**Reviewing Pathway Plans for young people who have left care:**

This guidance explains the arrangements in place for young people who have left Local Authority care to request a review of their pathway plans.

This is open to all young people aged between the age of 18 yrs and 25 yrs, who are “Former Relevant” young people. Please refer to appendix 1 at the bottom of this document to see if you qualify. If you are still unsure you are welcome to contact our office who can advise you if you qualify.

**What is the Post 18 Pathway Plan Review Offer?**

If you are a Former Relevant Young Person, in addition to the current 6 monthly pathway plan reviews undertaken by your personal advisor, you can also request a review of your pathway plan by an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) up to a maximum of 3 times. This will, in most cases, be the same IRO who previously reviewed your looked after child care plan.

The decision to continue to have independent oversight of your pathway plan is entirely led by yourself, you do not have to accept this service, or to take up all 3 reviews. You might feel you only need one or two.

The IRO will also have discretion, where they feel it is appropriate and necessary, to offer more than 3 reviews.

You might also not initially feel that you need this service, but this will remain available to you until you are 25 years old.

**How would this work?**

The IRO will notify the relevant team manager that the young person concerned has requested a post 18 pathway plan review as soon as the request is made.

Where relevant the Transitions Manager will also be notified and they will consider issues relating to DoLS, LPS.

Where a young person is not able to request a review themselves it will be the role of their advocate to consider requesting a review if they felt this was appropriate.

**4 weeks prior:**

* IRO contacts personal advisor to confirm the time, date and format for the review. The personal advisor provides a verbal update regarding the young person’s circumstances, contact details etc.
* IRO contacts the young person to arrange a time to meet before the review. Ideally this will be in the young person’s home or other venue of their choice.
* If the young person declines to meet their IRO face to face, or this is not practically possible, some other form of contact will be offered e.g. telephone call, e-mail etc. IRO will agree the format of the meeting and who should attend with the young person.
* No less than 3 working days prior to the review: the personal advisor updates the current plan and sends it to the IRO.
* The IRO reads the updated Pathway Plan – this document will be used as the basis for the Pathway Plan review.
* The pathway plan review meeting is not a decision making forum and it will be the role of the relevant team manager to read the recommendations from the pathway plan review and to respond to these within 5 working days.

**Format of the Pathway Plan Review Meeting:**

Usually the pathway plan review will take the form of a meeting. The attendees will be the young person, personal advisor, IRO, carer or accommodation provider, and any other professionals who contributes to the pathway plan. The young person’s views of who should attend the meeting will be the key determining factor.

The contributions and views of those attending the meeting will be captured within the pathway plan. It is the responsibility of the personal advisor to determine the views of other agencies and ensure these are accurately recorded within the pathway plan.

The IRO will record a summary of the issues and decisions in the pathway plan, clearly denoting this is part of the pathway plan review.

The meeting will agree a future date for the second pathway plan review if there is an identified need for a further meeting and this is recorded in the pathway plan.

A copy of the pathway plan is then shared with everyone that attended the meeting.

**Disputes and Challenges**:

Your IRO will challenge the Local Authority if they identify any areas where there is

drift, delay or lack of progress with aspects of the plan e.g. you may be in unsuitable accommodation, your health or education needs are not sufficiently met, there is a safeguarding concern or decisions or agreed actions from the previous review may not have been followed up, without good reason.

.

**APPENDIX ONE:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE AN ELIGIBLE CHILD?** | **WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A RELEVANT CHILD?** | **WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A FORMER RELEVANT CHILD?** | **WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A QUALIFYING CHILD?** |
| After the age of 16, the law gets a bit complicated because you are now a care leaver and different rules apply depending on your age and where you are living. The information below is for you if you are:* Aged 16 or 17
* Have been in care (with foster carers or in a children’s home) for at least 13 weeks since your 14th birthday
* Are still in care (with foster carers or in a children’s home).
 | After the age of 16, the law gets a bit complicated because you are now a care leaver and different rules apply depending on your age and where you are living. The information below is for you if you:* Are aged 16 or 17
* Left care on or after your 16th birthday
* Before that you had been in care for at least 13 weeks since your 14th birthday.
 | After the age of 16, the law gets a bit complicated because there are different categories of care leaver and different rules apply depending on your age and where you are living. The information below is for you if you :* Are aged 18 - 25
* Were in care for at least 13 weeks since your 14th birthday
* Stayed in care until you were 18 OR left care on or after your 16th birthday.
 | After the age of 16, the law gets a bit complicated because you are now a care leaver and different rules apply depending on your age and where you are living. The information below is for you if you are:* Are aged 16 - 21
* Left care on or after your 16th birthday
* Before that you had been in care for less than 13 weeks since your 14th birthday
* A 'relevant child' who has returned home for six months or more.
 |
| If this applies to you then the law says that you are a special category of care leaver known as being an “eligible child” (the part of the law that says this is Schedule 2, Paragraph 19B Children Act 1989 and regulation 40 of the Care Planning Regulations 2010). | If this applies to you then the law says that you are a special category of care leaver known as “a relevant child”. | If this applies to you then the law says that you are a special category of care leaver known as being a “former relevant child”.**IMPORTANT UPDATE:** The law has changed. From 1st April 2018 Children's Services should offer help to all Care Leavers up to the age of 25 even if they are not in education. It used to be the case that you needed to be in education to get support between 21 - 25. | If this applies to you then the law says that you are a special category of care leaver known as being a “qualifying child” (the part of the law that says this is Paragraph 24 Children Act 1989). |
|  |  | **I AM UNDER 25 BUT MY CASE IS CLOSED. CAN I GET HELP?**Children’s Services used to stop supporting care leavers (former relevant children) when they turned 21 if they were not in education. This meant that you might have had your case closed because you were not studying or seeking to return to education. However the good news is that the law has changed. From 1st April 2018 Children's Services should offer help to **all** Care Leavers up to the age of 25 even if they are not in education. This means that Children’s Services should contact you to see if they can assist you. But you can also contact Children’s Services because they must:* Do an assessment of your needs to decide what help you might need from them
* Give you a new **Personal Advisor (PA)**
* Complete a new **Pathway Plan** for you which details all the support and help you will be getting from them (this should include help with the cost of education).
 |  |