

CHAPTER 15: JOBSEEKER MANDATORY ACTIVITY (JMA) PILOT

CONTENTS	Paragraph Numbers
INTRODUCTION	1
AIM AND OBJECTIVE	2-3
DESIGN AND CONTENT	4-5
Provision Duration	4
Provider Delivery Requirements	5
KEY FEATURES OF PROVISION	6-20
Action Plans	7-12
Attendance	13-18
Sanctions	20
ACCIDENTS/INCIDENTS	21
GRIEVANCES	22
EXPENSES	23-24
Childcare	23
Travel	24
PROVISION PAYMENTS TO PROVIDERS	25-26
EVALUATION OF THE JSA PILOT	27-28
MARKETING, PUBLICITY AND MI FORMS	29

Introduction

1. As part of the pre-budget statement made on the 10 December 2003 and in the 2005 Budget the Government announced its commitment to ensure people have the support they require to return to the labour market. The aim of the Jobseeker Mandatory Activity (JMA) Pilot is to reduce the number of customers claiming Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) for long periods by encouraging and motivating them to find work. The Jobcentre Plus personal adviser (PA) will play a major part in the JMA process by tracking customers from week 13 following a JSA full advisory review. At week 26 the customer will be required to attend JMA 3-day provision as well as 3 subsequent JMA follow-up interviews with a PA provided they are still in receipt of JSA. These interviews will primarily focus on the Action Plan and maintaining the customer's motivation and confidence to find work.

Aim and objective

2. The aim of JMA provision is to increase the effective labour supply by helping as many unemployed and economically inactive people aged 25 years and over as possible to move into jobs or self-employment, by actively competing for jobs. JMA will provide information, training, support and motivation necessary for participants to actively look for work. JMA is also intended to help people over 25 years of age in the most disadvantaged groups and areas to move closer to the labour market, compete effectively for, and remain in work and to adjust more quickly to economic change. JMA will offer high quality innovative training that addresses the differences within the customer group. It should motivate and inspire participants to find employment, identify how they can overcome their barriers to move closer to the labour market and improve their job search skills. Providers will also be expected to work with participants in the completion of individually tailored Action Plans, which will form the basis of the PA's discussion with the participant at the three mandatory follow-up interviews.
3. The key objective is to help move jobless people into work at the 6-month stage of a JSA claim by:
 - Reducing the number of customers over 25 years of age claiming JSA for long periods by encouraging and motivating them to find work;
 - Helping participants acquire/update their job search skills in order for them to find and keep a job;
 - Helping people gain the 'soft' skills for example, time keeping in order for them to find and keep a job; and
 - Providing resources and support to help them apply for vacancies.

Design and Content

Provision Duration

4. The provision must be over three consecutive working days with a minimum of 6 hours on each day. Therefore Thursday, Friday and Monday or Friday, Monday and Tuesday is possible. A lunch break of one hour per day must be allowed, in addition to the 6 hours of provision and a simple lunch must be provided. Providers may extend these hours but they cannot shorten them. The provision should ideally be delivered to 12 participants per provision. Numbers can be reduced or increased dependent on the local area, with the prior agreement of Jobcentre Plus.

Provider Delivery Requirements

5. Providers must research the local labour market and deliver a provision or series of provisions to address the needs of groups within the area of delivery. The service offered by providers must:
 - Be innovative, flexible and take into account the diverse nature of this particular customer group e.g. customer status such as cultural and educational levels as well as other differences;
 - Deliver the provision or provisions in a welcoming environment, as participants are likely to be apprehensive and potentially lacking in confidence;
 - Support a seamless service between Jobcentre Plus and the provider; and
 - Work closely with Jobcentre Plus as per existing procedures.

Key Features of the Provision

6. The key features of the provision are:
 - A discussion to assess individual participant's job readiness, which will involve looking at documents such as the Jobseekers Agreement. Participants will be encouraged to take their JSAg along to be used in the discussion.
 - Completion of an Action Plan, which the participant will discuss at the three fortnightly follow-up interviews with their PA;
 - Confidence building and motivation;
 - Examination of job aspirations;
 - Finding the correct route into work for a participant;
 - Identifying barriers to work;

- Improving job search skills;
- Development of participant awareness of their own strengths and skills;
- Emphasising rights and responsibilities – This means re-emphasising the conditions for receiving JSA and re-iterating/encouraging the relationship between the participant and their PA;
- The participant will continue to be subject to the usual rules for receiving benefits.

Action Plans

7. One of the main objectives of the provision is that participants with the help of providers complete an individually tailored personal Action Plan. The Action Plan must set out the steps that the participant has agreed to take to move them back into work. The CAP8JP form may be used or an alternative format can be agreed with Jobcentre Plus.
8. The Action Plan must detail:
 - The provision attended and record of completion;
 - Job goals and the steps to be taken to achieve them;
 - When reviews are to take place and their results;
 - Previous work history (where appropriate);
 - Previous skills and experience (where appropriate);
 - Previous training undertaken by the participant and qualifications obtained;
 - Real or perceived barriers to employment identified with the steps to overcome them;
 - Steps that need to be undertaken to ensure achievement of their goal;
 - Detailed information on the activities involved.
9. Action Plans should be “SSMART” (ie Stretching, Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time bound), as PAs will be using them as a basis for developing steps to further help the participant back to work during the follow-up interviews.
10. The clerical CLAIM2JP is to be sent to the Jobcentre Plus Field Payments Team or to the nominated officer as directed by Jobcentre Plus. The clerical SL2JP together with a copy of the Action Plan must also be sent to the customer's PA in readiness for the first PA interview.

11. The quality of the Action Plans will be an indicator of the quality of the delivery of the provision.
12. At the end of the 3-day provision the participant should have a clear idea of the steps they need to take to move them closer to finding employment.

Attendance

13. Each person referred to the 3-day provision must attend for the full length of the provision. Participants will be allocated onto an appropriate provision, where a participant arrives late, misses part of a day or fails to arrive they will be given two further opportunities to attend. A maximum of two re-referrals will be granted. No further re-referral will be made by the PA once these are exhausted.
14. It is imperative that the participant's signature on the SL2JP is obtained in all cases when the participant starts the provision and the SL2JP returned back to the Jobcentre Plus office on completion of the provision.
15. Where a participant fails to attend provision the provider should notify Jobcentre Plus immediately by phone. See Chapter 2 paragraph 95 of the generic provider guidance. A participant is considered to have failed to attend in the following circumstances:
 - Did not turn up for any one of the 3 days of provision;
 - Arrived after a fixed time;
 - Left the provision before a fixed time (6hrs).
16. Customers who fail to complete the JMA course will be re-referred to day one of the course and need to complete all three days. However, if the Provider considers that it would not be appropriate for the customer to attend parts of the course that they have already attended, then they can decide to ask them to return to the point at which they left previously. This will be the exception and might occur, for instance, if the Provider feels that the customer could be disruptive or violent if made to repeat parts of the course.
17. The provider can use the ND4: Timesheet or a localised form of their choosing (as long as it captures the necessary information) to manage the participant's attendance during provision.
18. Participants asked to leave because of disruptive behaviour, or because they fail to meet the attendance policy requirements are likely to need careful handling. The Personal Adviser (PA) should be advised of all such cases including the reasons for leaving the provision immediately.
19. Please refer to Jobcentre Plus Provider Guidance Chapter 2 sections 86-109 and Annex 3 for further information about attendance.

Sanctions

20. If the participant fails to attend all or part of the 3-day provision a sanction may be imposed which means the participant would lose their benefit payment or national insurance credit (for credits only cases) for 1 week. PA's will explain sanctions to participants and ensure they are fully aware of the consequences should they fail to attend the provision or are dismissed from the provision on the grounds of misconduct. Providers will also have an obligation to emphasise the repercussions participants may face if they fail to attend/are dismissed from provision on these grounds.

Accidents/Incidents

21. Please refer to Jobcentre Plus Provider Guidance Chapter 2 sections 116-126.

Grievances

22. Please refer to Jobcentre Plus Provider Guidance Chapter 2 sections 112- 114.

Expenses

23. Please refer to Jobcentre Plus Provider Guidance Chapter 4 sections 70-78 for Childcare expenses
24. Please refer to Jobcentre Plus Provider Guidance Chapter 4 sections 56-69 for Travel Expenses

Provision Payments to Providers

25. 100% of the total unit cost per participant will be paid on completion of the 3-day provision and Action Plan.
26. Where participants fail to complete all 3 days of the provision no payment will be made to the provider.

Evaluation of the JSA Pilot

27. Success of this provision will be indicated in the following ways:
 - By the feedback/views of the participants themselves about the quality of their experience whilst taking part in this provision;
 - Feedback from Jobcentre Plus staff on the performance, quality and variety of courses put together by the provider;
 - Feedback from participants, monitoring officers and PAs on the quality of Action Plans;

- By the number of participants who progress into work at any stage during, or 13 weeks following the JMA provision;
 - The number of participants who are referred to a different Jobcentre Plus provision at any stage following the JMA provision which addresses the participant's barriers to employment and/or gets them even more job ready and nearer the job market.
28. Providers will be required to co-operate, as necessary, with the Department For Work and Pensions, Jobseekers Analysis Division, for the purposes of evaluating the JMA Pilot.

Marketing, publicity and management information (MI) forms

29. A list of generic forms can be found in Chapter 3.