

Care Leavers Released from Custody Protocol - joint working arrangements between Childrens Social Care (CSC), Youth Offending Service (YOS), Merseyside Probation Service (NPS) and Merseyside Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC).

Identify Care Leavers

Adult Justice Services should identify the individual as a having Care Leaver status as part of the initial assessment of the individual. The flowchart below highlights the stages and processes between agencies to facilitate effective joint working and support to the care leaver.

This may be relatively straightforward where the young person has been in the youth justice system and has been transitioned from Youth to Adult services. In these cases you should have been involved in the Transition process and have access to the most recent assessment (AssetPlus) for details of care history. In other cases, the individual may tell you that they have, or have had, a personal advisor and/or a pathway plan.

However, some individuals may be uncertain about the details of their care history or may have had negative experiences. Others might not recognise, or have a different interpretation of, term such as 'being in care', 'personal advisor' etc. It may be helpful to ask questions differently such as 'Have you always lived at home?' If you are unsure if an individual is a care leaver, where appropriate, check with the local authority (see flowchart below).

Once you have established that the person concerned is a care leaver, record this status. In custody P-NOMIS now contains a field that can be used to record care leaver status. In probation, nDelius contains a field under personal circumstances that is to be used to record care leaver status. Additionally, the national Equality Information Form also asks, at pre-sentence report preparation stage and at initial assessment, for this information and the status can then be recorded on nDelius.

Planning for Release

Details of Personal Advisor's should be recorded on P-NOMIS when in custody and on nDelius when under probation supervision and Personal Advisors need to be updated and informed well in advance of an release dates so that support can be provided.

The local authority must be involved in plans for release where the plan is for the young person to be provided with support in the community from Children's Social Care. This is because they are former relevant young people, as they have previously been Looked After by the Local Authority. The local authority will have relevant information which will assist in the consideration of release plans or home curfew particularly with regard to the young person's ability to cope with any additional supervision requirements attached to their license, such as electronic monitoring or an Intensive Supervision and Surveillance (ISS); or any MAPPA arrangements that may be required on release

At the initial DTO planning review in the Young offenders Institution, accommodation and ETE arrangements on release are discussed to ensure planning at the earliest stage of detention. Wherever possible, arrangements should be made for young people to visit prospective placements and employment or educational facilities and to meet relevant practitioners before their release. There are facilities for a young person to be granted Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) or Mobility to allow outside visits to take place, subject to relevant agreements.

As soon as possible and no later than 14 days before release, the young person must know:

- Who is collecting them;
- Where they will be living;
- The reporting arrangements;
- Sources of support - including out of hours;
- The arrangements for education, training or employment;
- Arrangements for meeting continuing health needs;
- How and when they will receive financial support;
- When they will be seeing their social worker;
- The roles and responsibilities of the respective practitioners.
- That the personal advisor and the Probation Officer will share information regarding their progress and compliance

It is essential that there is clarity about who is responsible for each element of the young person's plan and the arrangements for communication and enforcement. The local authority should record this plan as a Pathway Plan and make copies available to the young person, the supervising Adult Justice Officer (NPS/CRC) or Youth Offending Service (YOS) Case Manager, the custodial establishment and any other agencies that will be involved with supporting the young person after release and the young person's family, if appropriate. This plan should also specify any work that needs to be undertaken to support the young person to live independently, including access to the First Home Grant if permanent independent accommodation is identified.

Support in the Community

Most sentenced young people returning to the community once they have reached 18 years, will be supervised by the Probation Service, unless it is agreed that they stay with the YOS due to specific needs*. Where the local authority has agreed to support the young person on release, the Personal Advisor will collaborate with the Probation Officer during the period of supervision. The function of the Personal Advisor is to plan for the young person's care or for their support in the community.

It is good practice to have some joint appointments with the young person, Probation Officer and Personal Advisor so that information is shared. The NPS/CRC Officer should consult the local authority over enforcement issues, particularly if there is a possibility of the young person being returned to custody for breach of the conditions of their Notice of Supervision/Licence. Where the young person is having difficulty in complying with their conditions, the local authority should work with the NPS/CRC Officer to put additional

support in place. This may include, for example, support with transport, and work with the young person regarding consequences. The Personal Advisor and Supervising NPS/CRC officer should keep each other informed of significant events, including any changes in service delivery or plans and specifically of any concerns which may impact on compliance.

When appropriate the young person's Pathway Plan should be agreed with their placement provider and should include information about the support that the placement will provide to minimise the likelihood of the young person committing further offences in future.

*If it has been agreed that the young person is to remain under the supervision of YOS, during their license period, then all of the above would occur with the YOS Case Manager, in place of the NPS or CRC Officer.

Useful websites

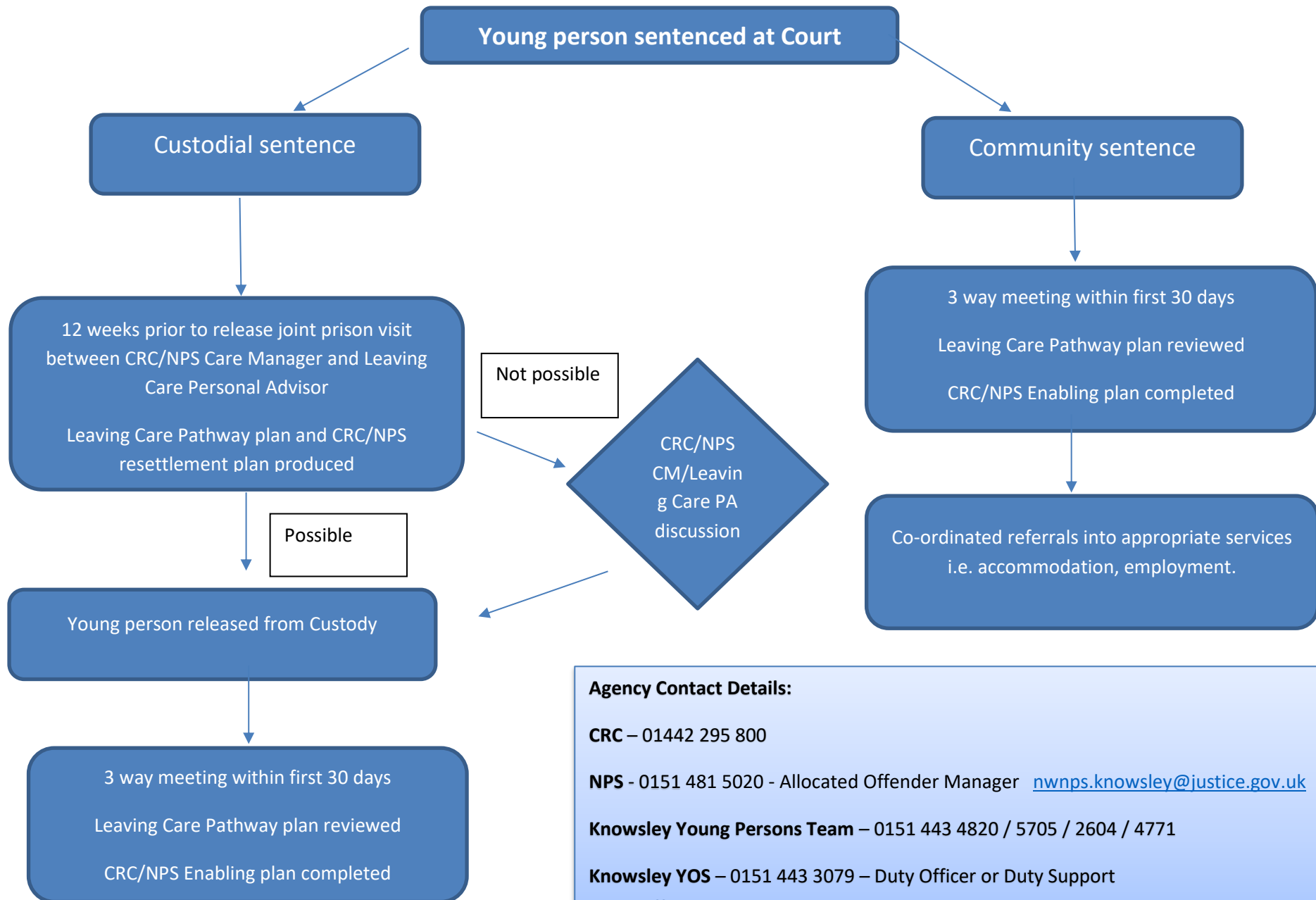
Care Leavers association – <http://www.careleavers.com>

Catch22 – <http://www.catch-22.org.uk>

HMPPS intranet - <http://intranet.noms.gsi.gov.uk/support/a-z-what-works/care-leavers>

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Care Leavers Released from Custody Protocol between Merseyside CRC, Merseyside NPS, Knowsley Young Persons Team & Knowsley YOS.



Agency Contact Details:

CRC – 01442 295 800

NPS - 0151 481 5020 - Allocated Offender Manager nwnps.knowsley@justice.gov.uk

Knowsley Young Persons Team – 0151 443 4820 / 5705 / 2604 / 4771

Knowsley YOS – 0151 443 3079 – Duty Officer or Duty Support

YouthOffendingService@knowsley.gov.uk