

Money matters: financial support for care leavers aged 18 and over 2023/24

Introduction

Camden has a duty to provide advice and assistance to care leavers aged 18 and up to the age of 25 if they have need of support.

Assistance may include financial support to help the care leaver to pursue education and training opportunities and to provide basic support where the care leaver cannot access public funds.

This leaflet explains what financial support you can expect from Camden once you reach 18 and how we will help you to maximise your income so that you can make the most of education and training opportunities.

Your benefit entitlements

Once you reach 18, Camden will no longer pay for your accommodation or maintenance. If you are not working, you must make sure that you put in a claim for job seekers allowance (or income support) and housing benefit to cover your living expenses and your rent. Your personal advisor can help you with this. If you are in Higher Education, you cannot claim Housing Benefit.

It is important that you put in a claim as soon as you reach 18 or there may be serious delays in paying your benefit. The Leaving Care team can give limited help if there is a delay in payment; speak to your personal advisor for details.

Financial help from Camden

- Camden can provide financial help on a discretionary basis and following an assessment of your needs in relation to your education or training.
- If you are aged 18 or 19, you can apply for a student bursary to help with education or training expenses. Ask the Connexions advisor for advice on how to apply.
- If you are a parent who wants to remain in or return to higher or further education you can claim a government grant to cover the costs of child care. Ask your personal advisor for details.
- Your personal advisor will carry out a travel assessment to see how Camden can help with your travel costs to college or training courses.
- You will receive a setting up home allowance of **£2000** (or **£3500** for single parents) when you move into your own long-term accommodation.

- You will get a gift, gift vouchers or a cash payment of £90 from your 18th to your 20th birthday then £100 on your 21st birthday as long as you remain in contact with your personal advisor. You should speak to your personal advisor about what you would prefer.
- We will pay for you to get a copy of your birth certificate and may help with the costs of applying for passports or travel documents depending on your assessed needs.

Higher education costs

All care leavers who are going on to higher education will receive:

- a **£3000** (which is currently under review) yearly grant. The £9000 paid for the duration of the 3 year degree course is inclusive of the £2000 government bursary.
- travel costs (subject to a travel assessment)
- a lap-top (from the 2nd year of A level or equivalent BTEC).
- vacation accommodation or funds to secure this.

You will be expected to apply for all available student loans and bursaries to cover fees and maintenance and will get support for this from your personal advisor.

Unaccompanied asylum seeking minors (UASC)

It is important that you keep your personal advisor aware of any changes to your immigration status as this will affect your entitlement to benefits and how Camden supports you.

- If you have a legal right to remain in the UK, you will be able to apply for benefits and we will continue to support you to pursue your education or training plans.
- If you are still waiting to hear the outcome of your application for asylum or extension of leave to remain, we will pay for your accommodation and maintenance and any support you need to remain in education or training.
- If you are Appeal Rights Exhausted and you are unlawfully in the UK and have no recourse to public funds we will not be able to support you financially and will have to refer you to the National Asylum Support Service (NASS). However, your personal advisor may carry out an assessment under the Human Rights Act 1998 to ensure your basic needs are met until you are removed from the UK.