



## Process for Care Leavers asking to “see their files”

As a care leaver, you have the right to ask to see the personal information that has been recorded while you have been in care and since leaving care. When you ask for this information, this is called making a ‘Subject Access Request’.

### How do you make a Subject Access Request (SAR)?

The best thing to do is to talk to your Personal Adviser (PA) in the Leaving Care Team first, or speak to the Duty Worker if you no longer have a PA. You can ring the Leaving Care Team or 0161 475 6700 or email [leavingcareduty@stockport.gov.uk](mailto:leavingcareduty@stockport.gov.uk). They will talk you through the process and also check out with you where you are up to – it is important that you are in a settled situation as it can be emotionally quite traumatic.

You can also make your request written or verbally directly to the Information Governance Team at [dpa.officer@stockport.gov.uk](mailto:dpa.officer@stockport.gov.uk) or 0161 474 4299. Alternatively, you can visit the Stockport Council website which allows you to fill in the Subject Access Request Form - [www.stockport.gov.uk/your-rights-data-protection/access-to-your-personal-information](http://www.stockport.gov.uk/your-rights-data-protection/access-to-your-personal-information)

The Information Governance (Information Governance) team will get in touch with the Leaving Care Team to confirm your ID and we will then contact you to discuss your situation and any support needs.

Your request will need to state clearly what information you are seeking for example, “I would like see the records held by social care during the period.....” By stating a timescale, the Information Governance team may be able to get the information back to you quicker and clearer.

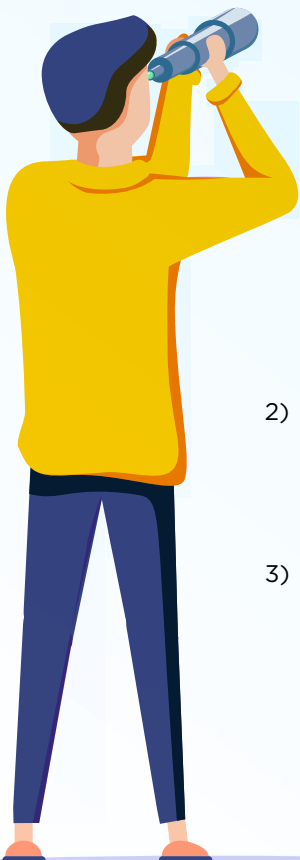


### Is there a charge to gain my information?

No – although there can be if you make repeat requests for the same or similar information.

### What can I expect?

- 1) Not everyone is in the right place to see their information when they first request it. Talk to your PA first about this, as we can talk you through it. It may be that your PA can talk to you about the information you need without needing to get the records.
- 2) If you do want to make a Subject Access Request (SAR), have a think about exactly what it is you want to see. A lot of the young people we work with want to see the information that was recorded around the time they went into care. So you could ask for the information within a specified time period.
- 3) The Information Governance team will contact your PA to discuss the request – this is to confirm your ID but also to discuss what support will be in place for you when you get this information. This is so important. Reading information from your files can be very emotional and distressing and we want to support you through this. We also have close links to counselling support such as Beacon, so we can refer you to them.



- 4) When the Information Governance team are preparing your request, they have to block out any information about other people as this information is confidential to those people. So be prepared for this – it can look very bitty – here is an example of what it could look like:

This is why it is sometimes better to just talk to your PA about what information you want and they can support you that way.

- 5) The sort of information that you can expect to receive includes the following:

- Daily record sheets
- Social care assessments
- Notes of concern
- Chronologies
- Meeting notes
- Other relevant records

- 6) The Information Governance team usually have the information prepared for you within a month, unless it is a very complex or lengthy request which may take longer. Your PA will let you know about this.

- 7) When your information is ready the Information Governance team will contact you and your PA. You can then arrange a time with your PA to meet and go through the information. This is really important as your PA will be able to answer any questions that you have about your information as well as the process and why some information may have been taken out. Your PA can also make sure you have access to the emotional support you need as this is often a very emotional, and sometimes traumatic, process for some young people. So please do make use of the support we can offer you.

## Subject Access Request (SAR) form - original

The image shows a 'bitty' Subject Access Request (SAR) form. It contains a 'Social Work Assessment' table with the following data:

Ref	First Name	Family Name	Gender	DOB	Ethnicity	Address
001	John	Smith	Male	12/10/2000	White British	7 Main Street, Salford, M6 6PU
002	Rebecca	Smith	Female	05/08/2002	White British	7 Main Street, Salford, M6 6PU

The form also includes sections for 'Consent', 'Information', and 'Declaration'. The 'Information' section contains a paragraph about the request, and the 'Declaration' section contains a statement from the requester.

## Subject Access Request (SAR) form - blocked out

The image shows a 'blocked out' Subject Access Request (SAR) form. It contains a 'Social Work Assessment' table with the following data:

Ref	First Name	Family Name	Gender	DOB	Ethnicity	Address
001	John	Smith	Male	12/10/2000	White British	7 Main Street, Salford, M6 6PU
002	Rebecca	Smith	Female	05/08/2002	White British	7 Main Street, Salford, M6 6PU

The form also includes sections for 'Consent', 'Information', and 'Declaration'. The 'Information' section contains a paragraph about the request, and the 'Declaration' section contains a statement from the requester.

## More information and support

**The Care Leavers Association** – Watch this video about care experienced adults talking about their experiences of accessing their files: <https://youtu.be/xs28tczL3yA>  
**Tel: 0161 236 5665** [www.careleavers.com](http://www.careleavers.com)

**Emotional Health support** – Beacon Counselling – For adults and young people (talk to the Leaving Care Team about a fast track referral)  
**Tel: 0161 285 1827** [www.beacon-counselling.org.uk](http://www.beacon-counselling.org.uk)

**TLC Talk/Listen/Change** – Offer a range of services to help you with your relationships, whether you're young or old, straight or gay, single or in a relationship. Providing a range of counselling services to help with the issues affecting you.  
**Tel: 0161 872 1100** [www.talklistenchange.org.uk](http://www.talklistenchange.org.uk)

**Stockport Healthy Minds** – Offer support and treatment for those who are experiencing symptoms such as difficulty sleeping, low mood, stress, worry or anxiety, feelings of hopelessness or panic attacks.  
**Tel: 0161 419 5725** [www.penninecare.nhs.uk](http://www.penninecare.nhs.uk)

**The Women's Centre** – Support and counselling services for women in Stockport.  
**Tel: 0161 355 4455** [www.stockportwomenscentre.co.uk](http://www.stockportwomenscentre.co.uk)

**Samaritans** – provides confidential non-judgemental emotional support, 24 hours a day for people who are experiencing feelings of distress, despair or suicide.  
**Call free on 116 123** [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)



For more information about Access to Records for care leavers, please visit the Care Leavers Association website  
[www.careleavers.com/what-we-do/access-to-records](http://www.careleavers.com/what-we-do/access-to-records)

