

Care Leaver Finance

16-18 years old

If a Care Leaver leaves care between ages of 16 - 18 then Leaving Care Service will cover their finances including rent etc and give them a weekly payment of £70. Once they reach the age of 18 they then go on the next step.

18+

When Care Leavers reach the age of 18 or leave care at 18 they usually go on to either Jobseekers Allowance or Income Support from the Department of Work and Pensions. This in most cases is a sum of £57.35 a week to live.

Costs

The Leaving Care service will give the young person a grant called the Leaving Care Grant of approximately £1900. This covers the household products the young person needs to set up home.

The young person will have to pay their own bills, however Leaving Care will pay for 1 full year TV Licence. Their weekly outgoings vary between each young person based on what they need to pay for, size of house, district and amount of gas and electric they use. The average weekly amounts are as follows:

Gas - £9

Electric - £12

Water - £5

TV Licence - £5

Council tax - £5

Mobile telephone - £5

Total - £41

This leaves a total of £16.35

The amount they have left has to cover their social life, food, drink, toiletries and other supplies including transport.

If a young person has had to move into a house bigger than 1 bedroom then they are also more than likely to have to pay some money towards their rent.

Unfortunately there are a number of care leavers who have ended up in debt because they are trying to live. It is also a case that care leavers need to either have children or have a disability that qualifies them to disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments. Also it is known that many care leavers don't have the budgeting skills to manage their finances, many young people from Residential and Foster Care don't seem too really to have any assistance prior to leaving to look at budgeting. It seems that the main group who have some skills are those who have stayed with Bed Space. *

*This information has been provided by a Leaving Care Worker from Lancashire County Council.

If a young person leaves care between 16-18 and they receive the £70 weekly from Lancashire County Council get used to this figure then on their 18th Birthday they have the big drop from £70 - £57.35 a difference of £12.65. If they have been on the £70 for a long time then they are very likely to find it very hard to go down to £57.35.

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24 June 2014