

SUPPORT FOR CARE EXPERIENCED YOUNG PEOPLE IN CUSTODY



**Working
for Children
and Families**
in Solihull



Solihull
METROPOLITAN
BOROUGH COUNCIL

1. Introduction

This guidance is to help you understand your care experienced rights and entitlements under the local offer for care experienced young people in Solihull, whilst you are in custody.

We know that it can be a worrying and stressful time for you, and we are here to support you through your sentence and in returning to life in the community.

Please read through this document carefully so that you fully understand your rights and entitlements, and do not hesitate to contact your personal adviser (PA) if you have any questions.

When you are released from custody you will be able to access the wider offer of support under the local offer for care experienced young people and your personal advisor will support you with understanding this and with planning for your release.

2. Eligibility

To qualify for the support detailed in this guidance you must be a 'former relevant care leaver' under the children and social Work Act 2017. This means that you will have been in care for at least 13 weeks between the ages of 14 and 16 or were a child in care for at least 13 weeks after your 16th birthday. Please note time spent on remand below the age of 18 counts as time as a child in care for these purposes.

If you were a child in care for a different period when you were under the age of 18 you may be a 'qualifying care leaver'. You will not be entitled to all the elements of the local offer for care experienced young people, but will be able to contact the Next Steps Service for advice guidance and befriending should you wish.

If you are over 25 and were previously in the care of Solihull Council, then you can access advice and guidance under our 'always here' offer whilst you are in custody. You will not be

entitled to all the provisions set out within this guide, but we will still offer as much support as we are able to. If you have any questions about this or your entitlements, please contact the Next Steps Service using the details below.

**Solihull Next Step Service
Chelmunds Place
858 Chester Road
Solihull
B37 7TW**

0121 717 1473 (option 1)

Caring4youngpeople@solihull.gov.uk

3. Your Personal Adviser (PA) and Pathway Plan

In Solihull, personal advisers are allocated to young people alongside their social worker from the age of 16. They will support you until you reach at least the age of 21 and where required, up until the age of 25. After the age of 21 you have a choice about the type of support you wish to receive from your PA. There are different levels of service available to young people aged between 21 and 25.

Your PA will visit you whilst you are in custody. They will contact you at least once every eight weeks until you are aged 21. Your PA will try to ensure that these visits are always in person, if you are accepting of this. When you are released, your PA will be part of your release planning and will continue to visit you in the community. Reduced visiting/contact can be agreed from the age of 21 to 25 if you wish to continue to have our support but want contact with us to be less often.

The role of the PA is to support young people with transition into adulthood and independence. As part of this they will complete a pathway plan with you. It's important that you are involved in this plan. It will set out what you want to achieve and how we will support you to do this. This plan will be reviewed every six months and can be changed to fit your needs. If there is a significant change in circumstances such as when you enter custody or are preparing for release, we will review your pathway plan earlier.

The pathway plan touches on many aspects of your life and how we can support you in each area, the sections of the pathway plan include:

- Identity
- Family, friends and carers
- Health, wellbeing and leisure
- Life skills support
- Accommodation
- Education, training and employment
- Your money

4. Entitlements

Allowances

- When you first enter custody, you may be able to access a one-off payment for essentials to help you with settling in, this is a discretionary payment and should be discussed with your PA.
- Whilst you are in custody you will be sent financial support up to the sum of £10.00 per week if it is deemed that you require this support. This is based on assessment of your needs and should be discussed with your PA.
- You may have savings which were made for you during your time in care, your personal adviser can help you with exploring this and with claiming these savings.
- You will receive birthday and festival allowances in line with the Solihull care experienced young people's local offer.

Family and Relationships

- We want to support you to remain in contact with people that are important to you. We can offer advice and guidance to your family or friends who are struggling with the costs of prison visits and explore whether they would be able to claim costs back.
- Your PA will explore which relationships are important to you in advance of your release so that we can plan how we can maintain and support these relationships.

Housing

- Wherever possible your PA will arrange an accommodation planning meeting three months in advance of your release date. Your PA will invite your offender manager, probation and representative from Solihull Community Housing team to attend the meeting to contribute to planning the housing arrangements for you upon your release.
During this meeting professionals should explore your accommodation plans and options and what additional support and resources may be needed to make this move successful for you.
- Your PA will also attend your HMPPS pre-release meeting to contribute to wider release planning.
- You will be able to access your setting up home grant to furnish your home when you are released. This is accessed in agreement with your PA.
- If you wish to live in the Solihull area following your release, then you will receive priority banding for access to social housing once it's deemed that you are tenancy ready.
- The Next Steps Service housing officer may be allocated to support you with moving into your new home, setting up bills and settling in.

Identification

- You are entitled to two forms of identification as a Solihull care experienced young person. This is usually in the form of an adult passport and a provisional driving licence. Your PA will support you with applying for these whilst you are in custody if you don't already have them. If you are not able to access a passport or driving licence, then alternative forms of identification will be explored. We can also support you with requesting an official copy of your birth certificate if you need this for a specific purpose.

- Your PA will also be able to provide an official letter which confirms you are a care experienced young person.
- Although not a form of identification, your PA can help you find out your National Insurance number and NHS number if you do not already know this.

Education, Employment & Training (EET)

- It is important that you use your time in custody to continue your education and development.
- Prior to and upon release from custody our Next Steps Service PA or Link Worker for training, education and employment will work with you to try to source an appropriate programme of training, education or employment that meets your needs. This will include ensuring that your CV is up to date and that we explore your aspirations and views around prospective careers and help you with making job applications.

Health

- You can access health support by the health team at your prison/YOI whilst you are in custody. If you are having issues with accessing health advice and support, then please contact your PA so that this can be challenged and escalated if required.
- You should be provided with your health information when you leave care at the age of 18 years old. If this has not been shared with you then please let your PA know so that this can be obtained and shared with you.
- Upon your release your PA will support you with registering at a local GP practice, dentist and optician.
- Where required, we can also work with our health colleagues and partners to ensure that you are able to access the health advice and support you require in the community.

5. Key contacts

My Personal Adviser's name is _____

Contact number _____

Email address _____

Solihull Next Steps Service - 0121 717 1473 (option 1)

The Solihull Next Steps Service offers a duty personal advisor Monday to Friday between the times of 9am and 5pm. This service ensures that you can access advice and guidance when you need it.

Howard League – 0808 801 0308

This organisation provides legal advice to prisoners' experience in a range of problems such as poor treatment discrimination, health and wellbeing issues and resettlement concerns. The helpline operates from 11am to 1pm on Monday and Tuesday and 10am to midday on Thursday and Friday.

You do not need permission to call; it is a designated global number on the prisoner call numbers. If you cannot make contact when you call then please leave a message with your name, number and prisoner number.

Prison Reform Trust – 0808 802 0066

This organisation operates a general helpline for prisoners. The helpline operates from 3pm to 5pm on Monday, 10.30am to 12.30pm on Wednesday and Thursday.

Please leave a voicemail with your name, number and prisoner number if you are not able to get through and a member of the team will call you back.

Rees Foundation – 0330 094 5645

This organisation offers advice and guidance for care leavers. The helpline operates from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.



6. Pre-release checklist

What do I need?	Do I have it?	Additional comments
ID		
Address		
Transport from custody		
Probation details and license conditions shared		
Calendar with important meetings		
Phone and sim card		
UC claim created		
List of important contact numbers		

My notes





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