



**City of London Corporation**

# **Leaving Care Guidance**

This is the guidance we have to follow when we support you to leave care.

**Easier to Read Version**

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## About Us

We are the City of London Corporation.  
We are called **CoLc** for short.



We act as a corporate parent to looked after children.

This means that we provide support, advice and help to looked after young people, like a good parent would.

You can stay in foster care until you are 18 years old or you can choose to leave at 16 years old.

When you are getting ready to leave care you are called a Care Leaver.

This guidance tells you how we help and support care leavers aged 16 to 25 years old.

## Information

If you are an Asylum Seeking Young Person you can usually get all of the financial support we explain in this guidance.

Please go to **pages 18 to 19** for more information about Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children.



## Support from a Social Worker

Every care leaver aged 16 to 25 is supported by a qualified social worker.

Young people have told us it is very important to be supported by the same care team and social worker. We think this is important too.



## Contact with your Social Worker

We must make regular contact with **all** care leavers aged 16 to 25 years old. This means getting in touch to make sure you are OK.

If you are aged 16 to 20, we must keep in touch with you and provide social worker support.

If you are aged 21 to 25, you can decide how much contact you want. Your social worker must contact you every year to see if you need any support.

## Visits from your Social Worker

### Age 16 – 17

If you move into new accommodation your social worker will visit you straight away in the first week, then every week for 4 weeks. After that they will visit you every 4 weeks.

You can ask them to visit more often if you want.

## Visits from your Social Worker



### Age 18 to 25

We will offer to visit you every 6 to 8 weeks. We will agree with you how often you want us to visit.

It is important you have regular contact with your social worker so you can get to know and trust each other.

It is important that we visit you in your home environment to make sure you are safe and well.

If your social worker cannot contact you, they must tell the Social Care Team Manager.

The manager will decide whether your social worker should come to check that you are OK. This is called an unannounced visit.

If we still do not have contact with you and we are really worried about you, we might have to contact the police.

If you are an Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Care Leaver and we cannot contact you, we must tell the Home Office.

## Pathway Plans

All care leavers have a pathway plan. Your plan will say what support and help you need to get ready to leave care. It will also say what support and help you will need when you have left care.

Your plan will be reviewed every 6 months with you.

If you think things have changed you can ask to have it reviewed before 6 months.

Care leavers aged 16 to 20 must have a full pathway plan.

Care leavers aged 21 or over do not have to have a plan. You can ask to have a plan or part of a plan if you need one.



## Your Health Needs

Your pathway plan will look at how you can stay well in your physical and emotional health.

Your social worker will talk to you about:

- Regular health check-ups
- Dental check-ups
- Eye check-ups

They can come to the appointment with you if you want.

The **NHS Health Costs Scheme** can help you pay for some NHS services.

Things like:

- Prescriptions
- Dental treatment
- Eye tests
- Glasses and contact lenses
- Travel to get to an appointment



You need to fill in a HC1 form. Your Social Worker can help you with this.

If you have **no leave to remain** and cannot get help from the scheme, we will help you pay for the services.

Your social worker will help you find other health and support services you might need.

## Cultural and Leisure Activities

All care leavers can access activities in the **CoLc**.  
Places like museums and libraries.



### Age 16 to 17

We want to support you with your hobbies, leisure and sports activities.

If your pathway plan says it is important for you to be supported with this, we might be able to help pay for it.

## Accommodation. This is where you live.

When you leave care we will listen to you and talk to you about where you want to live.



### Age 18 to 25

Your social worker will help you find the right accommodation for you.

- **Stay with Foster Carers**

You can stay with foster carers if it is the best thing for you. You must all agree to this.

It is not the same as being in foster care. Now that you have left care it will be called a **supported lodging placement** or a **room only basis**.

- **Semi-Independent Accommodation**

There are lots of things to think about and organise when you live on your own. Things like budgeting, looking after your home and being a good tenant.

Semi-independent accommodation means you will have support and help at home to learn new skills. This will help you to become more independent before living on your own.

- **Independent Accommodation.**

This means living on your own.

Your social worker will help you apply for social housing when you are ready.

Sometimes there is no social housing. You might need to go into private rented accommodation until you can get social housing.

You need to apply for Universal Credit Benefit to help pay for your rent and living expenses. Your social worker will help you do this.

All care leavers are offered at least two years of support for budgeting, looking after your home and being a good tenant.



# Care Leavers in Education



## Age 16 to 17

You can leave school on the last Friday in June if you will be 16 years old by the end of the summer holidays.

If you leave school you must do one of these things until you are 18 years old:

- Stay in full-time education, for example go to college.
- Start an apprenticeship or traineeship.
- Spend 20 hours or more a week working or volunteering and be in part-time education or training.

We can offer you Adult Education and Training. Ask your social worker about this.

## Personal Allowance

Personal allowance is money we give you for living expenses. We must give you this money.

If you are living semi-independently, living expenses are things like:

- Food
- Household bills
- Toiletries and clothes
- Personal expenses, things like travel.

If you are in foster care you will get a personal allowance from your foster carer.

We will give money to your foster carer to give to you.



# Care Leavers in Education



## Age 16 to 17

### Rent

We will pay your rent.



### Money for clothes

We will give you £150 a year to spend on clothes.

We will give you an extra £50 to spend on clothes for festivals or a special occasion.



## Age 16 to 19 Bursary Fund

You might be able to get a bursary of £1,200 a year if you stay in full-time education. A bursary is money that you do not have to pay back.



To get the bursary you must:

- have the legal right to be resident in the UK at the start of your course.
- have been ordinarily resident in the UK for 3 years before starting the course.
- be 'settled' in the UK. This means you have **Indefinite Leave to Enter or Remain** or have the **Right of Abode in the UK** if you are age 18 or older.

Your school or college will look after the bursary for you.

If you are subject to a **Home Office Deportation Order** you will not be able to get the bursary until it is sorted out.

# Care Leavers in Education



## Age 18 to 25

### Paying for your course

Your social worker can help you apply for money to pay for your course.

If you cannot get any money to pay for your course, we might be able to pay for it.

We will talk to you about what you want in your life and how the course will help you achieve it.



### Things you might need for your course

There might be things that you need for your course like:

- Books
- Uniform
- Equipment
- Laptop



Your social worker can help you apply for some money to help you pay for them.

If you cannot get any money, we might be able to pay for them.

### Travel

If you live independently, during term time we will buy you a weekly bus pass. If you need more money to travel, we might be able to help you.



## University and Further Education

If you want to go to university or further education talk to your social worker. They will talk to you about the money and support you can get.



Money you might be able to apply for:

- Maintenance Grant
- Loan for tuition fees
- Loan for maintenance
- Local Authority HE Bursary
- University Bursary

You will have to pay back any loans or maintenance when you have finished your course.

You do not have to pay back a grant or bursary.

Your social worker will tell you about:

- **Buttle UK**
- **Article 26 Helena Kennedy Foundation.**

They give support and information to care leavers.

Your social worker will also tell you about:

- **The Virtual Headteacher**
- **Information, Advice, Guidance and Resilience Practitioner**

They can help you claim a bursary.

## CoLC Bursary

We must give you a bursary. It is £2000 a year.

We will pay a bit of it weekly or monthly into your bank account.

To get the bursary your social worker will check that you are going to your course and that you are working towards your qualification.



## Travel

When you are choosing which university to go to we will buy you a travel card. If your travel costs more, we might be able to pay for it



## Accommodation

We will give you help and support to find the right accommodation.

We will support you to apply for social housing and money to pay for your rent.



If you cannot get money to pay for social housing, we might be able to pay for it. This will depend on your immigration status.

## Vacation Accommodation

If you stay in university accommodation you might have to leave it during the easter and summer holidays.

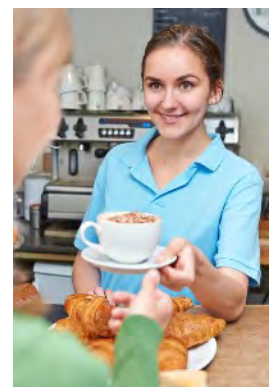
Vacation accommodation is the place you will stay in the holidays.

Your social worker will talk to you about it.

We will pay for your vacation accommodation.

## Part-time jobs

If you get a part-time job your wage will not affect how much you get for your bursaries, grants and loans.



# Care Leavers in Training or Paid Work

## Care Leavers not in Training or Paid Work



### Age 16 to 17

#### Personal allowance

We must give you money for living expenses.

If you are in foster care your foster care will give you this.

If you are in semi-independent accommodation we will pay it into your bank account.

If you have a long term sickness or disability, we will give you extra money for living expenses.



#### Travel

If you are in training and in foster care you will get travel expense from your foster carer.

If you are in training and live semi-independently we will get you a weekly bus pass.

If you are not in training or paid work, we will pay for a weekly bus pass if you are going to appointments or interviews.

When you get a job we will pay for your bus pass for the first month. After that you will have to pay for it yourself.

If your travel costs more than the weekly bus pass we might be able to pay for this.



#### Rent

We will pay your rent.





## Care Leavers in Training or Paid Work

## Care Leavers not in Training or Paid Work



### Age 16 to 17

#### Money for clothes

If you live semi independent and are in training, we will give you £150 twice a year to spend on clothes.

We will give you an extra £50 to spend on clothes for festivals or a special occasion.



### Age 18 and over

#### Paying your rent

Your social worker will help you apply for Universal Credit Benefit to pay for your rent.



#### Things you might need for your course

There might be things that you need for your training course like:

- Books
- Uniform
- Equipment
- Laptop



Your social worker can help you to apply for money to pay for them.

If you cannot get any money, we might be able to pay for them.

#### You can not work due to sickness or disability

If you have been told you cannot work because you have a long term sickness or a disability you might be able to get some extra money. It is called the Work Capability Component of the Universal Credit Benefit.

Your social worker can talk to you about getting Personal Independence Payments too.



## Young Parents and Pregnant Women

Your social worker can help you apply for some schemes, grants and benefits.



### Healthy Start Scheme

You can get:

- Vitamins for you and your child
- Vouchers for milk
- Fruit and Vegetables
- Baby Formula if you need it

### Sure Start Maternity Grant

This is a grant of £500.

Your social worker can help you decide how to spend the money on things you need for you and your baby.

If you cannot get this grant we will give you a maternity grant of £500.

### CoLc Baby Grant

We will give you a grant of £200 just before or after your baby is born.

### Universal Credit Benefit

You can apply for more benefits from Universal Credit Benefit.

### Care to Learn Scheme

If you are under 20 years old and in education you may be able to get help with childcare costs.



## Care Leavers who live at home with parents



### Age 16 to 17

If you go home to live with your parents and it goes well for 6 months, your parents can claim Universal Credit Benefit for you.

We will stop paying your allowance and rent after the 6 months.

If you are subject to a **Care Order under Section 31** of the **Childrens Act 1989** your family cannot get Universal Credit Benefit for you. They can claim Child Benefit for you if you are in full time education.

We must give you a personal allowance if you live at home and are **Section 31** or **Section 23a**, for the first 6 months you live there.

We will not pay your rent.

### Age 18 and over

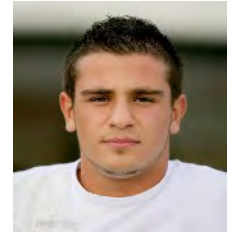
You can claim Universal Credit Benefit if you are unemployed and looking for work.

You cannot get Universal Credit Benefit to help pay your rent if you live with your parents or a close relative.

If you are in education your parents can claim Child Tax Credits and Child Benefit for you until your 21st birthday.

## Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children

If you are an asylum seeking young person you can usually get all of the financial support we have explained in this guidance.



### Age 16 to 17

When you arrived in the UK you will have asked the home office if you can stay. This is called **Asylum Seeking**.

The home office may give you **Discretionary Leave** whilst it makes a decision. **Discretionary Leave** means you can stay in the UK for 3 years or until you are 17 ½ years old.

We must pay for your rent and living expenses.

### Age 18 to 25

Depending on your immigration status you might not be able to get public funding and welfare benefits like Universal Credit Benefit for your education.

You will get public funding and welfare benefits if:

- You are a **Refugee**. This means you have been **granted asylum** and can stay in the UK for up to 5 years.
- The home office has not made a decision about your **asylum** and you have asked to make your **discretionary leave** longer. You must ask before your discretionary leave runs out.
- You are waiting for a final decision about your **asylum claim**.
- The UK Border Agency said 'no' to your **asylum claim** but you are asking them to look at it again. This is called **Appeal Rights**.
- You have **Humanitarian Protection**.

## Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children



### Age 18 to 25

#### No Asylum or Rights of Appeal

If the UK Border Agency said 'no' to your **asylum claim** and you have used all of your **appeal rights**, you cannot get any money from public funds or welfare benefits.

If this happens and you stay in the UK, we will still pay for your rent and living expenses until you are 25 years old. We think it is important to help and support you as a care leaver.

If the home office asks you to leave the UK you will be asked to go back to the country you came from.

Part of your pathway plan will look at how we can support you with this.

#### What if you were an Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Child who was looked after by the CoLc?

If the UK Border Agency said 'no' to your claim and the home office stops funding for you, we will still pay for your rent and living expenses until you are 25 years old.

## Care Leavers on Remand or Imprisoned



### Age 16 to 17

If you are on remand or imprisoned, you are a Looked After Child. The **CoLc** Social Care Team are responsible for you. We will give you the support identified in your pathway plan.

### Age 18 and over

Your social worker will contact **City Advice** for information and advice about your Universal Credit Benefits.

## Getting set up in Independent Living



### Setting Up Home Grant

When you move into independent accommodation for the first time, we can give you a grant. The money is given to your social worker.

You can decide together what you need to make your home safe and secure.

This can be things like:

- Bed
- Sofa
- Table
- Washing machine
- Things for the kitchen

### Settling in Allowance

If you cannot get the setting up home grant we might be able to give you a £250 allowance. This is to help you pay for:

- Basic food supplies
- Cleaning materials
- Light bulbs
- Essential toiletries

### Decorating Allowance

You might be able to get some money to help pay for painting and carpets.

# Help with your Bills in Independent Living



## Council Tax

You do not have to pay the **CoLc** council tax. If you live in the **CoLc** borough, your social worker will tell the council tax manager you are a care leaver.

If you live outside the **CoLc** borough your social worker will work out if you need to pay council tax.

If you do have to pay council tax, we will pay this for you.

## TV Licence

We will buy your first TV licence. You will have to buy your next one.

## Winter Heating Allowance

You can get this for your first winter in independent living. We will pay you £10 per month from October to March.

## Other Payments

### Your Birthday

On your birthday your social worker will give you a birthday card and £50. You will get this until you are 25 years old.



### Visits to Friends and Family

If you need to pay for visits to family and friends we might be able to help you with this.

## Emergency Payments

If you are waiting for your Universal Credit Benefit to be set up and you have no money, we can give you an emergency payment to help buy food and essentials.

## Clothes for age 18 to 21

We might be able to give you £150 per year for winter clothes.

We can give you an extra £30 to spend on clothes for festivals or a special occasion.

Speak to your social worker about this.

## Identification Documents

### Birth Certificate

We will make sure you have a copy of your birth certificate.  
We will pay for this if we need to.



### Provisional Driving Licence

We will not pay for a provisional driving license unless, you are an asylum seeking care leaver. This is because it is useful ID.

### Passports

We will apply for your passport and pay for it up to age 21.

We may pay for your passport and travel documents if you are an asylum seeking young person.

## Emergency Contact Numbers

In an emergency you can contact your social worker or the duty worker.

Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm

**Telephone 0207 332 3621**

Monday to Friday, 5pm to 9am. Saturday and Sunday anytime

**Telephone 0208 356 2710**



## Comments and Complaints

If you are unhappy with our service you can complain.

We will give you information about how to complain when you come into care and at your reviews.

You can tell your social worker or talk to their manager.

You can ask an advocate to help you tell us why you are unhappy with the service.

