

attending the youth court

Information for young people

Warwickshire Youth Offending Team

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I HAVE BEEN TOLD I MUST ATTEND COURT ON A CERTAIN DATE.

WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO?

- You must make sure you attend, as failure to do so is a serious offence.
- You should see a solicitor as soon as you can before the Court date.
- There will be a list of solicitors in the telephone directory or you can ask the Court Usher for a list.
- Don't worry if you think you cannot afford a solicitor – help may be available. You will be able to talk to your solicitor about this at your first meeting with him or her.

WHAT IF I CANNOT GO TO COURT ON THE DATE I HAVE BEEN GIVEN?

If there is a very good reason why you cannot attend – you must let the Court know straightaway and they will tell you what to do. For example if you are ill you may have to send in a Doctor's note.

WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF I JUST DIDN'T TURN UP?

A warrant may be issued and you would be arrested.

DO MY PARENTS HAVE TO COME?

Your parents or the adult who provides care for you should attend. The Court expects them and may order them to attend if you turn up on your own.

WHAT HAPPENS THE FIRST TIME IN COURT?

You will be shown where to stand by the Usher and the Court Clerk will read out the charges against you. You will be asked to plead guilty or not guilty.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I PLEAD “NOT GUILTY”?

The case will be adjourned for a trial. This will give your solicitor and the Crown Prosecution Solicitor time to prepare their cases. That means they will gather all the information they can for the Magistrates so that the Magistrates can decide if you are guilty or not.

WHAT IF I PLEAD “GUILTY”?

The Court may sentence you right away or they might ask for a report. Someone from the Youth Offending Team will explain what is needed and the Court will tell you the date when you should be in Court again.

Another leaflet will explain all about the report which is needed.

An early guilty plea may reduce your sentence.



I HAVE BEEN TOLD THE CASE HAS BEEN POSTPONED. WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

This means you will have to come back on another day.

1. you will be on unconditional bail. This means you are on trust not to offend again or to contact witnesses. You are also trusted to attend on the new date.
2. you will be on Conditional Bail. This means the Magistrates may order you to keep to conditions they set. For example:
 - stay at home during certain times
 - keep away from certain people

It is important that you keep to these conditions.

BEEN ADJOURNED –

In the meantime one of four things will apply to you:

3. you may be remanded to local authority accommodation. As you are a young person the Magistrates have decided that the Youth Offending Team should decide where you must stay until your next Court date. You may be placed in a foster home or somewhere else where you can be supervised. Your Youth Offending Team Worker will explain this more fully.
4. you may be remanded in custody if the offence is very serious.

REMANDS IN CUSTODY

Sometimes the Court will decide that only a remand in custody will do – in which case you will go to a Remand Centre or prison.

WHEN WILL THE COURT SENTENCE ME?

After reading reports and hearing from the Crown Prosecution and defence solicitors the Magistrates will make a decision about which sentence to give you.

Please see the leaflet on sentences which explains the different sentences available to the Youth Court.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

We will treat you fairly and with respect.

We expect you not to use comments or behaviour which is:

- racist
- sexist
- makes others feel uncomfortable.

YOUR RIGHTS

If you are unhappy with how you have been treated by a person from the Youth Offending Team tell us by:

- talking to your worker

OR

- telephoning the Unit Manager at your worker's office

OR

- ask for the Complaints Leaflet

CONTACTS

Warwickshire County Council
departments of Education and Social
Services, in partnership with
Warwickshire Health Authority,
Warwickshire Probation, Warwickshire
Police with Bail/Remand Services
provided by Barnardos.

Diane Johnson
Youth Offending Team Manager

If this information is difficult to
understand, we can provide it in
another format for example in large
print, on audio tape, in another
language or through discussion.

**Rugby Office (covering Coleshill,
Atherstone, Bedworth, Nuneaton and
Rugby areas)**

Warwickshire Youth Offending Team
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Rugby
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**Warwick Office (covering Warwick,
Leamington and Stratford areas)**

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Warwickshire
County Council



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