

Social care in prison

Can I get support with social care needs in prison?

The Care Act 2014 says that the local council where you are in prison must assess you if you might have social care needs.

You may have social care needs if you find it difficult to look after yourself and do daily tasks such as showering or getting dressed. This might be due to a disability or long term illness.

If you think you have social care needs you can ask for an assessment.

The local council will assess you to decide if you have social care needs which they should help with. The council will talk to you, prison staff and sometimes healthcare staff.

They will ask about your daily life and ask what you find difficult.

If you have difficulty understanding information, you should ask for an advocate. This is someone who can support you and help you to understand information. They can help you to tell the council what you think. This service is free.

What happens after social services have assessed me?

The council will decide whether they can give you care and support. This might be help with daily living, such as help using the shower or getting dressed.

The council might agree a care and support plan with you. This will say what help you need and who will give you this.

The council might:

- Give you information and advice
- Find someone to help you with daily care
- Help you stay well

Do I have to pay for the support I receive?

If you have savings outside prison you may have to pay for some or all of your care costs. You will not have to use prison earnings to pay for care.

What happens to the support I am getting if I move prison?

If you move to another prison:

- The council should tell the council in the new area about your needs
- The new council will look at the support you need
- Your care and support should carry on

What happens when I am released?

If you have a disability or need support you might be able to get help from social services when you return to live in the community.

It is important that the social services where you are going to live know about you before you leave prison. The local council where you are in prison should tell the council in the area you will be living about your needs. They should then look at what help you will need when you live in the community.

I am having difficulty contacting social services, what should I do?

If you have trouble contacting your council, or have any questions, you can ask prison staff to help you. You can also speak to the Prison Reform Trust, Citizens Advice Bureau or a solicitor for advice.

RECOOP and the Prison Service have written some factsheets on the Care Act, including how to refer yourself. You can ask for them in your library or contact Prison Reform Trust and ask us to send them to you.

Making a complaint about social services

If you are not happy with the council's decision or about the support you get, you can make a complaint.

Ask staff for a copy of the council's complaint leaflet. You can also ask the Prison Reform Trust to find and send this to you.

If you are not happy with the council's response you can then complain to the Local Government Ombudsman.

Their address is: The Local Government Ombudsman
 PO Box 4771
 Coventry
 CV4 0EH

Their phone number is: 0300 061 0614

Further information

The following may be of interest to you. If you are unable to access them elsewhere feel free to contact our Advice and Information Service and we will be happy to send you a copy.

Useful PSIs and PSOs (these should be available in the library):

PSI 15/2015 *Adult Social Care*.

Information sheets

'*Information book for prisoners with a disability*', Prison Reform Trust
RECOOP Easy Read guides to the Care Act

Other

The Care Act 2014

The Prison Rules 1999

Contact our Advice and Information Service

We are a small service and we are independent of the prison service.

We can give you information on prison rules, life in prison and how to get help in prison.

Our freephone information line is **0808 802 0060**. This number is for **prisoners** only. This number is **free** and you do not need to put it on your PIN.

This number is open:

- Monday and Thursday afternoon from 3.30pm to 5.30pm.
- Wednesday morning from 10.30am to 12.30pm.

At other times, you can call on **0207 251 5070**. This number is open from Monday to Friday 10.00am - 5.30pm. This number is **not free** but you do not need to put it on your PIN.

You can also write to us at:

Prison Reform Trust
FREEPOST ND 6125
London
EC1B 1PN

You do not need to use a stamp.