

For you to end a Care Order there will be a range of steps involved. The court will appoint a Guardian Ad Litem (an independent person who will talk to you), and you will also need a solicitor, who will advise you about what you need to show the court e.g. how have things changed so that your parents can care for you?

The court can deal with an application to end a Care Order by making a Supervision Order instead (but only if they feel this is enough to keep you safe - have a look at the 'Supervision Orders' leaflet).

There is a time limit on repeat applications. If you have applied to end a Care Order and this has been rejected, you cannot apply again for another 6 months.

This leaflet is based on information contained in The Children (NI) Order 1995, Guidance and Regulations Vol 1 'Court Orders and Other Legal Issues'.



PLEASE NOTE THE INFORMATION ON THIS LEAFLET WAS CORRECT AT TIME OF PRINT

ARE YOU CONFUSED OR STILL NOT SURE?

If you are uncertain about any aspect of this leaflet, or want some extra support, you can ask for an **Advocate** from VOYPIC and they will be happy to help you.

HOW DO I GET AN ADVOCATE?

- Ring 08450 742 942 and ask for the Advocacy Service or email advocacy@voypic.org
- You will talk to the Duty Advocate. They can offer you help and advice there and then
- If you need to meet someone for further support, they will put you in touch with an Advocate in your area
- It is that easy! Our Duty Advocates are there for you 9.30am-5.30pm, Monday to Thursday and 9.30am – 4.30pm on Friday

VOYPIC
voice of young people in care



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voice of young people in care

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**YOUNG PERSON'S
GUIDE TO
CARE ORDERS**

COMING INTO CARE

There are 2 ways you can come into Care, these are;

1. Voluntary Accommodation. This means that your parents have given their permission for you to go into Care.
2. Care Order. This means that Social Services have gone to court to get a court order to bring you into Care.

When you are in Care it is called being 'Looked After.' This means that Social Services look after you. There are different types of places where you can live when you are in Care, for example;

- A Children's Home
- Foster Care
- Secure Accommodation
- You could still live at home (only if you are on a Care Order)

This leaflet will try to explain what is meant by:

- **A Care Order and an Interim Care Order.**
- **When a Care Order is made, and it's effect.**
- **How long a Care Order lasts for, and how you can end it.**
- **How ADVOCACY can HELP YOU**

WHAT IS AN INTERIM CARE ORDER AND WHEN IS IT MADE?

If the Trust believes that you are not being looked after properly at home or are at risk, they may apply to the court for an interim Care Order.

WHEN IS A CARE ORDER MADE?

Care Orders are made when the Trust feel that children and young people are not being cared for properly at home, or are at risk of harm. Usually there will be a number of interim or temporary Care Orders made first. The court will then decide if a final Care Order is going to be made.

WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF A CARE ORDER?

If a Care Order is made the Trust will share responsibility for you with your parents. This means the Trust will work with your parents and make decisions about how you can be best cared for. This could mean that you may not be able to live at home with your parents. If this is the case, the Trust will care for you until it is safe for you to return home. You may be able to have contact with your parents during this time, so long as you are not at risk.

HOW LONG DOES IT LAST FOR?

A Care Order lasts until you are 18, unless the court decides to end it earlier.

HOW CAN I END A CARE ORDER?

The following people can apply to end a Care Order:

- You
- Your parents/guardians
- Someone from the Trust that knows you well e.g. your social worker

You can first appeal the Care Order 14-21 days after it has been made. If this appeal is rejected there is no time limit for when you can apply to end the Care Order. However, it is likely that a solicitor will advise you not to apply too soon after a rejected appeal.

The law doesn't state the age you must be to apply to end a Care Order - but you must be old enough to understand what this process means, and how it will affect you.

