



Referral Order

What is a Referral Order?

Referral Orders are used for the majority of young people appearing before the Court for the first time and pleading guilty, but can be used in other circumstances too. The Court will decide on the length of the order which will be between 3 and 12 months, depending on the seriousness of the offence. The Order will start on the day you agree your contract at the Referral Order Panel.

What happens next?

A member of the Youth Justice Service will see you to discuss your offending and to prepare a report for the Referral Order Panel (The Panel). You will be able to discuss this report with your YJS case worker before your Panel meeting.

Panel Meetings - What are they?

Once a Referral Order has been made, you will be asked to attend a Referral Order Panel meeting which will be held at a local venue, such as a community centre. Your parents, guardian or a member of the Local Authority will also be required to attend the Panel meeting. The panel will be made up of two members of the community and a member of the Youth Justice Service. The panel will see your report before they meet with you. The Referral Order Panel will agree a contract with you. Once the contract has been written, the panel will review your progress. Review meetings will be held after 1-3 months and at the completion of your order. If you fail to enter into a contract or fail to comply you may be returned to court.

Parents' responsibility?

If you are under 16 years of age at least one parent will be required to attend all Referral Order Panel meetings with you. The Court can also insist that parents or guardians of young people who are over 16 also attend the Panel meetings (where the Court considers it appropriate).

What might be included in the contract?

Part of the contract will include reparation, which is an opportunity to do something positive in return following your offending. It will also include a personal programme to avoid reoffending. There will be conditions added to the contract and these will be made clear to you at the panel.

What do I need to do?

To comply with your Referral Order you must:

- Attend Referral Order Panel meetings when required.
- Arrive on time for an appointment.
- Allow your YJS worker to see you at home when required.
- Comply with any reasonable directions of the YJS.
- Agree and sign a contract (if you agree with the contents).

The Referral Order can end up to three months early if you have completed the contract and the panel recommend it to the court.

You should also note that, during the Order, the following behaviour is not acceptable on Youth Justice Service premises, or when you are accompanied by Youth Justice Service staff:

- Attending while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, thereby being unable to take part in supervision.
- Fighting, violent or aggressive behavior or threats of violence.
- Other behaviours or language that might give or cause serious offence to Youth Justice Service staff, other people under supervision or members of the public.
- Other willful or persistent non-cooperation or behaviour which will affect the purpose of your or others' Orders.

What happens if I do not cooperate?

If you do not comply with the conditions of the Referral Order the Youth Justice Service will hold a meeting and the contract may be reviewed, or, if you are unable to offer a reasonable explanation, the panel must refer you back to the Court.

If the Court considers that you have 'breached' your Order, it may:

- Tell you to complete the Referral Order
 - Extend the Referral Order by up to three months
 - End the Referral Order and pass another sentence
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Complaints?

If you are not happy about the service you receive you should talk to your Youth Justice Service worker. If you still feel dissatisfied you can raise your issues with the YJS Team Manager:

Northumberland Youth Justice Service

Northumbria House, Cramlington,
Northumberland NE23 6UR. Tel: 01670 536400.

Northumberland Youth Justice Service

Northumberland Adolescent Service
Northumbria House, Cramlington, Northumberland NE23 6UR
Tel: 01670 536400 | Email: nasduty@northumberland.gov.uk
