

Withdrawn

This publication has been withdrawn.

It is no longer current.

DWP Provider Guidance Chapter 5

ESF Support for Families with Multiple Problems (England)

Chapter 5 - Action Planning & Working with Families

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General Requirements

1. Once you know that the family/individual are eligible you will need to undertake an initial assessment of needs and develop an action plan
2. You should engage with the individual within five days of the referral on the Provider Referrals and Payment system (PRaP) and conduct an in-depth needs assessment, linked to family circumstances.
3. You should also agree the Initial Action Plan with the individual within twenty days of receipt of the ESF14 from JCP , working closely with Local Authorities and other agencies where appropriate as the Action Plan is developed and implemented.
4. The requirement to have an “initial” Action Plan recognises that at the early contact stage you may not have fully explored all aspects of the participant’s requirements, barriers and aspirations. The twenty days gives participants time to commit fully to the provision and reduce the likelihood of incorrect or inappropriate attachments. Once the initial action plan is in place, you can then develop a fuller action plan including appropriate Progress Measures
5. We recognise that some of the families and individuals on this provision may have difficult lifestyles and very significant barriers to work, and that there may be occasions when it is not possible to meet the 20 day deadline. You should continue to keep your Performance Manager informed on a monthly basis of the numbers of participants that have not been attached within 20

days of receipt of the ESF14 from JCP, together with the reasons in each case why meeting the 20 day deadline has not been possible. Where the reasons relate to the participants' circumstances we will take this into account and where the Performance Manager authorises this there will not be any financial penalties if the timing is later than 20 days. **Please note:** There is no need to complete a new ESF14 if the 20 day deadline has past.

5. However, if the extended timescale is as a result of your own systems and processes this may be regarded as a systemic failure and could lead to a performance improvement action on your PDP and, depending on improvements made, the possibility of recovery of payments by DWP and/or future ESF audits.

Minimum Service Delivery Requirements

6. The minimum service delivery requirements, as outlined in the Specification, are as follows:

- engagement with potential participants through outreach and adopting / maximizing use of key workers where appropriate;
- obtaining personal details from the individual and gaining consent for this information to be passed on to JCP or LAs, where appropriate;
- ensuring family eligibility through the qualifying family member;
- starting work with the individual within five days of receipt and acceptance of PRaP referral;
- conducting an in-depth needs assessment with the individual and producing an agreed individual Action Plan within 20 days of receipt and acceptance of PRaP referral;
- coordinating activities and appointments with the individual including links to other support and where appropriate;
- providing a named key worker, in line with the Action Plan;
- drawing up and agreeing the initial Action Plan, which must be signed by the individual, (the attachment/start date is the date the Action Plan is signed and dated by the individual); and
- providing post-employment support to maximise the number of individuals moving into and sustaining employment.

7. Where there is more than one adult in the family unit, the Action Plan must reflect the individual's personal and their family-related needs.

8. We expect support to include outreach and key workers where appropriate when working with individuals within families with multiple problems.

Needs Assessment

9. A Needs Assessment must be undertaken to establish the individual's needs and identify any barriers, including labour market barriers. This assessment must also take account of the needs of the family as a whole, as far as these relate to the individual. Following this assessment an Action Plan must be developed to set out the activities and measures the individual will undertake and the support you will offer to address the barriers identified in the Needs Assessment.

10. As a minimum, the individual's Needs Assessment must consider the range of activities and types of general support listed below.

Activities to support: Personal and Life Skills

11. These include:

- Outreach and mentoring, access to key worker support where appropriate
- Raised personal and family-related aspirations
- Increased personal motivation
- Identifying own and family-related barriers (e.g. housing, health management, childcare, behavioral difficulties, abuse)
- Improved confidence in engaging with support organisations (for example General Practitioner etc.)
- Reduced social isolation, participating in community activities
- Improved personal confidence, self-awareness and self esteem
- Improved communication skills, spoken and written
- Increased understanding of others' expectations
- Ability to understand and make effective decisions
- Assessment and recognition of own skills/potential, work and personal
- Assessing financial barriers
- Awareness of rights and responsibilities
- Discussing parenting skills (including for parents/guardians not living with their children)
- Improved personal presentation, managing personal and home hygiene
- Improving personal health, diet and fitness, managing disability
- Discussing debt management, budgeting and financial management

Activities to support: Work Skills

12. These include:

- Introduction to employability skills, job preparation and job retention awareness
- Concentration and ability to engage with a task
- Increased labour market understanding
- Ability to prioritise planning and organisation skills
- Problem solving and team work
- Timekeeping, communication and negotiation, following instructions
- Managing increased responsibility, managing others
- Facilitating work – travel, caring responsibilities, childcare
- Improved literacy, numeracy or English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) skills
- Discussing and identifying options for work-related development opportunities
- Support in jobsearch and interview techniques, disclosure advice
- Access to and skills for use of IT skills, internet, online job application etc

- Short job-related skills certification
- Identification of suitable employment opportunities
- In-work support and career progression support

Action Plans

13. The Action Plan should chart the progress made by the individual and should give the individual a framework to help focus on what they need to do. It should be agreed by the individual and reviewed regularly. The Action Plan is an important way of evidencing the progress made and it is therefore important that all activities undertaken are recorded on it.

Initial Action Plan

14. The Action Plan must be reflective of the individual's personal and family-related needs as well as their barriers to work and the stage they are at in overcoming these barriers. The content of the initial Action Plan will be based on the individual's in depth needs assessment therefore you may or may not be able to identify longer term goals at this stage. For this reason, it is acceptable to include provisional or no progress measure proposals at the point where the initial Action Plan is developed.

15. To emphasise that this is an agreement between you and the individual, a signature and date must be obtained on the Initial Action Plan.

16. Action Plans must:

- clearly set out the agreed aims and actions that will help move the individual towards employment. These must address both individual and family barriers to work and be based on your continuing family support work with the individual;
- provide a framework of what the individual is aiming to achieve so that progress can be measured;
- include achievable actions that show consideration of minimum service requirements, as per the contract, and are tailored to the requirements of the individual;
- build on any existing Action Plans (e.g. JCP/LA Action Plans) so that activities under this provision complement those in the other plans and do not duplicate support;
- where specific progress measures are identified, show clearly which of the significant barriers identified in the individual's Needs Assessment the Progress Measures will address and state what the individual will need to do to achieve the measure(s), so that they understand precisely what their Action Plan means for them in practice. This may include agreeing Progress Measures sequentially rather than agreeing three or more all at once.

Reviewing the Action Plan

17. Action Plans must be reviewed and updated at least monthly to ensure they reflect the individual's progress towards current activities and measures, as well as any new requirements that emerge while the individual is on the provision. Timescales should be realistic and the Progress Measures should be achievable within the period of provision

18. You must keep the Action Plan and its review history in line with ESF audit requirements. Requirements on document retention are detailed in the [Generic Guidance Chapter 11 - ESF Requirements \(England only\)](#)