

**CITY OF YORK COUNCIL
COUNTER FRAUD ACTIVITY PLAN 2009/10**

Fraud Awareness

Training

A programme of fraud awareness training for staff across the council. This includes specific training in relation to Housing and Council Tax Benefit fraud for staff in the Revenues and Benefits Service and Housing. The training will be designed to raise fraud awareness particularly for new starters, help identify common types of fraud and provide advice to staff on making referrals to the fraud team.

General Fraud Awareness

Work to promote general fraud awareness within the council. Activities will include publicising the existence of the Anti Fraud and Corruption Policy and Strategy and related guidance, preparation of payroll notices, leaflets and posters, and articles in relevant staff newsletters and publications (including Benefits News, News and Jobs and In Depth). Guidance will also be provided on referral mechanisms for suspected fraud, corruption and other wrongdoing.

Advice and Guidance

Provision to provide ongoing advice and support on the design, implementation and operation of appropriate controls within the Council, to prevent and detect fraud (this work will be undertaken in collaboration with internal audit).

Public Awareness

Ongoing work to publicise the arrangements for reporting suspected fraud, corruption and other wrongdoing, particularly fraud of the benefit system. Planned work will include the production of leaflets, posters and newspaper articles. In addition the press office will be informed of all successful prosecution cases.

Fraud Detection and Investigation

The Investigation of Suspected Frauds

Provision to undertake investigations into suspected fraud, corruption or other wrongdoing. The majority of the work will relate to benefit related fraud but investigations of other categories of internal and external fraud will also be undertaken. Where appropriate joint investigations will be conducted with the internal audit team, the DWP and other counter fraud agencies.

Financial Investigations

Provision to undertake financial investigations and recover benefits paid fraudulently and/or any other financial losses arising from criminal acts. The work will be undertaken by an accredited Financial Investigator and in accordance with the provisions of the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002.

Data Matching

Provision to check data validity and investigate potential frauds identified through bulk data matching exercises, including;

- the monthly Housing Benefit Matching Service (HBMS);
- the National Fraud Initiative;
- local data matching exercises.

Prosecutions and Sanctions

Provision to prosecute or apply sanctions against claimants found to have committed fraud.

Proactive Investigations

Unannounced Visits

A programme of unannounced visits to claimants to identify residency and other similar frauds. The visits will be targeted to high risk categories of claimants.

Targeted Investigations

A programme of work targeted at high risk categories of claimants to confirm their entitlement to benefit.

Reporting and Feedback

General

Provision to report on the results of fraud prevention and investigations to the S151 Officer, appropriate Chief Officers and Members. Feedback will also be provided to staff making referrals, where appropriate. Where fraud has occurred as a result of weaknesses in systems and procedures then the relevant managers will be informed urgently so as to prevent similar problems in the future.

Other

Review of the Anti Fraud and Corruption Policy and related guidance and policies.

Ongoing maintenance, review and update of the fraud case management system and related investigation procedures.

Liaison with the DWP Counter Fraud Investigation Service (CFIS), the National Investigation Service, Police, Inland Revenue, other Local Authority Fraud Investigators, and other stakeholders.