



Dame Sara Thornton DBE QPM
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Dear colleagues,

This is an open letter distributed through our Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) stakeholders in response to concerns raised regarding subsistence payments for those in the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), specifically UK nationals.

I would therefore like to draw your attention to the following documents which may be useful in providing clarity on the policy position for subsistence payments:

- The Salvation Army Victim Care Contract which is available [here](#). Schedule 2 'Authority Requirements' provides details on the subsistence payments payable to service users (p.13) which does not instruct that any other income should be taken into account. Section 3 within this document, which covers outreach services (p.10), states that "all services in this schedule shall be provided to all service users".

Service User Type	Value of Subsistence Payment
Service User in Catered Accommodation provided by the Contractor	£35
Service User in Self-Catered Accommodation provided by the Contractor	£65
Service User accommodated by the Authority, and in receipt of Subsistence Payments through that Service	£65 minus the amount of Subsistence received by the Authority
Service user Not Accommodated by the Contractor or the Authority (e.g. Living with friends or family)	£35

(Source: The Home Office (2015) AVMS-CC-Volume 3- Schedule 2- Authority Requirements)

- The Salvation Army Victim Care Contract is also referenced in the [2018 JR judgement](#) (K and AM v SSHD Hearing date 30 and 31 October 2018). With reference to subsistence payments, paragraph 13 (p.5) of the judgement states that:
"the entitlement is non-means-tested. The victim of trafficking gets these sums irrespective of whether he or she is receiving, for example, voluntary payments from a kindly relative."
- Sec 49 [Statutory Guidance: Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims](#) (p.139-140) also provides a useful summary of the policy regarding subsistence payments and makes reference to the adjustments made for those receiving Victim Care Contract support who are also asylum seekers or failed asylum seekers receiving financial support under sections 95, 98 or section 4 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.

In reference to the rates outlined in the table on the previous page, I have had confirmation from The Salvation Army (TSA) that the category '*Service User accommodated by the Authority, and in receipt of Subsistence Payments through that Service*' specifically relates to those in asylum support and not those in receipt of wider welfare benefits or entitlements.

I hope that this information is useful in providing some clarity on this matter. Whilst I am not able to advocate for individual victims, I am keen to understand how the policy regarding subsistence payments is operating in practice. If you are aware of any case examples where there have been issues with clients accessing subsistence payments, please contact April McCoig, Victims and Partnership lead at April.McCoig@iasc.independent.gov.uk.

In these unprecedented times, it is now more important than ever to ensure that vulnerable victims are being supported and are receiving the financial subsistence that they are entitled to.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'San Yuen', written in a cursive style.

Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner