



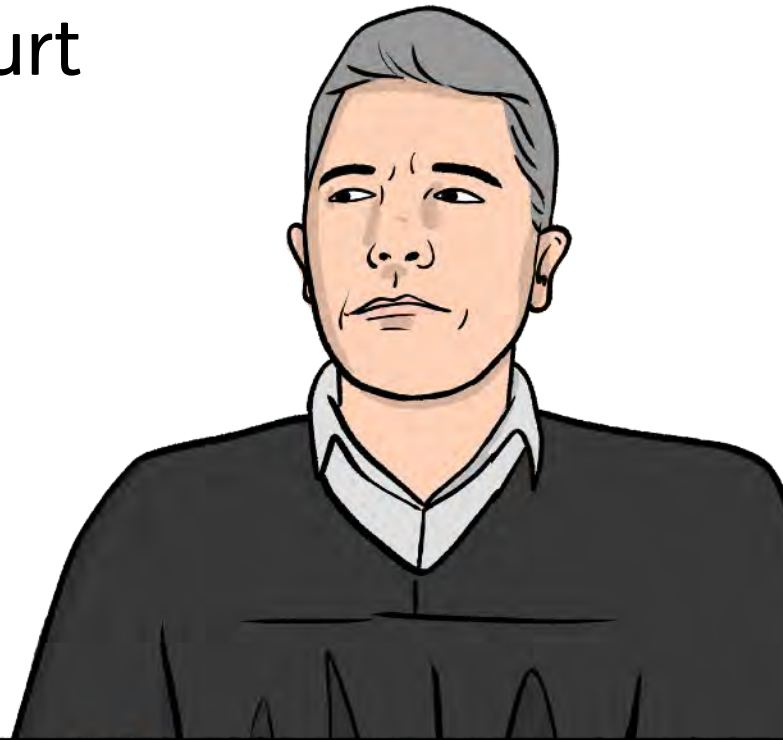
Ministry
of Justice



**Easy
Read**

The Youth Justice Charter

Part 2: Going to court



**An Easy Read version of the
Youth Justice Charter**

Easy Read



This is an Easy Read version of some information. It may not include all of the information but it will tell you about the important parts.



This Easy Read booklet uses easier words and pictures. Some people may still want help to read it.



Some words are in **bold** - this means the writing is thicker and darker. These are important words in the booklet.



Sometimes if a bold word is hard to understand, we will explain what it means.



[Blue and underlined](#) words show links to websites and email addresses. You can click on these links on a computer.

What is in this booklet

The youth justice system	4
The Youth Justice Charter	5
What happens if you go to court	9
If you want to complain	29
Find out more	30

The youth justice system



If you are a child aged 10 to 17 years old and break the law, you might have contact with the **youth justice system**.



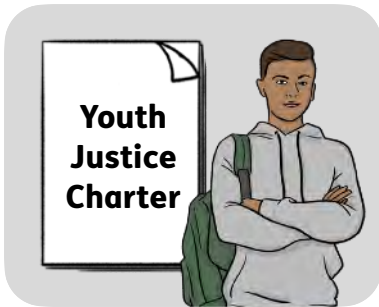
The **youth justice system** is the police, courts, youth justice services and **custody** services.



The law is a set of rules that must be followed to keep people safe and protect people's property.

Breaking the law is also called **offending**, or **committing a crime**.

The Youth Justice Charter



The Youth Justice Charter tells you about your rights if you are a child and break the law.



All children have **rights**. You still have these rights, even if you have broken the law.

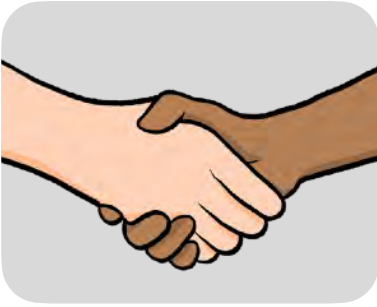
Rights are basic things that every person should have. Like the right to be safe, the right to education, the right to be respected.



The Youth Justice Charter calls them **standards**.

The standards explain how you should be treated by the different people and organisations you have contact with.

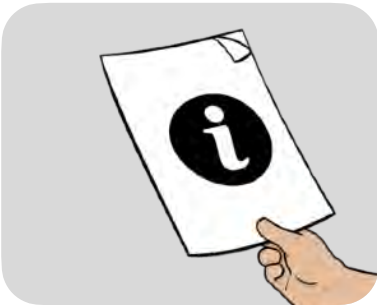
In all parts of the youth justice system you have the right to:



- Be treated fairly.



- Have help with the law, from someone who is on your side.



- Have information to help and support you.



- Be listened to and have what you think taken seriously.



- Be healthy and kept safe.



In all parts of the youth justice system you also have the right to:

- Be able to learn and grow.

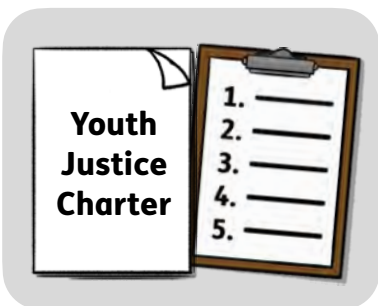


- Be able to make good choices for the future no matter what has happened in the past.



You also have the right to complain if you do not think these standards have been met.

This Charter tells you how to do that.

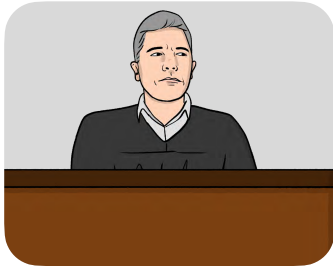


There are five parts of the Charter and each part has a booklet.



The booklets tell you about the standards when you are:

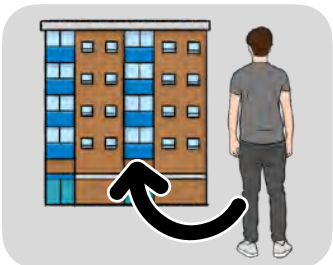
- Stopped by the police.



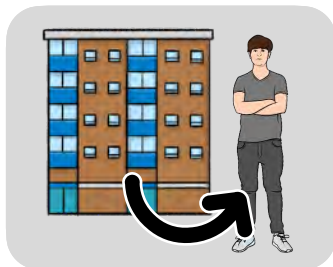
- Going to court.



- Being supported by youth justice services.



- Going into youth custody.



- Leaving youth custody.



This booklet tells you about going to court.

What happens if you go to court



If you have been charged with a crime, it means you have to go to court.

You will usually go to a youth court.



In court, someone called a magistrate, or sometimes a judge, listens to what has happened.



They listen to the evidence and decide if you are guilty or not guilty.



If you are guilty, they decide what happens to you.



If you have been charged with a serious crime, you will go to a Crown Court.



There is usually a **jury** in a Crown Court.

A **jury** is a group of 12 people who listen to the evidence and decide if you are guilty or not guilty.



If you are found guilty, the judge decides what happens to you.



The job of the judge, magistrates and jury is to listen to everyone's side of the story and make a fair decision.



The court standards explain how you should be treated before, during and after you go to court.

1. You should get support to prepare for court.



You should be told as early as possible that you have to go to court.

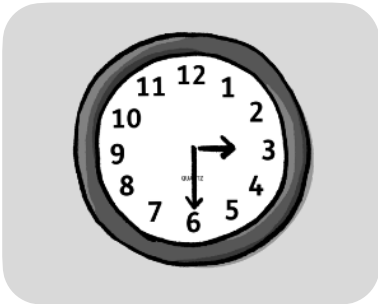


The Youth Justice Service (YJS) can answer any questions you have.

The YJS should make sure that you know:



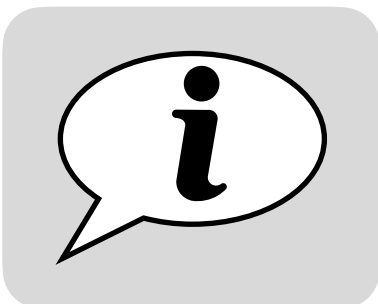
- Where you need to go.



- What time you need to get there.



- What will happen when you get there.



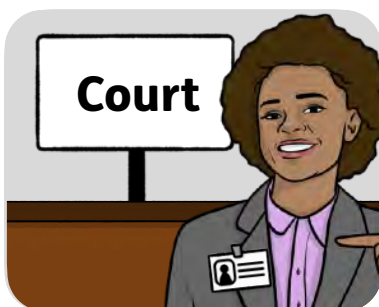
If you are going to court from custody, your YJS, **lawyer** or custody officer will tell you this information.



A **lawyer** is someone who knows the law and can give you advice about it. Your lawyer works for you, not the police or the court.



Your YJS, lawyer or custody officer will help you and your parents or carers get to court.



Your lawyer can help you to visit court and see what it looks like before your court date if you want to.



If you are taken to court by transport from the police station, you should:

- Not travel with other prisoners who are adults.
- Be in the transport for as short a time as possible.



2. You will be able to have a lawyer in court who will be on your side and will stand up for you.

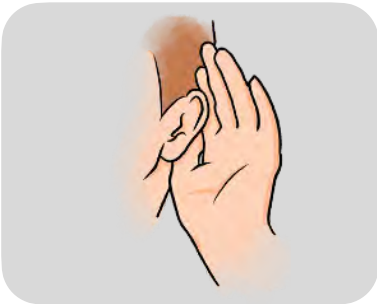


You can have free legal advice from a lawyer.



Your lawyer:

- Works for you.



- Will listen to you and take you seriously.



- Will tell you the truth.



Your lawyer will also make sure you understand what is happening.



You can to talk to your lawyer before, during and after court.



The people who work in the court should find you somewhere to talk in private.



If you do not have a lawyer and you want one, there will be a duty lawyer in court who can support you.



When you are in the courtroom, you should be able to sit near your lawyer so you can talk to them if you want to.

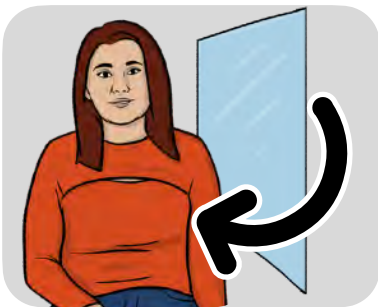
3. You should be able to sit next to your parents or carers in court.



If the magistrates or judge are worried about your safety or the safety of others, they might decide you need to stay in the **dock**. They will explain why.



The **dock** is a separate part of a courtroom. Sometimes the dock is **secure** which means it is behind glass with court security staff.



Your lawyer can ask for you to sit outside of the dock.



The magistrates or judge will decide if they will let you and explain why.

4. You will have a bail hearing if you have been charged with a crime.



Bail is when you are released while the police look into whether you committed a crime. When you are on bail you must return to the police station or court when you are told to, if you do not you are committing a crime.



The court will decide if you can have bail at a bail hearing.



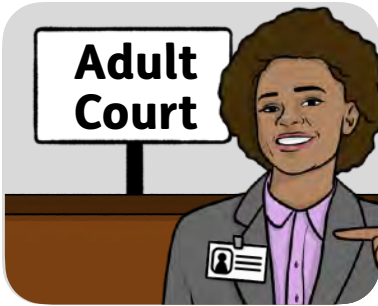
Someone from the YJS will:

- Talk to you about bail.
- Tell the court about your situation to help them decide if they will give you bail.

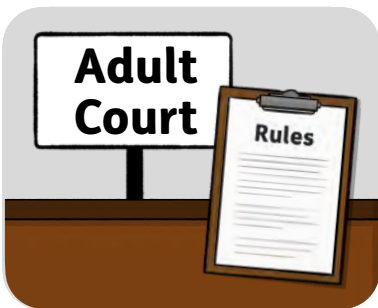




The bail hearing should happen within 24 hours of you being charged with a crime.



You might have to go to an adult court for the bail hearing to make it happen within 24 hours.



If you do have to go to an adult court, someone will be there to tell the court about the different rules for children.



There are 3 things that the court could decide to do at the bail hearing:

1. You will be let out on bail.



2. You will be **remanded into the community**.

This can mean living:



- At home.



- With someone else from your family.



- In foster care.



- In a children's home.



You usually have to follow rules during this time. These might be called **conditions**.



3. You will be remanded to the youth secure estate.



If you are remanded the judge or magistrate will tell you in court what will happen to you.

5. You will be helped to understand what is happening in court.



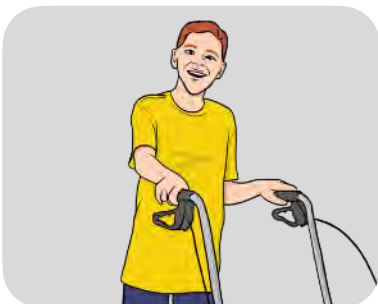
You will also be helped to explain things to other people.



If you speak a different language than English or Welsh, the court staff can arrange for an **interpreter** for you.



An **interpreter** is someone who can change what someone is saying into a language you understand. This could either be a spoken language or sign language.



If you need help because you have a disability, a learning difficulty or autism or ADHD, your lawyer can ask for an **intermediary**.



An **intermediary** is someone who is not part of the court. Their job is to help you and the other people in court understand each other.



The adults in the court room will speak clearly.



The judge or magistrates will check that you understand what they said.



You can ask any questions.



You can ask to take a break if you need one.

6. Your mental health and wellbeing will be looked after while you are in court.



Wellbeing means feeling happy and healthy in your body and mind.



If anyone is worried about your mental health or wellbeing they might ask someone to talk to you.



That person can give advice to the court about how to support you.

7. The judge or magistrates will help you to understand what their decisions mean for you.



The judge or magistrates will explain anything you need to do as part of your bail, remand or **sentence**, including any **conditions** you need to follow.



A **sentence** is what you have to do if the court decides you are guilty, and how long you have to do it for.

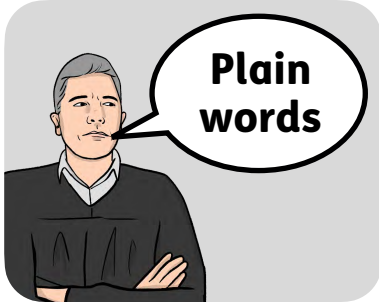


Conditions are rules that you have to follow as part of your sentence.



The judge or magistrates will also explain what will happen if you do not do what they have asked.

8. If the court has remanded you into custody, you will get help to understand why this has happened.



The judge or magistrates must explain their decision to you in ordinary language that makes sense.



The decision will also be written down for you.

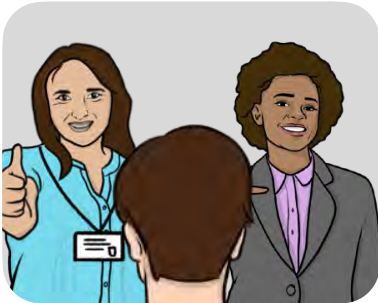


Your lawyer can keep asking the court to let you out on bail.



The court must look at your case if you are in custody waiting for your trial for a certain amount of time.

9. You will be supported to understand what happens after court.



The Youth Justice Service and your lawyer will help you understand the judge or magistrates' decision.



If you have been found not guilty or have been given an **absolute discharge**, you can go home and do not need to follow any rules.

Absolute discharge is where the court decides you do not need to do anything, even though you have been found guilty.



If you have been given a **community sentence** your YJS will arrange to meet with you and will tell you where you need to go for your appointments.

A **community sentence** means you can go home but you must follow certain rules for a set amount of time.



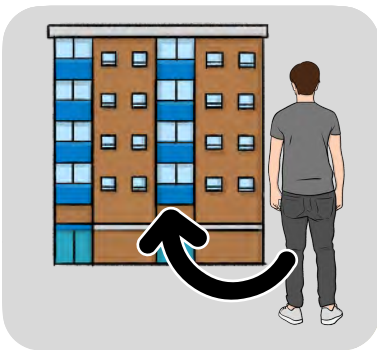
If you have been given **conditional bail or community remand**, your YJS will make sure you know any conditions you need to stick to and might discuss a timetable for supervision.



Conditional bail means you have to follow some rules. If you do not do this, you might be arrested.



If you have been given a **custodial sentence**, you will be taken from the courtroom to the court cells by security staff.



A **custodial sentence** is when you have to stay in the youth secure estate. This could be a young offender institution, a secure school, a secure training centre or a secure children's home.



You will wait in the court cells until transport can take you there.



You should be told where you are going.



You should be able to call your family if they have not been in court.



You should get to your custody placement in time to get settled in.



You should have something to eat and drink and toilet breaks on the journey.



Your lawyer and YJS will come and talk to you while you are waiting for your transport.

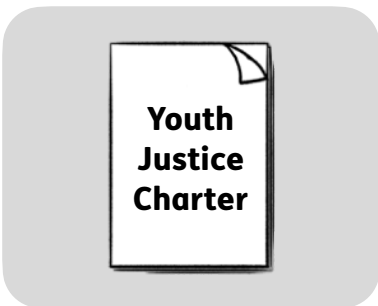
If you want to complain



If you think someone has not followed the standards, you should tell them.



If you do not want to tell them, or are not happy with what they say, you or your parents or carers can make a complaint.



There is information about how to do this in the Youth Justice Charter, in the part called “What to do if these standards have not been met”.



To find out more, search the internet for "youth justice charter".

Find out more



You can look at our website here:
[www.gov.uk/government/
organisations/ministry-of-justice](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-justice)

You can contact us by:



- Post:
102 Petty France
London
SW1H 9AJ
United Kingdom



- Phone: 0203 334 3555