

Will I have a criminal record?

If you complete the actions in the contract, your conviction will be "spent". That means that in most circumstances you will not have to tell anyone about it nor will most other people have any right to know about it (the only exception is if you are applying for certain types of jobs - for example working with children).

In this way the Referral Order is different from other court orders which can stay 'live' on your record for much longer.

But if you do offend again, you will go straight back to court, and will not get another chance at a Referral Order.

Name of Calderdale YOT Officer:

Date and Time of Panel:

Panel Venue:

For further information please contact:

Calderdale Youth Offending Team
3 Trinity Place
Halifax
HX1 1BD

Telephone
01422 368279

Fax
01422 368483

E-mail
info@calderdaleyot.org.uk

Equal Opportunities

At all times you have the right to be treated fairly and without discrimination. This means the Youth Offending Panels and YOT staff will treat you fairly whatever your race, colour, sex, sexuality or disability. You are also expected to behave equally fairly towards other people.

Complaints Procedure

If you feel you have been treated unfairly or unreasonably by the YOT or Youth Offender Panels you can make a complaint. To do this, contact the Calderdale YOT Manager at the above address.

Data Protection

The Calderdale Youth Offending Team deals with personal data under the Data Protection Act 1998. Some of these may be sensitive such as criminal offences, proceedings and convictions. We may share some or all of them with other Council departments, our agents, service providers or other third parties. When involving any third party we shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that they will keep your personal data secure and treat it confidentially. If you are worried about giving us your personal details or about us sharing them with others, please discuss this with the member of staff who is dealing with your case.
We will explain what you can do.

Accessibility

These information leaflets are available in a number of different formats and languages from our Halifax office, or from our website.

Calderdale
Youth Offending
Team

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Referral Order

What it means to you



Making Calderdale Safer

How the Referral Order affects you

The purpose of the Referral Order is to stop you from offending. The length of the order is set by the court and you will then be referred to a Youth Offender Panel who will reach an agreement with you on what has to happen during the time that the order runs.

The panel will aim to:

- Help you not to offend again
- Hear how the victim of the offence feels
- Help you put right some of the harm done.

Why am I going to a Youth Offender Panel?

Every crime is serious, but because this is the first time you have been to court and because you admitted your guilt, you have been given the chance to be dealt with in a different way.

A panel of people - two or three from the community and one from the Youth Offending Team, will sit down and talk with you about what you have done.

They will listen to what you think, how the victim of the offence feels about what has happened and what your parent/carer has to say.

Together, you will work out a plan about what needs to happen to make sure you don't offend again.

What happens now?

A member of the Calderdale Youth Offending Team will contact you to arrange an appointment to be able to find out more about you and your circumstances.

The Youth Offending Team worker will prepare a report and find out when you and your parent/carer are available to attend at a Youth Offender Panel meeting. You will be sent a letter to confirm the details of when and where the meeting will be. If you are under 16 your parent/carer must attend with you.

The court will have decided who is to attend and in some cases where you are over 16 they may still have ordered a parent to attend.

If you fail to attend the panel meeting you will have to go back to court. If your parent/carer fails to attend the meeting when the court has ordered them to, they will have to go back to court.

What will the panel do?

The panel meeting will be different to court. It will be less formal but you must still treat everyone with respect.

The panel will consist of members of the community (two or three people) and a worker from the Youth Offending Team. The victim of the offence may also be present.

If the victim has decided they will attend the meeting, there will be an opportunity for them to say how they feel about the offence and what they would like to happen.

You and your parent/carer have an opportunity to say what happened and how you feel about it.

When everyone has had a chance to speak the panel will work out with you what needs to happen now.

Remember the main aims are:

- To prevent you from offending again, and
- To put right some of the harm done

Together you will agree an action plan which will be written up as a 'contract'. It will include activities such as dealing with any difficulties you may have in education or finding work or training, drug or alcohol problems and helping you to understand what will happen if you do continue to offend.

It may also involve writing a letter of apology to the victim or making a recording by audio or video tape to say that you are sorry.

It might be that you are required to carry out some practical work either for the victim or for the benefit of the general community to demonstrate that you really do want to make amends.

We will work this out **together** so there will be nothing in the contract that you are unable to do.

What will happen during the contract?

When you have agreed a contract of activity with the Panel, you will be expected to complete it during the length of your order (which was decided by the court). The Youth Offending Team, as well as your family and friends, will provide you with the support to successfully complete the contract.

You will be asked to attend regular review panel meetings to review your progress, and discuss any problems. If you experience difficulties with the contract you can ask to meet the panel to discuss these. If you fail to do something that is in your plan of activity then you will have to go back to the panel and they may decide to send you back to court.

If you successfully complete all the actions required in the contract then there will be a panel meeting at the end of your sentence period and the order will be finished.

If you are having any difficulties it is important that you ask for help - we want you to succeed and we will encourage and help you as much as we can.