

Series No		On desk date	
Contact	Adviceline: 01253-848000	To	All IS and JSA Staff

The 23 day rule does not apply to this bulletin.

The contents of this bulletin can be made available to the public on request.

Classification	Subject	Paragraph	Action
New Information	<i>Revised Model National Service Level Agreement for benefit administration between Jobcentre Plus and Local Authorities</i>	1	<i>For the attention of all Benefit Managers and Financial Assessor Managers</i>

Managers Action:

Benefit Managers should also make appropriate front line staff aware of relevant parts of the SLA

The requirements and monitoring arrangements to support this Service Level Agreement (SLA) will take effect from 1 April 2006. Sign-off of the new SLA by all parties will be required.

Consultation has taken place on the SLA and it is now ready for use. Please consider the implications on your own procedures of the revised requirements and the monitoring arrangements required to support the SLA 2006/07

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Background

- 1.1 The creation of Jobcentre Plus, The Pension Service, The Appeals Service, The Rent Service and the introduction of New Tax Credits administered by HM Revenues and Customs means that there are now several partners upon which Local Authorities (LAs) rely to ensure effective delivery of Housing and Council Tax Benefit. Each of these partners has an SLA with the Local Authorities. The attached SLA (see Annex B) provides the minimum standards for effective liaison between Local Authorities and Jobcentre Plus and sets out the obligations required of both parties. These standards have been developed jointly by Jobcentre Plus (National Tier and field) and LA representatives and take account of recommendations made in the 2003 Benefit Fraud Inspectorate report. The SLA includes additional requirements to reflect ongoing changes within Jobcentre Plus including the move to integrated Jobcentre Plus offices, the introduction of the Customer Management System (CMS) and the centralisation of benefit processing. Local agreements may therefore be necessary to cover circumstances relevant to the local position in the roll out programme.

1.2 National Framework Agreement

From June 2004, a National Framework Agreement (see Annex A) has been put in place which lays down the common principles that should be embraced in individual DWP Business SLAs with Local Authorities. This framework document sits alongside the Jobcentre Plus SLA and both documents are intended to promote greater focus on working together and the resolution of day to day problems through dialogue at the appropriate level.

1.3 Action required

Agreement of standards between both parties & sign off of the agreed SLA at District level.

1.4 End of year action

At the end of March 2007, the relevant business unit manager and LA benefits manager should complete an end of year certificate confirming that the SLA has been reviewed and that all monitoring arrangements have been complied with.

National Framework Agreement

1. This National Framework Agreement recognises that there will be a requirement for a number of the businesses that collectively form The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to enter into Service Level Agreements (SLAs) that describe the day to day working practices and standards between those businesses and Local Authorities (LAs).
2. This Framework document lays down the overarching common principles that should be embraced in each of the individual SLAs, with a view to creating a greater focus on working together to understand any issues that may arise through promoting liaison and dialogue as the means of resolving them, rather than merely laying down standards that are required to be met.
3. DWP SLAs that are covered by these overarching principles are:
 - The Pension Service
 - Jobcentre Plus
 - The Appeals Service (until transfer to DCA)
 - Financial Services Division – Debt Management
 - Rent Service (DWP Agency from 01/04/2004)

This document has been endorsed by the Local Authority Associations.

Introduction

Local Authorities

4. Local Authorities have a key role in supporting government objectives in relation to placing people in work and removing people from poverty through delivery of Housing and Council Tax Benefit. Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit is an important part of welfare provision designed to enable people on lower incomes access to a decent home. It also plays a key part in enabling people to make the transition from welfare into work.

Department for Work and Pensions

5. The Department for Work and Pensions is committed to eradicating poverty for children, combating pensioner poverty and sustaining a higher proportion of people in work than ever before, whilst providing security for those who can't work. DWP has been created specifically to improve and tailor services to customers

The Pension Service

6. The aim of The Pension Service is to combat poverty and promote security and independence for today's and future pensioners. In addition, The Pension Service will develop and implement local services through a local service plan that will be co-terminus with LA boundaries. These plans will involve a range of partners including LAs.

Jobcentre Plus

7. The aim of Jobcentre Plus is to help more people into work, help employers fill their vacancies, and to provide people of working age with the help and support to which they are entitled. An important feature of the organisation will be the alignment of Jobcentre Plus and LA boundaries. This development should bring benefits for DWP, LAs and our common customers.

The Appeals Service

8. The Appeals Service hears appeals on decisions on Social Security benefits, Child Support, Vaccine Damage, Tax Credit, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit and Compensation Recovery questions throughout Great Britain and on decisions under the Road Traffic Act In England and Wales.

Financial Services Division – Debt Management

9. Debt Management (DM) is the organisation responsible for delivering debt management and recovery service for the DWP; this responsibility includes, in certain circumstances, the recovery of HB/CTB overpayment on behalf of LAs. DM has overall responsibility to support the DWP in the reduction in losses from fraud and error in programme spends, by the efficient and effective collection of debt.

The Rent Service

10. The Rent Service (TRS) is an executive agency of the DWP. Its aim is to be England's leading provider of impartial, professional rental valuation services that are fair to our customers and other stakeholders. TRS makes fair rent evaluations for regulated and secure tenancies, and determines whether Housing Benefit customers (and prospective customers) are being asked to pay more rent than their landlords might reasonably expect in open market conditions.

The Purpose of SLAs

11. The SLAs described in this document are intended to improve quality of services and secure application of minimum standards by the parties to the agreements. The SLAs also encourage closer working through dialogue and liaison and the development of a better understanding of our procedures in order to provide the best possible customer experience. Whilst individual SLAs will set out the minimum standards but both parties are encouraged to build on the SLAs to reflect local needs.

Reviews and Disagreements

12. All SLAs must contain arrangements for monitoring performance throughout the year plus arrangements for a full joint review of progress at the end of the business year. SLAs should run from April – March. It is important that a process for resolving disagreements at the lowest practicable level is described in all SLAs.

Monitoring Arrangements

13. Monitoring of the arrangements set out in the SLA in relation to performance against minimum standards and day to day liaison arrangements is essential. It is important that where minimum standards are not being achieved that this is not used as a reason to refuse to sign the SLA. Instead the SLA should be used as a vehicle to promote dialogue in relation to the minimum standards with a view to agreeing the actions that are required in order that the standards can be achieved or aspired to at some future date. Liaison arrangements are the key feature of all SLAs and these arrangements should be regularly monitored to ensure that in ever changing circumstances they meet the needs of all parties.

Nominated Officers

14. Each party to an SLA should appoint a nominated officer to whom day to day problems can be addressed. This officer can also be the conduit for ensuring that any disagreements are handled at the most appropriate level. The appointed officer should also take responsibility for ensuring that full contact details are provided where issues need to be escalated. This will allow day to day business between the parties to be expedited in the most efficient manner.

Customer Compliance Liaison

15. Customer Compliance has been introduced in Jobcentre Plus from April 2006 to make sure customers know exactly what their responsibilities are, especially reporting changes in their circumstances when they happen. Customer Compliance teams will be based in Jobcentres and will deal with customer error and the cases that are unsuitable for criminal fraud

investigation because they have not passed the risk scoring process, in a faster and more cost-effective manner. They will perform robust customer interviews designed to find and fix incorrectness and ensure future customer compliance by getting the customer to sign an undertaking to fulfil their responsibilities of reporting changes of circumstance on time.

16. The process has been developed in such a way that each referral will be checked for any notified Local Authority investigation *before* it is considered for Customer Compliance action and no further action will be taken if an LA investigation exists. This will avoid any Customer Compliance action taking place whilst there is an existing Local Authority investigation. However, although there should not be any direct interaction between the Local Authorities and Customer Compliance teams, **Jobcentres must provide Local Authorities with a named Customer Compliance contact at the SLA sign-off meeting**, in case the process breaks down or other problems occur.

Cross Referral to other SLAs

17. All parties need to note that where it is necessary to cross refer to arrangements specified in another organisation's SLA it is not acceptable to say "See.....SLA". The actual process to be conveyed must be detailed in each SLA.

Principles of Sign-Up

18. All parties should do everything in their power to establish the necessary dialogue and create the correct circumstances that will lead to sign-up of the SLAs. This must involve discussion regarding day to day liaison, minimum standards and monitoring and disagreement procedures.

Future Arrangements

19. As individual DWP Businesses evolve and closer working arrangements between DWP Businesses and Local Authorities become better established, individual SLAs and this framework document will need to change. It is important that the Businesses recognise that changes to individual model SLAs or this document require clearance through the Practitioners Operational Group (POG).

The following table lists the services and performance requirements against which standards will be measured and reports made:
N.B All monitoring undertaken must be recorded.

PART 1: New Claims

No.	Requirement	Standard	By Whom	Monitoring/Additional notes
1	<p>In offices using CMS, the LA Input Document to be forwarded on completion of <u>all</u> information gathering and verification of the associated IS/JSA/IB claim(s),</p> <p>On receipt of the input document, LA to return the reply slip to the FAAT</p> <p>Where officers are not yet operating CMS, or are under clerical contingencies, customer to be instructed to return HB/CTB claim forms directly to the LA. In the event of any fully or partially completed HB/CTB claim being received in the Jobcentre Plus office, forward to appropriate LA benefits section.</p> <p>Forms to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> stamped with the date of receipt at the Jobcentre Plus office. 	<p>100% of LA Input Documents to be forwarded within 2 working days of <u>full</u> information gather and the evidence (that customer can reasonably be expected to provide) in support of their primary benefit claims being provided to Jobcentre Plus.</p> <p>100% within 2 days of receipt of the input document</p> <p>100% within two working days of the date of receipt of the HB/CTB claim at the Jobcentre office, or as soon as is reasonably practicable thereafter.</p>	<p>Financial Assessors Administration Team (FAAT)</p> <p>LA staff</p> <p>Customer service and benefit processing staff at Jobcentre Plus.</p>	<p>Monitoring should be carried out every 6 months, as a minimum, and should establish that all LA Input Documents have any appropriate associated documentation (eg JCP 25) and are being issued to the LA within the timescales.</p> <p>Spot checks to be performed by supervisor to ensure that the HB/CTB claim forms are forwarded to the LAs within the required timescales.</p>

No.	Requirement	Standard	By Whom	Monitoring/Additional notes
2	<p>In offices using CMS; At the point the customer statement is issued, the Case Notes Screen to be annotated with the date the customer statement is issued with a disclosure to LA only.</p> <p>Where CMS has not been implemented, or clerical contingencies are in place, provide the customer with the HB/CTB claim form and benefit information leaflets, on new claims and changes of address.</p> <p>Note the HB/CTB claim form with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the date of first contact • the date of issue • the type of any other DWP benefit being claimed 	<p>100% of cases to be annotated appropriately</p> <p>100% of cases to be issued with the correct annotated forms on the date of the request.</p>	<p>First Contact Admin Team or FAAT (depending on who issues the customer statement)</p> <p>Benefit processing or customer services staff at Jobcentre Plus.</p>	<p>This requirement is necessary because HB/CTB date of claim rules have changed. By entering the information in the Case Notes Screen the date will be provided to the LA on the LA input document within case notes. This is an interim measure agreed between JCP and LAs pending future revision of the customer statement</p> <p>Not required.</p>

PART 2: Extended Payments

No	Requirement	Standard	By Whom	Monitoring/Additional notes
3	<p>Identify IS/JSA claims where a customer satisfies the conditions for a HB/CTB Extended Payment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Record details in IS110/ JA110 <p>For wholly clerical cases, include the information in the end of entitlement notice that is sent to the LA and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For IS customers Appendix 2 of Is GAP Circular 1/01. • For JSA customers Appendix 7 of JSA circular 3/01 	100% of cases to be correctly included	Benefit processing staff at either Jobcentre Plus or the LA must be able to identify customers who maybe entitled to an extended payment and take the appropriate action.	<p>Jobcentre Plus would have difficulty monitoring notifications made by ETD, while the LA would have difficulty identifying cases where the information was totally missed out. It is suggested that this issue be addressed locally, for example, problems to be picked up at 6 monthly contact meetings,</p> <p>Spot checks to be performed by Jobcentre Plus supervisor on clerical NHB(IS) forms to ensure that the information is correct.</p>
4	<p>Identify claims where a customer is entitled to Mortgage Interest Run-On (MIRO).</p> <p>Record details in IS110/ JA110</p> <p>For wholly clerical cases, include the information in the end of entitlement notice that is sent to the LA and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For IS customers Appendix 2 of Is GAP Circular 1/01. • For JSA customers Appendix 7 of JSA circular 3/01 	100% of cases to be correctly included	Benefit processing staff at either Jobcentre Plus or LA must be able to identify customers who maybe entitled to MIRO and take the appropriate action.	See above.

PART 3: Notifications

No	Requirement	Standard	By Whom	Monitoring/Additional notes
5	<p>Notify the Local Authority benefits section, for cases with a HB/CTB interest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • date IS/JSA(IB) entitlement commences • date IS/JSA entitlement ceases and the reason. • date IS/JSA(IB) withheld/suspended, with the accompanying reasons, and • dates when IS/JSA(IB) reinstated 	<p>100% within 2 working days from the day of determination or re-determination of the IS/JSA(Income-Based) claim.</p>	<p>Benefit processing staff at Jobcentre Plus</p>	<p>Notifications of IS/JSA allowance / disallowance are now issued by ETD with the following exceptions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wholly clerical cases. • Suspension of IS/JSA(IB) and any subsequent reinstatement. • If IS/JSA ceases and the actual date of disentitlement is not entered on ISCS/JSAPS e.g. if the date of disallowance is more than 14 months ago, or a retrospective period of disallowance comes to light and the customer still has current entitlement. <p>In all the above circumstances clerical notification NHB(IS)/NHB(JSA) will be required</p> <p>Spot checks to be performed by Jobcentre Plus supervisor on clerical notifications to ensure that the information is correct and is issued to the LAs within the required timescales.</p>

No	Requirement	Standard	By Whom	Monitoring/Additional notes
6	<p>Notify reported changes of circumstances to the other party when HB/CTB has been claimed in connection with a claim to IS/JSA (IB) with the relevant date of change. Where the change is for HB/CTB elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to non dependants (numbers, status, income etc) • partners circumstances • address, including temporary changes, and • admission/discharge to hospital <p>Where the change is for IS/JSA(IB) elements, all changes except:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tenancy matters • landlord issues, and • rent queries 	<p>100% within 5 working days from the date of determination or re-determination of the income based claim. Section 122D of the Social Security Administration Act 1992 refers.</p>	<p>Benefit processing staff at either Jobcentre Plus or the LA depending on where the change is reported.</p>	<p>Spot checks to be performed on clerical notifications to ensure that the information is correct and issued to the LA/ Jobcentre Plus office within the required timescales</p>
7	<p>Jobcentre Plus to ensure that all clerical cases with a HB interest are clearly annotated as such.</p>	<p>100% of clerical cases to be correctly included.</p>	<p>Benefit processing staff at Jobcentre Plus.</p>	<p>Not required</p>
8	<p>LA notify Jobcentre Plus offices of any indicators they identify as incorrectly set</p>	<p>All cases to be notified as soon as practicable after identification</p>	<p>Benefit processing staff at LAs</p>	<p>Not required</p>

PART 4: Liaison Between LA's and DWP

No	Requirement	Standard	By Whom	Monitoring/Additional notes
9	Maintain regular contact between all associated Local Authorities and Jobcentre Plus through both a nominated representative and a member of the senior management team. Meetings to be held every 6 months, as a minimum, and formally minuted. Senior management should attend a minimum of one meeting each year. Other interested parties such as, welfare groups etc to attend as appropriate.	Meetings to be held at least 6 monthly to discuss monitoring performance	Staff at the appropriate management level (eg those with the responsibility to make decisions) within Jobcentre Plus and LA.	<p>Depending on where the Jobcentre Plus office is in the rollout programme, ensure that all relevant contingent parts are included in the liaison meetings, eg representatives from processors, contact centres and front line officers.</p> <p>In some areas regular contact between Jobcentre Plus and LAs is generally on an informal basis with meetings as and when required. While these arrangements should be promoted it is suggested that in order to discuss performance requirements regular meetings are set up (six monthly is recommended) which are minuted and attended at some time by a member of the senior management team. The level of that representation should be decided at a local level. Minutes to be distributed to closer working representatives on Fraud.</p>
10	Relevant Jobcentre Plus staff to participate in exchange visits with LA staff.	New staff to visit within 6-12 months or as part of their training/induction, wherever reasonably practical. Other relevant staff to be encouraged to visit. Visits to be arranged in consultation between nominated liaison officers.	Staff at all levels including senior management within Jobcentre Plus and LA.	Managers at both Jobcentre Plus offices and LAs to ensure there is joint local agreement on a manageable programme of exchange visits.

No	Requirement	Standard	By Whom	Monitoring/Additional notes
11	<p>Discuss and agree the potential for local joint projects. Suggested projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint training courses • Publicise each other's benefits • Take- up campaigns 	<p>All projects to be registered by Jobcentre Plus with the nominated contact point within the Field Director's / Operations Director's office</p>	<p>Staff with the relevant management experience and authority to agree joint projects within Jobcentre Plus and LA.</p>	<p>While monitoring is not required, it is important that local joint projects are registered to ensure that where similar initiatives are being, or have been carried out in other areas that the findings in those areas can, where applicable, be shared.</p>
12	<p>In offices operating RATS (ie Customer Information System has not yet rolled out), where requests are received from the LA for further information that is not available through the RATS system, arrangements to be made to provide details within agreed timescales</p>	<p>Requests for information are cleared within 2 working days of referral to Jobcentre Plus Office</p>	<p>Benefit processing staff in Jobcentre Plus</p>	<p>Although the decisions on the timescales for responding to enquiries from the LA should be made at local level, it is suggested that where possible, replies to those enquiries should be made within 2 working days of receipt at Jobcentre Plus</p>

No	Requirement	Standard	By Whom	Monitoring/Additional notes
13	Each party will appoint a local nominated liaison officer.	Each Jobcentre Plus Field Director has already made a commitment to provide a nominated contact point. This role should be defined and include specific duties at a local level.	A manager of supervisory level within Jobcentre Plus and LAs.	Local management to ensure that this duty is carried out by an appropriate officer. It is imperative that following any organisational changes all staff are made aware of who their own nominated officer is. The nominated officers must also ensure that their corresponding LAs (or JCPlus offices, for LAs) are provided with contact details and each party is kept informed of the changes. Ongoing Jobcentre Plus organisational changes including the roll-out of fully integrated offices and the move to Benefit Processing Centres, means it will be necessary to look critically at the nominated officer role. It is suggested that there should be a nominated officer who represents the district. However local discussions may determine that a nominated officer in each site suits local needs more appropriately.
14	Jobcentre Plus will provide Local Authorities with a Customer Compliance liaison officer at the SLA sign-off meeting.	This role should be defined and include specific duties at a local level.	The line manager of the Customer Compliance liaison officer.	Local management to ensure that this duty is carried out by an appropriate officer. It is imperative that following any organisational changes all staff are made aware of who their own nominated officer is.
15	Disagreements - Issues affecting delivery of agreed service levels should be resolved at the lowest practicable level. If resolution is not possible at a local level the issue should be escalated to regional level through the Joint Regional Board (JRB) or nationally through	The escalation route should be followed in all instances	Jobcentre Plus and LAs	There are 11 JRBs (1 for each region). Beneath these sit Joint Operational Boards, which is the forum where practitioners meet to resolve local issues/barriers/non compliance with the SLA and monitor the effectiveness of the arrangements. These are set up according to regional needs. The Government Relationships Team will

No	Requirement	Standard	By Whom	Monitoring/Additional notes
	the Government Relationships Team (part of Jobcentre Plus' Partnerships Division)			take responsibility for LA relationships with JCPlus from April 2006
16	Respond to all queries within agreed timescales.	<p>Recommended that all regular queries should be cleared within 5 working days. Urgent cases are cleared within one working day, or 2 working days where relevant papers are stored at remote storage sites.</p> <p>Urgent cases defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • threatened homelessness • eviction • ombudsman queries • councillor queries • MP/MSP/AM enquiries • Media enquiries 	Benefit processing staff within Jobcentre Plus and LA depending on who receives the query.	Clear local agreements should exist on the handling of cases, particularly urgent cases and should be established as early as possible, taking account of local remote storage arrangements.
17	JCP and LAs to make each other aware of clearance time targets and give regular updates against those targets.	If clearance time targets are not being met JCP/LA should make the other organisation aware, so that they are able to manage the customers expectations appropriately.	JCP/LA liaison officer	Local performance statistics against clearance times from each organisation should be made available at local liaison meetings and/ or Joint Operational Boards and Joint Regional Boards.
18	In offices operating CMS where the LA requires the Customer Statement (the original or a photocopy) to be provided within the required timescales.	<p>Customer Statement to be forwarded to the LA by Jobcentre Plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • within 5 working days of receipt of the request, where the original has not been sent to remote storage. 	Jobcentre Plus	<p>LAs will not request Customer Statements as a matter of course and will normally only require them when they are dealing with, for example, a fraud investigation/prosecution, an appeal, or an overpayment</p> <p>By local liaison, a process should be established to ensure that any request for a</p>

No	Requirement	Standard	By Whom	Monitoring/Additional notes
		<p>Where the original Customer Statement has been sent to remote storage the statement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is to be requested from remote storage within 2 working days of receiving the request from the LA; and • forwarded to the LA within 2 working days of receipt from remote storage 		<p>Customer Statement from the LA is actioned promptly</p> <p>The current contract between JCPlus and Remote Storage supports this standard as far as turnaround times are concerned.</p>
19	Provide telephone access between staff at Jobcentre Plus and LA offices.	Decisions on the length of time that telephone access is made available and the process by which that access is controlled to be made at a local level.	Liaison required between Operational Managers within Jobcentre Plus and LAs.	Agreements on telephone access will be made at a local level and checked by nominated officers to ensure they are adhered to.
20	<p>Provide regular and up to date lists of contact points in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Authorities, and • Jobcentre Plus <p>With direct dial telephone, email addresses and fax numbers.</p>	When changes occur, revised lists to be provided as soon as practicable.	Liaison required between Operational Managers within Jobcentre Plus and LAs.	Operational managers within Jobcentre Plus and LAs will ensure that contact lists are updates regularly and notified to the other party.
21	LAs to display and make available Jobcentre leaflets, and display other publicity material e.g. posters about implementation of CMS.	100% of forms to be correctly issued.	LAs.	Operational managers or nominated liaison officers within LAs will ensure that Jobcentre Plus leaflets are displayed and made available to customers. Operational managers or nominated liaison officers within Jobcentre Plus will liaise with LAs to provide other publicity material for display

PART 5: National Insurance Numbers

No	Requirement	Standard	By Whom	Monitoring/Additional notes
22	Nominated officer to be appointed to deal with Section 19 enquiries.	Jobcentre Plus and LA to appoint at local level a nominated officer with responsibility for the processes involved in the tracing and allocation of NINOs as defined in Multi Benefit Bulletin 74/99.	A supervisory grade within Jobcentre Plus and LA.	Responsibilities of the nominated officer are described in HB/CTB circular A52/98. Those responsibilities should be noted when the nominated officer is appointed
23	Action requests received from the LA on DCI1LA for basic NINO trace (where LA have not been able to trace this via RAT) and for full trace and allocation of NINO	86% of requests to be cleared within 24 working days of first contact	Tracing to be undertaken by administration staff. Authorisation by Jobcentre Plus to be undertaken by a supervisory grade.	DCI1LAs are now processed by Central Control Units (CCU), with district offices only being involved when a local interview is required. The standard is a national key management indicator and it is for regions, if they so choose, to set internal benchmarks for districts and CCU which combined will meet the overall Key Management Indicator (KMI)
24	LAs to provide where possible a verified NINO or a NINO which can be verified when contacting a Jobcentre Plus office with an enquiry.	100% accuracy required where claimant provides a NINO.	Benefit processing staff within LAs.	Not required.

PART 6: Deductions / Overpayments

No	Requirement	Standard	By Whom	Monitoring/Additional notes
25	Action initial requests for deductions from IS/JSA cases in respect of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rent • Rent arrears • Council Tax arrears • Community Charge arrears • Water and sewerage charges (Scotland only) 	Initial action (ie assessment of whether deductions are appropriate and implementation of deduction when IOP does not need recalling or recall of IOP) required on 100% within 5 working days of receipt of request. Following return of IOP, deductions should be instigated within 3 working days.	Benefit processing staff within Jobcentre Plus.	Not required
26	In changes of circumstance on deductions cases where Jobcentre Plus is making deductions on behalf of the LA, agree a process for providing details of changes and supporting documentation.	Discussions at local level should be carried out to agree a method for notifying Jobcentre Plus and the LA changes in circumstance.	Benefit processing staff within Jobcentre Plus and LA.	Local arrangements should be agreed between Jobcentre Plus and LAs on the method for notifying each other of changes on IS/JSA and/or HB/CTB, and of the level and type of information required to support that referral. It is suggested that this is done through the use of a locally agreed proforma
27	Jobcentre Plus to ensure the decision making and any necessary re-assessment on LA fraud cases is actioned within 10 working days.	Discussions should be held at local level to agree a method for ensuring this requirement is adhered to.	Jobcentre Plus decision makers.	Not required

Service Level Agreement between Jobcentre Plus and Local Authority Housing Benefit 2006/7

Signed on behalf of Jobcentre Plus

..... (Name of Jobcentre Plus Office)

..... (Name of signatory)

Signed on behalf of the Local Authority Housing Benefit

..... (Name of Local Authority)

..... (Name of signatory)

Date

End of year sign off certificate for Service Level Agreement between Jobcentre Plus and Local Authority Housing Benefit 2006/7

To confirm the SLA has been reviewed and all monitoring arrangements complied with.

Signed on behalf of Jobcentre Plus

..... (Name of Jobcentre Plus Office)

..... (Name of signatory)

Signed on behalf of the Local Authority Housing Benefit

..... (Name of Local Authority)

..... (Name of signatory)

Date