

## Letter of Rights

This leaflet gives you **important information** about your rights when you are at the police station.

By rights we mean **important freedoms and supports** that the law says everyone can have. **Knowing about your rights** will **help you** be sure that you are being treated fairly by the police.

Please read this information as soon as possible. It will help you to make decisions when you are at the police station. **Please ask for help** if you do not understand anything in this leaflet. **Please ask** if you want an **easy-read copy** or a **translation**.

### Your rights:

1. You have the right to know why the police are keeping you at the police station.
2. You have the right to know what the police think you have done.
3. You have the right not to speak. You do not have to answer any questions the police ask you. **BUT** you do have to give your name, address, date of birth, where you were born and your nationality.
4. You have the right to have someone else told you are at the police station. If you are under 16, this must be a parent or guardian. If you are 16 or over, this might be a family member, a carer or a friend.
5. You have the right to have a lawyer told that you are at the police station. This is free.
6. You have the right to speak to a lawyer in private at any time. This is free.
7. You have the right to have a lawyer present if the police interview you. This is free.
8. If you are under 16, a lawyer must be present when the police interview you unless there are exceptional circumstances. If you are 16 or 17 and subject to a compulsory supervision order, a lawyer must be present when the police interview you unless there are exceptional circumstances.
9. If you are under 16 you have the right to be visited by your parent or guardian at the police station.
10. If you are 16 or 17 and subject to a compulsory supervision order you have the right to be visited by your parent or guardian at the police station.
11. You have the right to medical help if you are ill or injured.

## Your rights

In exceptional circumstances, some of **these rights** may not apply. For example, if the police think you have important information to stop someone being hurt they might need to ask you questions before your lawyer arrives.

**The police cannot delay or remove your right to remain silent.**

### More information for people kept at the police station

(known as "held in custody").

- **Your right not to speak** (known as "right to silence")

You do not have to answer any questions the police ask you, apart from to give your name, address, date of birth, place of birth and nationality.

Anything you say may be written down or recorded. Anything you say could be used as evidence at trial, if your case is taken to court.

- **Telling a lawyer you are at the police station**

You can ask the police to tell a lawyer that you are at the police station. This can be your own lawyer or the on-call lawyer. The police will arrange for a lawyer to be contacted as soon as possible. This is free.

- **Telling someone else that you are at the police station**

If you are 16 or over and not subject to a compulsory supervision order you can **ask the police to tell someone** that you are at the police station. This could be **someone in your family, your partner, your carer, your friend or another person you know**. You might not be allowed to speak to this person.

If you are 16 or 17 you will be allowed access to this person unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If you are:

- **under 16**

or

- **under 18 and subject to a compulsory supervision order**

The police must try to tell your parent or guardian that you are at the police station.

- **If you are ill or injured**

The police will ask you questions about your health and wellbeing. It is important that you tell the police if you have a medical condition that may affect you while you are at the police station.

The police might ask a healthcare professional to check on you. This is to help make sure you are looked after properly while at the police station. If you think you need to see a doctor or a nurse tell the police. If you are ill or injured, you will be provided with medical help.

- **Food and Drink**

Water will be provided if you ask for it. You will be offered food if you are at the police station for more than four hours. If you have any dietary or religious needs then tell the police as early as possible.

**If you need extra help**

**This is information about a service only. It is not a right.**

You might need help understanding what is happening when you are at the police station. This help can be provided by a support person called an Appropriate Adult. This might be needed if you have a mental disorder or learning disability. **Speak to the police if you think you need this help.**

If the police think that you need the help of an Appropriate Adult, they will get you one, even if you do not ask.

- **Getting an interpreter to help you**

It is important that you can understand what is being said at the police station. If you **do not speak or understand English**, the **police will get someone** who speaks your language **to help you**. This person is called an interpreter. This is free.

- **Getting help with communication**

Lots of people find it hard to understand what is happening at the police station. **Please ask for help if you are not sure about anything. Please ask for help** with reading if you need it.

If you are **deaf or have trouble communicating** clearly, **the police will get someone to help you**. This could be a BSL interpreter or another appropriate professional. This is free.

- **If you are not British**

If you are not British, you can ask the police to contact your High Commission, Embassy or Consulate, to tell them where you are and why you are in the police station. Someone can then visit you in private and arrange for a lawyer to see you.

**• What happens if you are charged or brought into the police station on a warrant?**

If you are charged with an offence, you might be allowed to leave or you might be kept in the police station and taken to court on the next possible day.

If you have been brought into the police station on a warrant, you can be held and taken to court on the next possible day. In some situations you may be allowed to go home.

**• Getting to see paperwork**

A note of the evidence in the case will be given to you or your lawyer, if your case goes to court. This will let you or your lawyer prepare your defence. You have the right to a translation of at least the relevant parts of important paperwork if you do not understand English.

**• Information about the right of access to a lawyer**

o Tell the police if you want to speak to a lawyer. The police will contact a lawyer for you as soon as possible.

o You are allowed to have a private conversation with a lawyer at any time. This might be on the telephone, or they might come and see you at the police station.

o Speaking to a lawyer does not make it look like you have done something wrong.

o A lawyer's job is to protect your rights and give you advice about the law.

o You can choose to speak to a lawyer you know or the on-call lawyer. The on-call lawyer is independent and does not work for the police.

o If the police interview you, you can ask that the lawyer is in the room with you when this happens.

o The police are not normally allowed to interview you without a lawyer if you have asked for a lawyer to be in the room with you.

o You can change your mind about speaking to a lawyer and can ask for a lawyer at any time. Tell the police as soon as possible and they will contact a lawyer for you.

o If the lawyer does not come to the police station when they said they would, or you need to talk to the lawyer again, ask the police to contact him or her again. The police have no influence on when the lawyer arrives at the police station once they are contacted.

- **How long can you be kept in custody?**

The police can normally keep you for up to **12 hours** without charging you with an offence.

The police can extend this up to a maximum of **24 hours**, but only if a Police Inspector agrees to this (Chief Inspector if you are under 18).

You have the right to have your say about this decision, or you can choose to have your lawyer speak to the police for you.