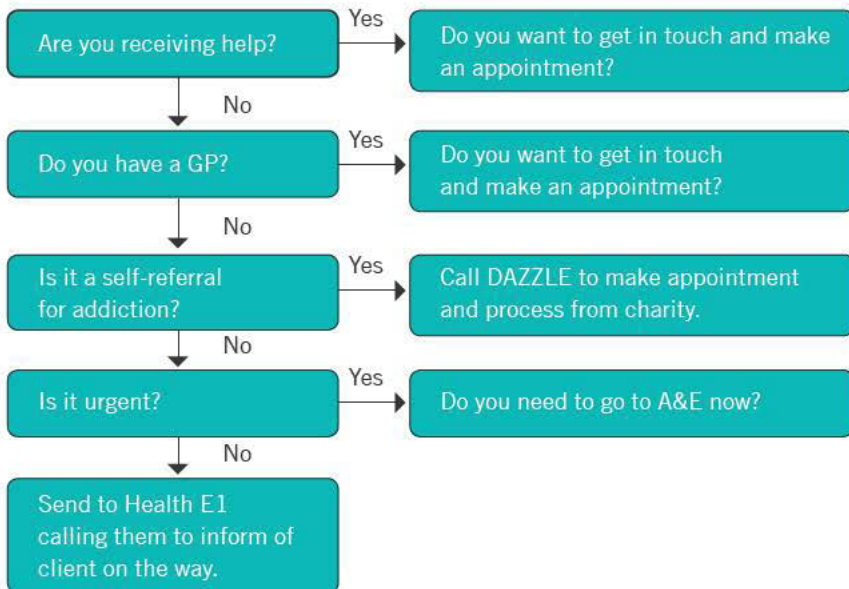
## Training

The training needs of the clients can be very diverse. The main referral jobs clinic is with Veronica, held on Wednesdays 2-4pm at Crisis in Commercial Street.

IT training and certification is possible (EDLC) but requires the client to make an appointment so the volunteer/client will not be in the way during a Lifeskills morning.

## Medical

In many cases clients seeking help are already receiving help.





# Setting up a Mail Contract

## **What is it?**

A mail contract is set up for people with no way of communicating by post. It is intended for use by people of 'no fixed abode' (NFA).

## **What can it be used for?**

Post can be addressed to the individual using 'Care of Whitechapel Mission' and should be mainly used for benefits.

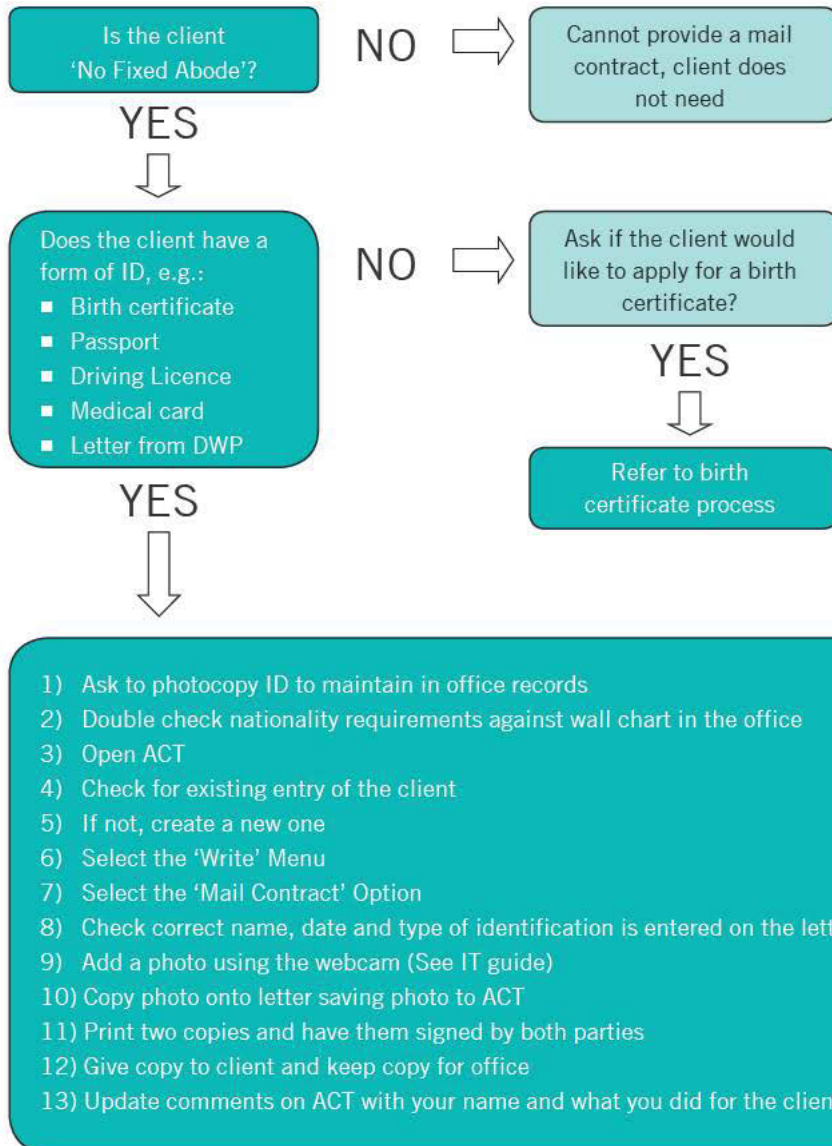
## **What it should not be used for**

It cannot be used for credit cards, bank accounts or DVLA correspondence.

## **What happens after the contract is completed?**

Once the signed copy has gone to the office, a spreadsheet is updated with the client's details. Mail is then sorted upon arrival with new post for the client being displayed on the screen in the main hall.









# Providing an ID Letter

## **What is it?**

A letter addressed from Whitechapel Mission identifying the individual for benefit or other purposes.

## **Who can provide a letter?**

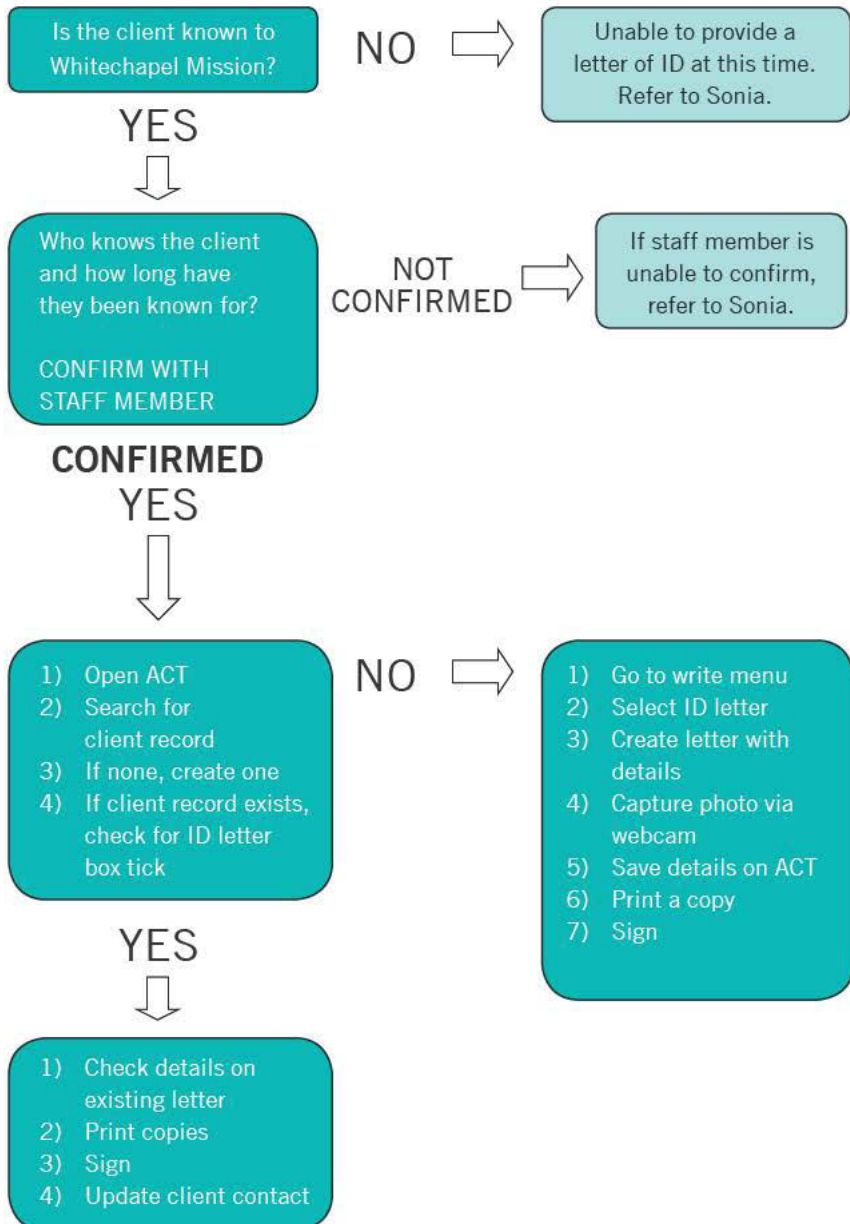
Any staff member can provide it as long as the individual is confirmed by Sonia or someone else as being a known individual.

## **When an ID letter should not be provided**

A letter should not be provided when the individual is not known to Whitechapel Mission.

## **What happens after the letter is completed?**

A copy is simply given to the client.





# Birth Certificate

## **What is it?**

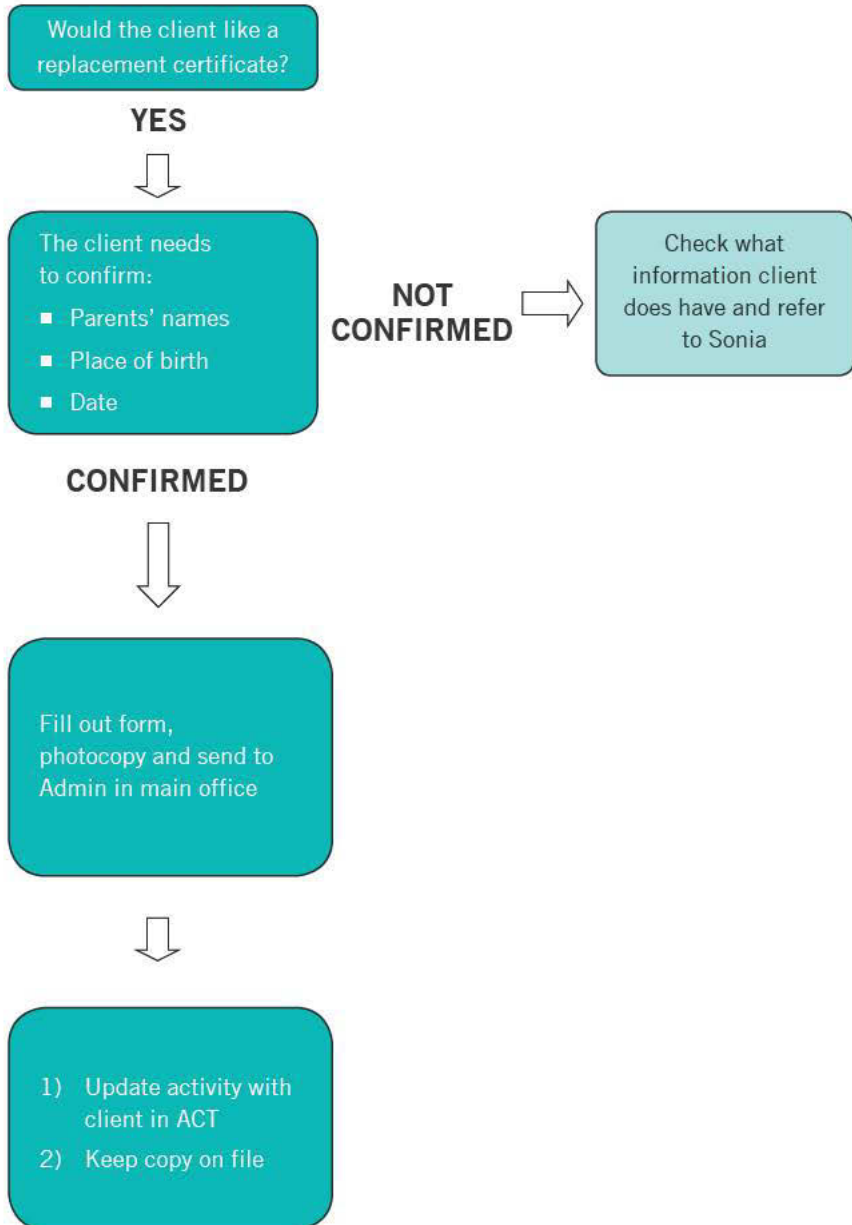
A replacement birth certificate for clients in case they have lost it, have no ID or simply want the Mission to keep one.

## **Who can request a certificate?**

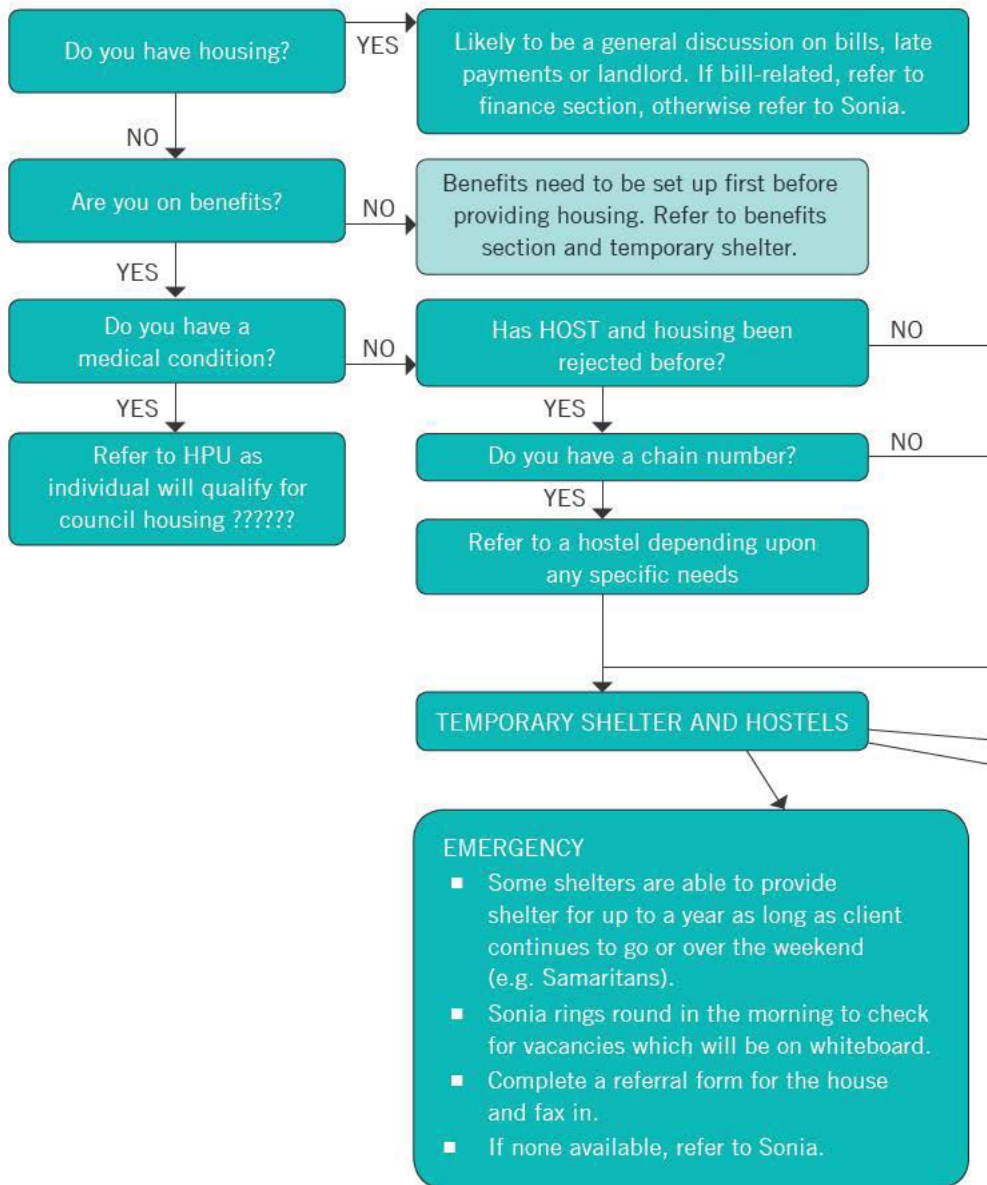
Anyone with no ID and/or no means of paying.

## **What happens after the form is completed?**

The office will send the application off and the birth certificate will be given to the client once it arrives.



# Housing Requests



Complete a HOST form – if client has been to prison, has a criminal record, has been evicted for non-payment or an ASBO – only refer to hostel not private

A rough sleeper needs to be seen three times on the street to be given a number.

- Check where client is living on the wall chart.
- Use streetrescue form for the blue areas.
- White areas needs the specific local authority form from website for filing.

## VULNERABLE

There are a wide range of hostels available for specific needs including (see box to the right):

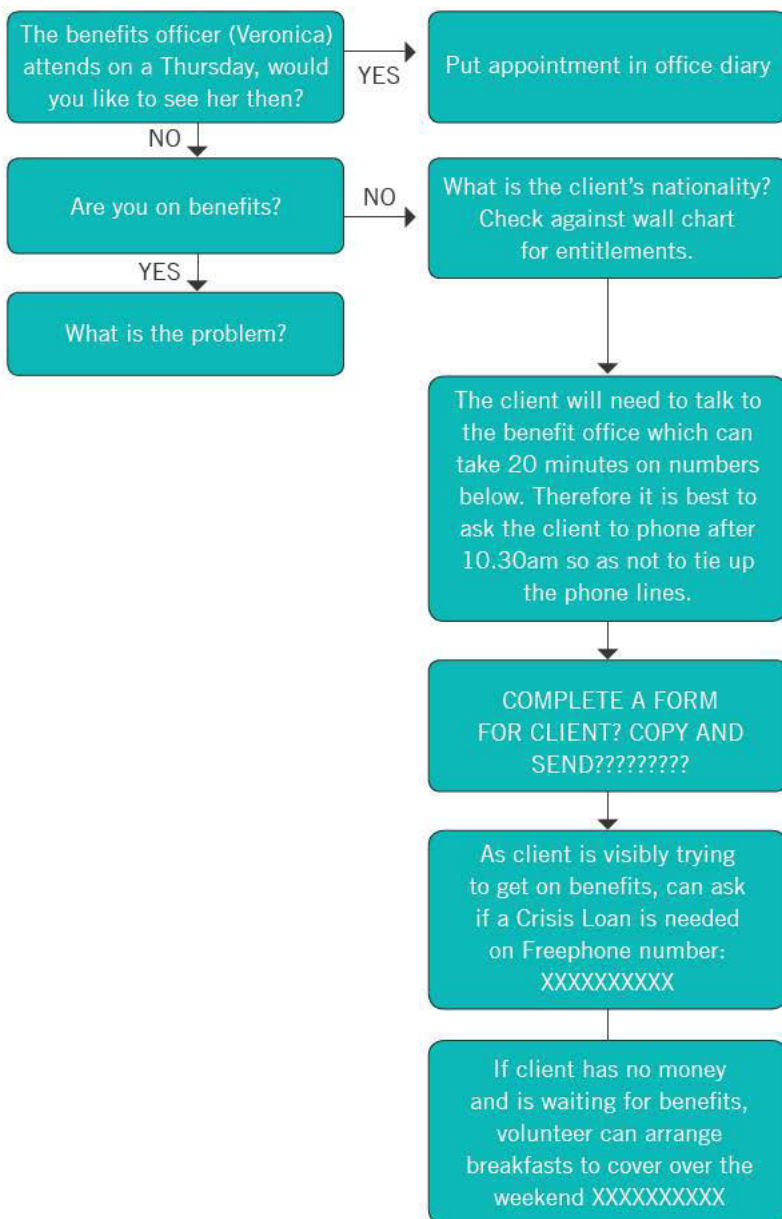
- Male only
- Female only
- Mixed
- Couple only
- Singles only
- Animals allowed
- Wet (Alcohol allowed)
- Dry (No alcohol allowed)
- Ethnic specific

## NIGHT SHELTERS

- **Hopetown** (Female Only) (020 7539 9240)
- **Dock Street** (Mixed and High Drug Use) (020 7471 1326)
- **Booth House** (Men Only) (020 7392 9490)
- **Edward Gibbons** (Men Only and Alcohol allowed) (020 8983 1983)



## Benefits





<p><b>Jobseekers Allowance</b></p> <p>Payable to adults actively seeking work. Jobseeker must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Be available for work</li> <li>■ Be actively seeking work</li> <li>■ Be capable of work</li> <li>■ Enter into jobseeker's agreement which remains in force</li> <li>■ Not be in paid work of 16 or more hours' duration or full time education</li> </ul>	<p><b>Notes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Must attend two weekly signing meetings</li> <li>■ Restart interview after six months</li> <li>■ Can be stopped if not seeking or unavailable</li> <li>■ A hardship fund can be obtained if in a vulnerable group</li> <li>■ Must inform if in work, volunteering, training, hospital or prison</li> </ul>
<p><b>Details</b></p> <p>Over 25 years old – £60.50, under £47.95                  0800 055 66 88  <a href="http://www.dwp.gov.uk/advisers">www.dwp.gov.uk/advisers</a></p>	
<p><b>Income Support/Employment Support Allowance</b></p> <p>Payable to people aged 16-59 who are too sick to work and not enough NI for incapacity benefit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Lone parents</li> <li>■ Registered sick or disabled</li> <li>■ Students who are lone parent or disabled</li> <li>■ Caring for sick or elderly</li> <li>■ Cannot have savings over £16k, be working for less than 16 hours</li> </ul>	<p><b>Notes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Means tested on personal circumstances</li> <li>■ Get free dental, free prescription, housing benefit, council tax benefit</li> <li>■ If moving into hostel must notify benefit office</li> <li>■ Replaced by Employment and Support Allowance from Oct 2008 which requires planning to return to work</li> </ul>
<p><b>Details</b></p> <p>£60.50, except if sick for over 364 days continuously and over 25 years old, for which they get £86.35                  0800 055 66 88  <a href="http://www.dwp.gov.uk/eservice">www.dwp.gov.uk/eservice</a>  <a href="http://www.dwp.gov.uk/advisers">www.dwp.gov.uk/advisers</a></p>	

## Benefits Continued...

<p><b>Incapacity Benefit</b></p> <p>Payable to adults who are not capable of work who have paid enough NI:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Referred by doctor with medical certificate</li><li>■ Benefits department will check client's NI contributions</li><li>■ An application for income support/ESA should be made too, just in case of insufficient NI</li></ul>	<p><b>Notes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ A personal capability assessment is carried out with questionnaire on client's ability to perform tasks, e.g. how long can you stand?</li><li>■ Change of address notification is vital</li><li>■ A form to obtain free NHS prescriptions/benefits should also be completed (HC1), obtainable from 0845 850 1166</li></ul>
<p><b>Details</b></p> <p>£84.50 (Long Term) / Under pension age £75.40-£63.75 (Short Term) 0800 055 66 88 <a href="http://www.dwp.gov.uk/eservice">www.dwp.gov.uk/eservice</a> <a href="http://www.dwp.gov.uk/advisers">www.dwp.gov.uk/advisers</a> <a href="http://www.direct.gov.uk/disability">www.direct.gov.uk/disability</a></p>	
<p><b>Disability Living Allowance</b></p> <p>A benefit for people under 65 who need help to look after themselves, keep safe or get around:</p> <p>CARE – need help washing, dressing, eating, using the toilet, communicating OR need for supervision to stop being a danger to themselves or someone else and being unable to prepare a meal themselves.</p>	<p><b>Notes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ You can get Disability Living Allowance whether or not you work</li><li>■ It isn't usually affected by any savings or income</li><li>■ You don't usually need a medical to claim DLA</li></ul>

MOBILITY – unable or virtually unable to walk, need help outdoors due to being deaf/blind, severe mental and behavioural impairment, illness which walking impairs their life, needs guidance/supervision from another person when walking outdoors. This must occur even with use of equipment/aids and must have had condition for three months and expected for another six.

**Details**

At least £17.75 for each element CARE and MOBILITY

0800 88 22 00 (if a form is requested via this line – it will be treated as date of claim)

Forms can be downloaded or obtained from job centre plus or social security office.

[www.dwp.gov.uk/advisers/claimsforms](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/advisers/claimsforms)

[www.direct.gov.uk/disability](http://www.direct.gov.uk/disability)

## Benefits Continued...

### **Pension Credit and Retirement Pension**

Paid to people over 60, to ensure that pensioners have a guaranteed level of income:

- Means tested taking savings and income into account, including any State Retirement Pension (£90.70 for enough NI for men over 65 and women over 60)
- If not enough NI has been paid will only get a percentage

### **Notes**

- Winter fuel payments payable to people over 60 in w/c 3 Sept. If payments not automatically received, claims must be made before 31 March following the above date. If user was 60 or over in 2000, but did not receive a Winter Fuel Payment, they can claim one now from [www.thepensionerservice.gov.uk](http://www.thepensionerservice.gov.uk)
- If over 80, some state retirement pension is available even if NI low
- State retirement pension is payable in hospital

### **Details**

Pension credit for single person £124.05, higher for severe disability  
0800 99 1234

Form BR19. Claims made to 0845 300 1084. NI number and ID required

Winter fuel: 08459 151515

### Attendance Allowance

A benefit for people with care needs who are over 65. It does not include help for mobility needs (unless claiming DLA mobility allowance previously):

- Condition for six months or terminally ill (use DS1500 form from GP or hospital)
- Care for bodily functions (e.g. washing, getting dressed, going to toilet, social activities, stop being a danger to themselves/others or terminally ill)

### Notes

- Can be from mental illness, disability or physical ill health
- Attendance allowance cannot be backdated before the first contact with DWP/Social Security Agency
- Form has to be returned in allotted time

### Details

Lower rate for frequent care through day or night of £44.85

Higher rate of £67 for frequent care through day or night or for those who are terminally ill

0800 882200

[www.dwp.gov.uk/disability](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/disability)

[www.dwp.gov.uk/advisers](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/advisers)



## Benefits Continued...

### Social Fund

**Crisis loans:** available to help people with their immediate short-term needs in a crisis. Benefits receipt not required

**Budgeting loans:** Interest-free loan for intermittent expenses after a period on JSA Incapacity benefit or pension credit

**Community Care Grants:** Non-repayable grants to help people live independently in the community

### Notes

CRISIS: In an emergency, or as a result of disaster, and without the loan there will be a serious damage or risk to their health and safety. If the person is also receiving CCG, a loan may be payable to pay rent in advance to a non-local authority landlord. No set limit for crisis loans

BUDGETING: Available to people who have claimed JSA, IS or PC for at least 26 weeks and who need help to pay for any of the following: furniture or household equipment; clothing or footwear; advance rent or removal expenses for a new home; travelling expenses; things to help them look for or start work; improving, maintaining or securing their home. £100-£1,500

COMMUNITY CARE GRANTS: Awarded for ex-rough sleepers/homeless providing they are on a 'Programme of Planned Resettlement'. Need is assessed via 'Statement of Needs' form. Demands should be realistic, e.g. Argos not Harrods. Provide supporting evidence

### Details

Varies.

SF30 form

[www.dwp.gov.uk/advisers/claimforms](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/advisers/claimforms)

[www.dwp.gov.uk/advisers/sb16](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/advisers/sb16)

## Birth Certificates

Generally clients come to the Mission with several basic problems below.

- **Utilities** – People are unable to pay their bills or have got behind on payments.
- **Arrears** – General bills and other household payments which are too much or behind on payments.
- **Bailiffs** – When bailiffs are in the client's property or threatening to repossess goods. If the client has no goods, they cannot repossess.

Most companies seeking payment are more than happy to discuss a longer repayment period for smaller amounts.

1. Call the company
2. Ask to stagger payments at a lower rate which the client can afford
3. Fax a signed offer and copy of the client expenditure



Work with the client to fill in a form below to help budget and deal with any problem payments.

Name:			
NI Number:			
Date of Birth:			
Reference:			
Address:			
<b>Income</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Average weekly wage		Rent	
Fortnightly wage		Loans	
Monthly wage		Public transport	
Child benefit		Council tax	
Child tax credit		Gas	
DLA		Electric	
Pension		TV licence	
Income support		Telephone	
Other benefits		Fines	
Other		Food/Housekeeping	
		Cigarettes/Alcohol	
		Other	
<b>Total</b>		<b>Total</b>	