



Support for care leavers in custody

A young person's guide




Lambeth



What is this booklet about?



This leaflet is designed to give you information to support you as a care leaver whilst you are custody. As a care leaver, you have rights to support and we want to make sure you understand what these are. To access support as a care leaver, you need to have been in care for 13 weeks or more, which includes your 16th birthday. It is important to let the prison know you are a care leaver so you can access the right support.

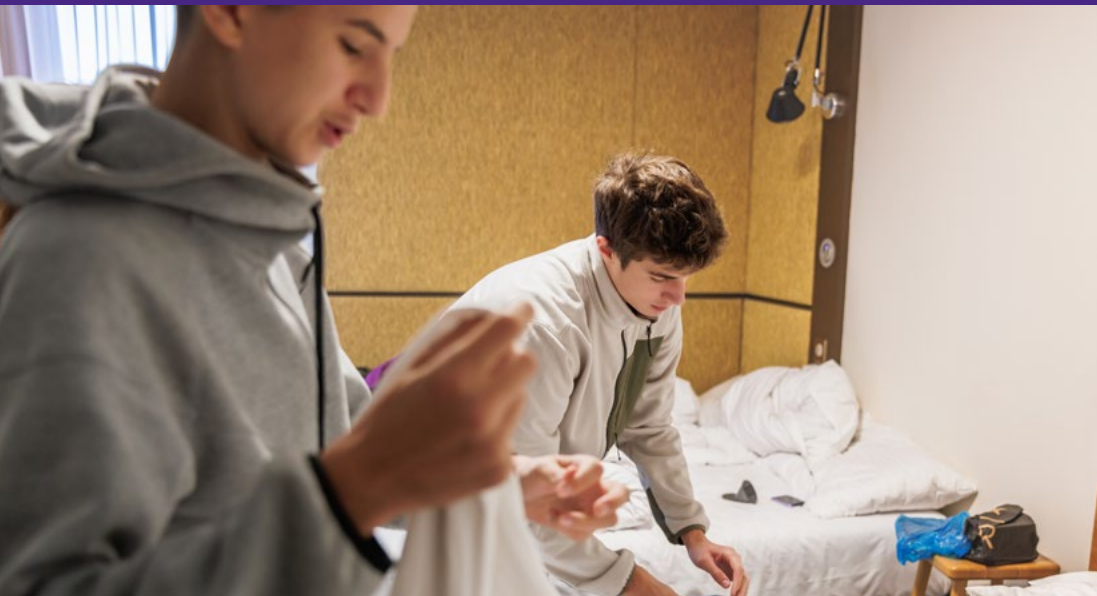
As a care leaver, we understand that you may not have family or a support network around you to support you whilst you are in custody or preparing to be released. The Local Authority (Lambeth Council) are 'corporate parents' for children looked after and care leavers and we should be providing the best support available for you to cope with your sentence and to support you on your release.

As a care leaver you will have a Personal Advisor (PA) who can work with you until you reach 25 years old. Your PA will be your main point of contact to the Local Authority and will help you to access practical and emotional support. If you are over 18, Your PA should be visiting you at least every 8 weeks. They will work with you on developing a 'Pathway Plan' which is a plan to understand what your needs are and how best they and others can work together to meet those needs in prison, to plan for your release and when you are living back in the community. **As you are over 18 and an adult, It is important that you give your consent for your information to be shared to ensure you get the right support.**

Who should be supporting you and how

What you should expect from prison staff and probation

- It is important that staff know you are a care leaver to make sure you get the right support
- Staff at the prison will create a sentence plan to structure your activities during the time you are in custody
- Prison staff and probation should work closely with your Personal Advisor to make sure they are all working together to meet your needs and support you, this should be in your pathway plan. They should let your PA know if you move prisons
- Prison staff should work closely with probation to make sure they have the right information to support you when you are being released
- Staff should talk to you in a quiet and confidential place if that is possible.





Support from Lambeth Council

- You will have a Personal Advisor (PA) who will work with you to access the right support and draw up a pathway plan with you to look at the best people to support you
- Your PA will visit you at least every 8 weeks whilst you are in prison, but they can visit more often if needed
- Your PA will work with you to review your pathway plan every six months as your needs and circumstances may have changed. Your pathway plan should have been reviewed when you first went into custody if you had one. Your PA can also attend meetings with you if invited
- All Local Authorities have 'A local offer' for care leavers and your PA will help you to understand what this offer is whilst you are in prison and when you have been released
- Lambeth's Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO's) also work with care leavers in custody up to the age of 21. They will look at the quality of care you are getting whilst in custody, and check and support plans are in place for you when being released, including housing support. They will also make sure you are getting the right benefits and support, including access to education and employment training whilst in custody and when you have been released.

What financial support should you expect

What you should expect from prison staff and probation

- You can earn a small amount of money if you work, learn or do other activities in prison
- You will receive £10 per week allowance.

Financial support from Lambeth Council

- Your PA can do an assessment to see if you need more money sending to you whilst you are in prison where you may be able to get an extra £10 per week
- Your PA may be able to offer you £200 clothing allowance
- You may be able to get a setting up home allowance on your release
- You may have a savings account after being looked after, you need to talk to your PA about this
- You may be able to get items related to your faith, beliefs or physical care
- Your PA will ensure you have the right access to your legal entitlements and any benefits you are entitled to.



What support should you expect when being released from custody?

Support from prison staff and probation

- Prison staff will inform your PA of your release date
- A resettlement plan will be written to help prepare you for release. This should be done alongside the review of your pathway plan
- Staff will help you understand what organisations are available to support you when you have been released
- The probation service can offer interim temporary accommodation and then will work with housing to find you more long term options.

Support from Lambeth Council when you are to be released from custody

- Your PA will attend resettlement planning meetings if invited, with prison and probation staff
- Your pathway plan will be reviewed before you are released to help them understand what your plans, ambitions and feelings are. The best way to do this would be as part of your prison pre-release meeting
- A housing advisor will put together a housing plan with you before your release, this maybe supported accommodation, emergency temporary accommodation or private rented
- You will still have the support from your PA when you have been released and living back in the community
- Make sure you work with PA to understand what the care leavers offer is when you have been released from custody
- You may be able to get a clothing allowance to buy clothes for when you are released.

