

# What you need to know if you have been sentenced to secure youth care

You have committed a criminal offence, but as you are so young you have been sentenced to secure youth care (*sluten ungdomsvård*) instead of prison. That is why you have been sent to a special residential home for young people (*särskilt ungdomshem*) run by the National Board of Institutional Care (SiS). You will be given care and treatment to help you avoid committing further crimes.

During the first part of your time with us, you will not be allowed out of your unit without a member of staff to go with you.

Staff at the residential home include residential care workers (*behandlingsassistenter*), teachers, psychologists, nurses and others. They are there to help you, for instance with planning your treatment and preparing for your release, and will work with you to write a sentence plan (*verkställighetsplan*). The staff will tell you more about this.

It is important that you keep in touch with your social worker, to get the help you need to prepare for when you are released.

During the time you are with us, our job is to help you to go back into the community after you have served your sentence. This means that you may eventually be placed in an open unit. If it is suitable, you could also be allowed to spend time outside the residential home, for example to go to an ordinary school or have a work placement. This is known as transition (*utslussning*).

## **You have the right to read what staff write about you**

Staff write down details of your care and treatment in a case record. It is important that everything relating to you is written down there, so that you and the staff can see that you are getting the care you are entitled to. You have the right to read what your case record says about you. If you

think that any of the information in it is wrong, staff have to make a note of this in your record. Ask the manager of the home if you want to know what information the home has about you, and how it can be used.

### **Staff can use coercive measures**

To make sure that the home environment is safe and secure for you, the other young people and the staff, staff have the right, in certain situations, to use coercive measures, which are known as 'special powers'. This means that they can decide, for example, that you are not allowed to make phone calls to whoever you like, or that they can take things from you that you are not allowed to have in the home.

If staff make use of these coercive measures, they always have to explain to you why. You also have to be given a decision in writing.

### **Prevent you leaving the home**

If you try to leave the residential home, staff have the right to stop you. They can keep you there, for instance, by physically restraining you.

### **Telephone calls**

You are allowed to make and receive phone calls during the telephone hours that apply at the home, but sometimes staff can decide that you are not allowed contact with a particular person. This may be because it is not good for you to be in touch with that person, for example. You always have the right to contact your lawyer or the authorities.

### **Visits**

Close relatives (such as your parents, brothers and sisters) are usually allowed to visit you. If it is suitable, you can also receive other visitors. Staff can stop you having visits if they believe they will affect you in a way that is not good for you.

### **Letters**

You are always allowed to send and receive letters and parcels, but if staff believe that letters you get from or write to a particular person could affect you in a way that is not good for you, they have the right to read them. Staff can also check letters and parcels that you send or receive if they suspect that they contain something you are not allowed to have in the home (such as drugs or other things you could use to harm yourself or

others). No one is allowed to open and read letters that you send to or get from your lawyer or the authorities unless you want them to.

### **Searches of the person and full body searches**

When you come to us for the first time and when you have been outside the residential home, staff are allowed to search your clothes and bags (known as a search of the person). They can also ask you to get undressed so they can see that you are not hiding anything under your clothes (full body search). In the same way, if staff suspect that you have something that is not allowed in the home (for example, after you have had a visit), they have the right to carry out a search of your person or a full body search. They also have the right to search your room to check whether you have anything there that you are not allowed to have.

### **We can take things from you that you are not allowed to have in the home**

If you have something that could be dangerous to yourself or to the others in the home, such as a knife or some other object that could be used as a weapon, staff have to take it from you. This is known as taking charge of property. Staff can also take charge of things like money, credit cards and mobile phones if they think you could use them in a way that is not good for you or the other young people. Your belongings will be returned to you, at the latest, when you are discharged from the home. If you have things like alcohol or drugs on you, staff have to take charge of them and destroy them.

### **Urine and breath samples**

If staff suspect that you are under the influence of alcohol or drugs, you will have to give a sample, for example of urine or breath.

### **Separate care**

If the staff believe that your care will work better if you don't meet the other young people all the time, you may be given what is known as separate care (*vård i enskildhet*). This means that, for a time, you will live in a separate part of the home, where you will have staff nearby at all times, but will not be able to meet other young people exactly when you like.

### **Segregation**

If you are violent or under the influence of alcohol or drugs, staff can

segregate you. Segregation (*avskiljning*) means that for a short time, no more than 24 hours, you will have to remain in a special room which staff can lock the door to. There will be staff nearby at all times. As soon as you have calmed down, you will be able to return to your unit.

### **Leave**

If you follow your sentence plan, you may eventually be allowed leave. How long you will have to wait for your first leave varies from one person to another.

At first you will only be granted leave together with a member of staff. If you stick to the rules during these periods of leave, you may also be allowed out of the residential home on your own, for example to visit your family.

## **You have the right to appeal against decisions**

You can appeal to a court against any decision concerning you. This means that you can write to the court (the Administrative Court, *Förvaltningsrätten*), telling them that you think the decision is wrong and want it to be changed.

### **You can appeal against these decisions:**

- A decision about which residential home you are to be placed in.
- A decision not to allow you leave.
- A decision not to let you make or receive phone calls.
- A decision not to let you receive visits.
- A decision saying that the manager of the home will read one of your letters or check one of your parcels.
- A decision saying that staff are to take charge of and destroy something you are not allowed to have in the home, such as alcohol or drugs.
- A decision to carry out a search of your person or a full body search.
- A decision saying that you have to give a sample, for example of urine or breath.
- A decision to segregate you.
- A decision on separate care.

- A decision that separate care is to continue.

### **How you appeal against a decision**

When staff have given you the decision, you have three weeks to appeal against it.

Write what decision you are appealing against and why you think it is wrong. You must also sign the letter with your name. You could write something like this:

I appeal against the decision of *(write the date given in the decision)* not to let me telephone *(write the name of the person you are not allowed to phone)*. I think this decision is wrong because *(write why you think the decision is wrong)*.

*(Sign your name at the bottom)*

If you have difficulty writing, you can ask a member of staff to help you.

Hand your appeal to the manager of the home, who will then decide whether the decision can be changed.

If the manager does not change the decision, she or he will send your appeal to the Administrative Court.

### **You have the right to complain about your care**

If you are unhappy about something at the residential home, you always have the right to complain to staff or to one of the authorities whose job it is to make sure the home is following the law. These include, for example, the National Board of Health and Welfare (*Socialstyrelsen*), the Swedish Schools Inspectorate (*Skolinspektionen*) and the Parliamentary Ombudsmen (*JO*). You, your parents or your social worker can complain about your care or education at any time.

Here are a few examples of things you could complain about:

- You are not allowed to be involved in planning your treatment.
- You feel that some members of staff are treating you badly or unfairly.

- Your school teachers are not giving you enough support.

### **How to complain**

It is up to you to decide *who* you want to make your complaint to. You can complain, for example, to:

- your key worker (*kontaktperson*), your unit manager, the home manager or some other member of staff, or
- the National Board of Health and Welfare, the Swedish Schools Inspectorate or the Parliamentary Ombudsmen.

It is also up to you *how* you want to complain. You can write a letter or complain by phone.

If you are unsure how to go about it, you should ask your key worker or some other member of staff. They can help you to write a letter or to make an appointment with the manager of the home, and to find the address or telephone number of the authority you want to complain to.


If you write a letter, it is a good idea to sign it with your name. This makes it easier to investigate what has happened, as the person investigating can then talk to you.

### **National Board of Health and Welfare's phone number for young people in residential homes**

The National Board of Health and Welfare has a special telephone number for young people who are placed in residential homes. The number is 020-120 06 06. You can call it on weekdays (Monday–Friday) between 8 am and 6 pm. Calls are free.

### **Processing of personal data**

SiS keeps records of your care and treatment, your education and – in some cases – your medical care. Staff write these records in electronic documentation systems. In your records and in other documentation, various information about you is held. As well as your name, personal identity number and address, this may for example include information about your sentence plan, how you are getting on at school, or any medical care you receive. If you are under 18 years old, we also hold



details of the person/persons with custody of you, and then they too have the right to be informed about the processing of your personal data.

The personal data legislation contains rules about how this information can be processed. You have the right to ask, once a year, for information about what personal data we hold and what we do with it. If you want to know more about your personal data, you should write a letter, sign it and hand it to the manager of your home.

If you discover that any personal information about you is wrong, please get in touch with the personal data representative (*personuppgiftsombudet*) at SiS's head office. The address is:

Statens institutionsstyrelse (SiS)

Box 16363

103 26 Stockholm

The phone number to the switchboard is 010-453 40 00.