

Prison release information

- This is for prisoners who have just been released from prison in England.
- It has important information for when you have been released.
- This factsheet has been produced with the help of ex-prisoners.

Where can I get help with housing?

If you need help with finding somewhere to live you can:

- Go to, or contact, the housing department at the **local council**. You can find out your local council here: www.gov.uk/find-local-council. Or ask at the **library**.
- Contact or visit your local **Citizens Advice** 0800 144 8848. www.citizensadvice.org.uk
- Contact **Shelter** on 0808 800 4444. www.shelter.org.uk
- Contact **local housing advice organisations**. You can find them on **Turn2Us**: advicefinder.turn2us.org.uk. Choose 'housing' or 'homelessness' from the drop-down menu and put in your **postcode**.
- **Homeless services** – website only.
 - **Homeless England**. Database of homelessness services: homeless.org.uk/homeless-england.
 - **Crisis**. Click the 'get help' link to get details for local services: www.crisis.org.uk.
 - **Streetlink**. Find out about local support services: <https://thestreetlink.org.uk>.

You might have nowhere to live. Tell the council you have just been released from prison. Also tell them if you:

- are at risk of abuse,
- are pregnant,
- have children under 18,
- have no home because of things like fire, flood or other disasters,
- have mental or physical health problems, or are very old or frail,
- been in care or the armed forces.

This might lead to emergency housing

You can find private places to rent by visiting or calling local estate agents. You can also go on websites like:

- **Zoopla**: www.zoopla.co.uk/to-rent
- **Rightmove**: www.rightmove.co.uk/property-to-rent.html
- **Purple Bricks**: www.purplebricks.co.uk/tenants

You can find out more about **Housing options - For adults who live with mental illness** at www.rethink.org. Or call 0121 522 7007 and ask us to send you a copy.

Where can I get help with money?

- Talk about your money situation with your probation officer.
- You might be able to apply for different benefits. You can:
 - go to your **local Jobcentre Plus**
 - call the **universal credit line for released prisoners** on 0800 169 0345 or go to www.gov.uk/universal-credit

- Contact or visit your local **Citizens Advice** on 0800 144 8848 for advice. www.citizensadvice.org.uk
 - Contact **Money wellness** for free money, benefits, and debt advice online, over the phone or webchat. 0161 518 8285. www.moneywellness.com
 - Call **Mind welfare benefits line**. For anyone with mental health problems who needs benefits advice on 0300 222 5782. www.mind.org.uk/information-support/helplines
 - Contact **local benefits advice organisations**. You can find them on **Turn2Us: advicefinder** turn2us.org.uk. Choose '**benefits**' from the drop-down menu and put in your **postcode**.
- If you cannot pay for basic things you might be able to get help from your council.
 - This help might be a loan, money, or help from a charity.
 - It is sometimes known as the **Household Support Fund**.
 - You can find out your local council here: www.gov.uk/find-local-council. Or ask at the library.

If you need free, expert advice on debt, you can contact:

- **National Debtline**. 0808 808 4000. www.nationaldebtline.org
- **StepChange**. 0800 138 1111. www.stepchange.org
- **Debt Advice Foundation**. 0800 6226151. www.debtadvicefoundation.org

For more information see **Mental Health and Money Advice**: www.mentalhealthandmoneyadvice.org

What about probation?

- Your probation officer will supervise you and should help you on release from prison.
- It is **important** to keep appointments with your probation officer. If you miss appointments or break probation rules, you could go back to court. You could put appointment reminders in your phone or diary.
- If you cannot make an appointment, let the probation officer know.
- You might be on licence. Your probation officer should make an appointment with you on the day of your release or the next working day. But if they do not, contact them. The details will be on your licence document.
- Your probation officer should help you with things like housing, money, and work.

How can I get a GP? Get help for my physical and mental health?

- You can find a GP to register with here www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-gp or by calling **NHS 111**.
- You can register with a GP surgery if you are homeless or have no fixed address.
- If you need **urgent treatment** your local GP surgery can treat you for up to 14 days.
- You can call **NHS 111** for non-urgent medical help or go to their website here: <https://111.nhs.uk>
- Pharmacists can give you advice and treatment for a lot of health conditions.
- You might have a health need. You can ask your probation officer or police services to refer you to the **RECONNECT service**. They must do this within 28 days of you being released from prison. RECONNECT provides liaison, advocacy, signposting, and support to help with community-based health and support services. You can read more here: www.england.nhs.uk/commissioning/health-just/reconnect

- If you need **urgent mental health support**:
 - You can call **NHS 111** or visit <https://111.nhs.uk/triage/check-your-mental-health-symptoms>. They will refer you to a service that can help. Or tell you what to do next.
 - Call **999 or go to A&E** at hospital if you are very unwell and you have no help. You can find your nearest A&E here: www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-an-accident-and-emergency-service
 - Visit a local **crisis café or hub**, if there is one – you could ask **NHS 111**

If you need to talk to someone about how you are feeling you can talk to:

- **Samaritans**. Call 116 123. www.samaritans.org
- **Sane Line**. Call 0300 304 7000. www.sane.org.uk
- **Support Line**. Call 01708 765200. www.supportline.org.uk
- **CALM**. Call 0800 585858. www.thecalmzone.net
- **National Suicide Prevention Helpline**. Call 0800 689 5652. www.spuk.org.uk/national-suicide-prevention-helpline-uk
- **Silverline**. For people over 55. Call 0800 4708090. www.thesilverline.org.uk

Rethink Mental Illness provides lots of services and support groups in England. Including some services for ex-prisoners. Call 0207 840 3131. www.rethink.org

If you need help for **alcohol or drug issues** see your GP or these organisations might be useful:

- **The Forward Trust**. Help for drug or alcohol issues, past offending, homelessness or unemployment. Call 020 3981 5525. www.forwardtrust.org.uk
- **Drinkline**. National alcohol helpline. Call 0300 123 1110. www.drinkaware.co.uk/advice-and-support
- **Alcoholics Anonymous**. Help and support for dependent drinkers. Call 0800 917 7650. www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk
- **Frank**. Help, advice, and information about drugs. Call 0300 123 6600 www.talktofrank.com
- **Turning point**. Drugs and alcohol support. www.turning-point.co.uk
- **We Are With You**. Delivers drug and alcohol services in the community. www.wearewithyou.org.uk

You can find out more about **GPs and your mental health** at www.rethink.org. Or call 0121 522 7007 and ask us to send you a copy.

How can I get work?

- You can go to your local **Job Centre Plus**. You can find yours here: <https://find-your-nearest-jobcentre.dwp.gov.uk/search.php> Or ask somewhere like your local library.
- Discuss finding work with your probation officer.
- If you live with a mental illness there is help for you to find work. You can find out more about **Work, volunteering, and mental illness** at www.rethink.org. Or call 0121 522 7007 and ask us to send you a copy.
- You can contact:
 - **The National Careers Service**. Free information, advice and guidance. Call 0800 100 900. www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk

- **The Shaw Trust.** Supports people to improve their chances to get work. Call 0300 303 3111. www.shaw-trust.org.uk
- **St Giles Trust.** They provide services to help you get employment. Call 020 7708 8000. www.stgilestrust.org.uk/what-we-do/employment-services
- **Working Change.** Support women with criminal convictions to find work, education or training. <https://workingchance.org>

What other help is there?

- You might think your personal safety is under threat. Go to a local police station.
- Libraries can be useful places. You might be able to use the internet for free, get information and use other services. You can find your local library here: www.gov.uk/local-library-services
- **Nacro.** Provides a range of services to help ex-prisoners. Call 0300 123 1889. www.nacro.org.uk
- **St Giles Trust.** Provides a range of support for ex-prisoners. Call 020 7708 8000. www.stgilestrust.org.uk
- **Salvation Army.** Provides a range of practical help. Find your local one here: www.salvationarmy.org.uk/map-page Or call: 0207 367 4500

Can I get social care?

- You might have a physical or mental health issue and need help from social services.
- This might be if you need care and support to meet all your needs to live your daily life.
- You can have an assessment from your local authority.
- You can find your local authority here: www.gov.uk/find-local-council.
- You can find out more about **Social care assessment – Under the Care Act 2014** at www.rethink.org. Or call 0121 522 7007 and ask us to send you a copy.

Produced by **Rethink mental illness** advice service. **Phone** 0808 801 0525 Monday to Friday, 9:30am to 4pm, excluding bank holidays. **Webchat** service available. See www.rethink.org for our trusted and reliable advice and information **webpages**.

We would love your **feedback** on this factsheet. You can email us at feedback@rethink.org.



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