

Guiding principles for suspension

This is a judgement call by the Contract Advisor, but the following areas should be considered when making a decision:

1) Is there admitted or suspected misuse of funds or admission of inflation of cash or stock? If misuse is admitted, amount is irrelevant.

2) Is there a discrepancy identified?

Factors to consider:-

- Amount of discrepancy – a guiding figure for suspension is where a discrepancy is in excess of £1,000.
- Size of branch.
- When during the Branch Trading period the audit took place.
- Experience of subpostmaster
- Previous branch performance (consult EFC for intervention visits, warning given, losses, errors etc.)
- Proportion of debt settled centrally.
- Frequency of debt settled centrally.
- Frequency of transaction corrections.
- Subpostmaster's ability / willingness to make good the loss.

3) Absentee subpostmaster?

Factors to consider:-

- Establish level of involvement, using Horizon Event Logs.
- Establish what day to day controls are in place
- Duration of misdemeanour.

4) Gain opinion from auditor.

5) Consider potential future risk to Post Office Ltd funds if the subpostmaster is left in post.

If in any doubt, make decision to suspend and carry out further investigations.
Re-instatement is an option that can be taken at any time.

If the decision, in light of the above considerations, is not to suspend, a brief note from the Contract Advisor setting out the justification should be drafted into a word document and entered onto the EFC for future reference.