



Ministry
of Justice

Youth Justice Charter

How will the Youth Justice Service
help me in the community?



The **Youth Justice Service (YJS)** is a very important part of the youth justice system. They are also sometimes called **Youth Offending Teams (YOTs)**.

YJS teams are made up of different people, including **social workers**, education specialists, and speech and language therapists. You may meet with several of them about different things, but you will have one **case manager** who will be your main point of contact. They will get to know you and make a plan with you and other professionals to support you.

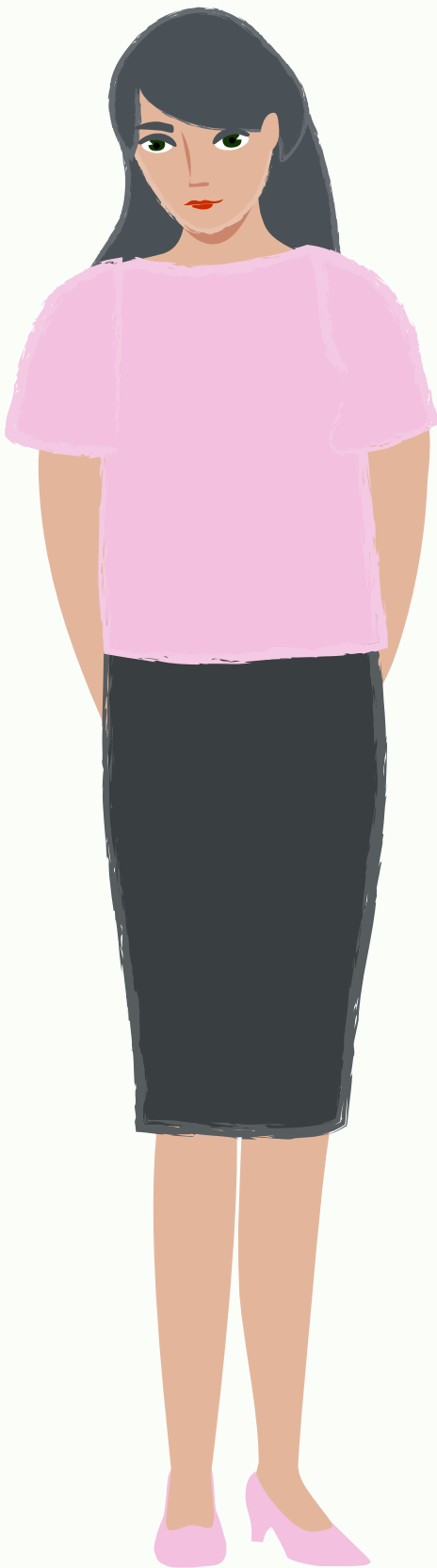
These standards explain what to expect from your YJS team if the court has given you **bail**, **community remand** or a **community sentence**. A community remand is also known as a remand to local authority accommodation. This can be living at home, with a relative, in foster care or in a children's home. There are usually rules, such as places you can't go or people you can't talk to. A community sentence is a court order with rules you need to follow for a certain amount of time.

YJS teams may also help you if you have come into contact with the police, if you have been given an **out of court disposal** or if you are on bail waiting to go to court.

The YJS standards below explain how you should be treated by your YJS team in the community.

These standards form part of the Youth Justice Charter. To find out more, search 'Youth Justice Charter'. You can also find out about what happens if you are stopped by the police, going to court, going to custody and leaving custody. There is also a youth justice journey map to show the different stages of the youth justice system.

If you need help understanding these standards, you can ask someone you trust to go through them with you. We have used some words that you might not understand. We have put these words in bold. We have explained what they mean at the end in a list called 'difficult words'.



YJS
standard
1

I will know who my case manager is and how to get in touch with them.

- You will be told the name of your **case manager** and when and where you will next need to meet them. They will explain how often you will meet and how to contact them.
- They will want to see you face to face. This may be at the YJS office, your home or somewhere else such as a café. They may also message, video call or voice call you.

YJS
standard
2

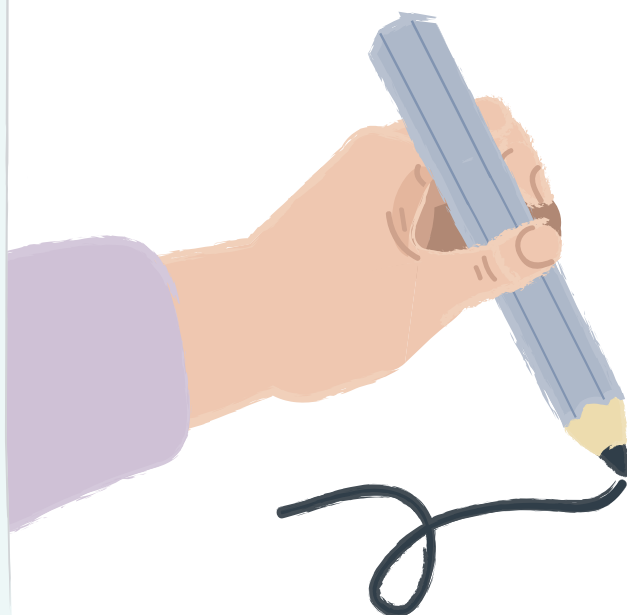
I will be given help to understand the role of the YJS team and how I will work with them.

- Your **case manager** will explain clearly why they are involved and what will happen while they are working with you.
- They will explain the different requirements and which things are compulsory (what you must do) and which are voluntary (what you can choose to do).
- Your case manager will see you at agreed days and times – this is called **supervision**. They will try to make it as easy as possible for you to get to your appointments. You should tell your case manager if you are worried about how to pay for your travel.
- Your case manager will explain what will happen if you don't attend your appointments or don't do the things that are asked of you. This could include being contacted again by the police or going back to court.

YJS
standard
3

My case manager should understand my individual needs and should help other people to understand them too.

- Your **case manager** will spend time getting to know you. They will want to know more about what has happened and why, what and who is important in your life, and if you have any hobbies. They will want to visit you at home to understand your situation and meet with your parents or carers.
- Your case manager will encourage you to share your story in your own way. That could be through drawing, writing or just talking.
- They may ask other professionals to meet with you if they think that would be helpful.
- Your case manager will write a report to help the court make decisions about your future.
- If you don't follow the rules you have been given as part of your **bail** or **court order**, then your case manager can start breach proceedings. This is a formal process. They will ask what has happened and support you if you need to go back to court.



YJS
standard
4

I will be involved in developing a plan to help me achieve future goals.

- Your **case manager** will make a plan to support you. This plan is meant to give you the best possible chance of achieving your goals and to help you avoid breaking the law in the future.
- Your case manager will share the plan with you written down, as pictures, or as something you can listen to later on.
- You can ask your case manager to change the plan if something is not working for you.
- Your case manager will help you understand the plan and answer any questions you might have. They will also explain what having a criminal record means for you and when you might need to tell potential employers or **education providers** about it.
- Your parents or carers will be asked to get involved in deciding the plan.



YJS
standard
5

I will be given help to understand what happens at the end of my court order.

- If your **court order** is coming to an end, your **case manager** will talk to you about what help and support you may need to help you avoid breaking the law again. This could include ongoing wellbeing support if needed.
- They may recommend getting help from other organisations or services, such as a youth support mentor.
- If you agree to what they suggest, they will arrange this for you.



YJS
standard
6

If I am turning 18 soon, my case manager will organise my move to the adult probation service.

- If you are approaching 18 years old but haven't completed your **sentence** or time on **bail** or **remand**, you may have to move across to the **adult probation service**. This change will be carefully planned and discussed with you.
- Your **case manager** will share important information with the probation worker, so they understand all about you and what you need help with. This will include your healthcare, special educational needs or any other support you may need.
- You will be able to meet your new probation worker before the change so you can get to know them.





What can I do if these standards are not met?

If you think these standards have not been met, you should tell the person named in the standard, or any adult who supports you can tell them for you. If you do not want to do this or are unhappy with the response you get, you can make a complaint.

There are different ways to complain and you can choose which way you prefer.

- Speak to your YJS **case manager**.
- Ask to speak to the manager of your YJS.
- Contact your **local authority** complaints department.
- Call the **Children's Commissioner's** advice line. If you are in England, the number is **0800 528 0731**, or you can [contact them on their website](#). If you are in Wales, the number is **0808 801 1000**, or you can [contact them on their website](#).
- You can complain about your **lawyer** to the [Solicitors Regulation Authority](#).

Difficult words

We've used some words in this charter that you might not understand. We've listed them below and explained what they mean. These explanations are to help you understand this charter. They are not legal definitions.

Adult probation service: People who work for the probation service are responsible for supervising anyone aged 18 and over who has been released from custody or who has been given a community sentence. They are called probation workers.

Bail: This is your temporary release if you are being investigated about your involvement in a crime. When you are on bail you must return to the police station or go to court at a particular time and on a particular day. It is a criminal offence not to do this. Conditional bail is where you have to follow certain rules while you are on bail. If you don't do this, you might be arrested.

Case manager: The Youth Justice Service case manager is your main point of contact from your local Youth Justice Service. Your case manager will work with you, your family and other professionals to understand your situation and give you the support you need. They will make a plan to support you and help prevent you from committing a crime in the future.

Children's Commissioner: There is a Children's Commissioner for England and a Children's Commissioner for Wales. They protect the rights of children and stand up for your views and interests. They can give you support and advice.

Community sentence: This is a type of sentence where you are free to go home but you must follow certain rules and do certain things for a set amount of time. There are two types of community sentence, a Referral Order and a Youth Rehabilitation Order. If you receive a Referral Order, you will meet with a community panel who will help oversee your order.

Court order: This is when a judge or magistrate says that you must do something.

Education providers: This could be a school, college or university.

Lawyer: This is someone who is trained to understand the law. They will make sure you know your rights, explain to you what is happening, and give you legal advice. The lawyer works for you (not the police or the court).

Local authority: This is another name for the local council or local government. They run services like schools, sports centres, social services and Youth Justice Services.

Out of court disposal: This is something the police might give you if they think you have broken the law. It means that you do not have to go to court. There are different types of out of court disposals with different rules and things you will need to do.

Remand: If you are charged with an offence and refused bail, you will be remanded. This means the judge or magistrate decides that you should stay in local authority accommodation or youth secure accommodation. The decision is made at a remand hearing.

Remand to local authority accommodation: This can be living at home, with a relative, in foster care or in a children's home. A remand to local authority accommodation usually has rules (called 'conditions') such as places you can't go or people you can't talk to. You must follow the conditions of your remand. If you don't, you may have to stay in youth secure accommodation until your next court appearance.

Sentence: A judge or magistrate can give you a sentence if you are guilty of committing an offence. A sentence is an order from the court that you must follow. There are different types of sentences. All sentences have certain requirements you must follow but some involve going to custody (custodial sentences) whereas others (community sentences) mean you can stay at home. A 'sentencing hearing' is when the court decides what your sentence will be. Social worker: This is someone from your local authority who is trained to support children and their families who may be having difficulties.

Supervision: This is when you meet with your Youth Justice Service case manager. This might be as part of your bail conditions or as part of your sentence. You must go to these meetings.

Youth Justice Service (YJS) or Youth Offending Team (YOT): A team of professionals (including police, social workers and substance misuse workers) who work with you if you have committed, or are suspected of committing, a crime. The work they do with you might be voluntary or compulsory and will depend on your circumstances and the crime you have been involved in.



© Crown copyright 2025.

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/official-documents