

About youth offending teams

Youth offending teams have been set up to help to reduce offending by young people. YOTs are made up of professional people from social services, the police, probation, health, education and youth services. We also have partnerships with voluntary sector agencies.

It is our job to work with the police and courts to ensure that steps are taken to help young people accused of breaking the law keep out of trouble in the future.

What if I am not happy about the way I am being treated?

Contact the YOS Head of Service on **0208 583 6363** or the Customer Relations Team
Pavilion BF
Civic Centre
Lampton Road
Hounslow TW3 4DN

What if I have any more questions?

If you have any questions please ask your Worker at the YOS.

Contact:
Hounslow Youth Offending Service
Redlees Centre, Worton Road
Isleworth TW7 6DW
020 8583 6363
youthoffendingservice@hounslow.gov.uk

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London Borough
of Hounslow

Referral Order

Information for community
panel members

Hounslow Youth Offending Service

What is a youth offender panel?

Local people will take the lead in challenging young offenders to take responsibility for their actions and helping them to change their behaviour for good. Panels will also give victims a chance to say how the crime has affected them and what might help put things right.

What are the panels for?

The panels are different because they involve local people working with young offenders, their parents and victims. Panel members will listen to these key people and discuss and agree with the young offender a plan of action designed to put right the harm already done and prevent future offending.

Panels aim to:

- Ensure young offenders take responsibility for their behaviour
- Help put things right for the victim
- Bring young people back into the law-abiding community.

Who will be on the panels?

Each panel will have two community members who are volunteers from the local area and a member of the local youth offending team.

Who will the panel deal with?

Young offenders aged 10-17 who plead guilty and have not been convicted before.

Referral Order Extensions

Post sentence Referral Orders can be extended in duration where a young person commits a second offence either before the commencement of the original order or during the order, provided the court are satisfied there are sufficient exceptional circumstances which deem this appropriate.

This is an important opportunity to help young people to stop offending at an early age.

Who else will be at the meeting?

The young person's parents will be there along with any other adults who may be able to offer support and guidance. The victim of the offence will normally be invited to attend and can bring someone with them to provide moral support.

Alternatively they can ask for their views to be taken into account or be represented by someone else at the panel meeting.

Will panel members be trained?

We don't expect people to have all the skills necessary to be a youth offender panel member from the start. We will offer full training, which will help you prepare for a challenging but worthwhile task. The initial training will normally be one session per week for about two months, this is likely to be at week-ends. Once you become a panel member you will continue to get regular training sessions to support you in your work.

What if I have a criminal record?

Being a youth offender panel member involves working with young people and for that reason we are required to carry out a full criminal record check. Previous convictions, especially those which are minor in nature and old, will not automatically bar you from becoming a youth offender panel member. This is something we can discuss further with you.

How much of my time will it take?

We would expect you to spend about three hours per session on being a youth offender panel member once or twice per month.

Will I be paid?

No. Community panel members are volunteers. You will not make money from being one, but equally you will not be out of pocket. Travel and other legitimate expenses will be paid.

Referral orders

Referral orders are a key element of the Government's strategy to reduce offending by young people.

From 1 April 2002 all young offenders aged between 10 and 17 will be referred to a youth offender panel by way of a Referral Order, if they have no previous convictions and plead guilty. The only exceptions will be for some minor cases, or if the court passes a custodial sentence or hospital order.