

CENTREPOINT BEST PRACTICE CHECKLIST FOR EMPLOYERS



Centrepoint is the leading national charity working with homeless young people aged 16 to 25. We are a registered social housing provider, a charity enterprise and a company limited by guarantee. Last year, alongside our partners, we worked with almost 14,000 young people, supporting them to explore their aspirations and lead meaningful lives.

To end youth homelessness, it is vital that vulnerable young people access meaningful employment. Employers play a pivotal role in ensuring that young people enter and thrive in the world of work. Centrepoint's new Employer Guidance outlines how employers and charities, such as Centrepoint, can work together to support homeless young people into meaningful work. This checklist outlines the recommendations that are presented in the Guidance.

Many of these recommendations, while aimed at young people, can also benefit staff of any age and contribute to making workplaces inclusive for all.

For more information and examples, please refer to the [full Best Practice Guidance](#).



EMPLOYERS SHOULD:

Work collaboratively with expert organisations

- Employers should work in partnership with support organisations to understand the needs of young employees with homelessness experiences and learn how they can be supported in the workplace. This collaboration should begin pre-employment and continue once the young person is in post.
- Employers should be open to speaking to advocates, such as social workers or key workers, and young people themselves to discuss any additional needs or adjustments they might need.

Improve access to work for homeless young people

- Employers should provide entry level jobs that are accessible for young people with experiences of homelessness.
- Employers should provide young people with work experience placements that offer exposure to a variety of roles and, if possible, have a guaranteed interview/role offer upon successful completion of their placement.

Improve interview practices to be more inclusive for homeless young people

- Employers should conduct practical/competency-based interviews to accommodate those without work experience, while ensuring questions and tasks are relevant to the role and interviewers are open about what is being assessed.
- Employers should conduct interviews in individual rather than group settings to reduce anxiety and the likelihood that young people with experiences of homelessness will compare themselves to others.
- Employers should, where possible, be flexible when organising interviews – enabling young people to wear non-standard interview attire and choose online interviews to accommodate for those who cannot afford interview clothing or travel expenses.
- Employers should have diverse interview panels to help young people from different backgrounds to understand that they can work within their organisations.

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Ensure that there is organisational understanding and flexibility for young people at risk of or experiencing homelessness

- Employers should implement organisational policies defining appropriate reasonable adjustments and support available for those at risk of or experiencing homelessness.
- Employers should recognise the impact of paid work on young people in receipt of benefits and living in supported accommodation. Where possible, employers should be flexible when offering hours of paid work to these young people.

Provide support to young people at risk of or experiencing homelessness

- Employers should have support offers in place for young employees who are struggling with their wellbeing such as employee assistance programmes and external counselling.
- Line managers should have regular wellbeing check-ins with young employees that provide spaces to disclose difficulties.
- If possible, employers should allocate spaces in their places of work for wellbeing rooms so that young employees can take breaks when needed.
- Employers should have peer support systems in place for young employees who are new to organisations, so that they have someone who they can confide in and who can help them to become familiar with their workplace.

Provide financial support to those in need, such as young people at risk of/experiencing homelessness

- Employers should consider the value of implementing bursaries or loan schemes that support young people, who are new to the world of work, to afford work attire, travel costs and other expenses associated with employment.
- Employers should support young people who are new to the workplace to mitigate for the impact of waiting for their first month's wages by offering advance payments or having the option to be paid weekly or fortnightly.
- Employers should signpost to local hardship funds or, where possible, implement their own funds aimed at supporting young employees who become homeless or are at risk of homelessness.

Have clear complaints and whistleblowing processes

- Employers should ensure that whistleblowing policies and procedures are accessible and easy to understand, and that young employees are empowered to report wrongdoing.

Provide training & development opportunities

- Employers should provide training and development opportunities to young employees so that they continue to develop and achieve career progression.
- Employers should provide apprenticeships that enable young people to gain a variety of experiences, qualifications and demonstrable skills and knowledge.
- Employers should provide young employees with accessible and transparent requirements to progress within their organisations. This can help young employees to understand where they need to develop and gain experience.

Engage in fundraising to support the wider goal to end youth homelessness

- Employers should involve employees in charity events.
- Employers should make one-off donations.
- Employers should set up donation schemes linked to product sales.
- Employers should enable employees to volunteer.
- Employers should get in touch with Centrepoin to think about how their organisation can best support our goal to end youth homelessness.



To find out more visit

centrepoin.org.uk/research-reports/centrepoin-employer-best-practice-guide

