

YOUTH RIGHTS: PLACEMENT RULES FOR YOUTH IN CARE

How much money should be spent on clothing for me?

There is no statewide policy on how much should be spent on clothing for you. Your county or placement agency should explain their clothing allowance policies to you. If you need clothes and no one is helping or answering your questions, contact your lawyer or bring it up in court.



What happens to my money?

Your money—money earned, given to you as a gift or as allowance—is your personal property. But the placement or foster parents can have reasonable rules about the amount of money that you can take out and use. You should be told what these rules are. When you leave placement, your unspent money should be returned to you.

Caretakers CANNOT:

- Use physical punishment
- Verbally abuse
- Threaten to have you removed
- Deny meals, clothing or shelter
- Deny visits or communication with your family

Can I be punished or disciplined?

Just like in any home, a foster home, group home or institution will have some rules and consequences if those rules are not followed. However, the law makes clear that you cannot be physically or verbally abused as punishment.

Can I sleep over at friends' houses?

It will depend on the policy in your county, so you should check with your caseworker. If you do sleep over somewhere, it is a good idea for the people taking care of you to make sure that the home is safe and that there is adult supervision.



Can I go on trips out of Pennsylvania?

Yes—you can travel with your foster parents, placement, or school. The county child welfare agency should be provided notice of your trip and give permission. If your biological parents have not had their rights terminated, they should also be notified and give permission.

Can I go out on dates?

You should ask your case worker if they have a policy on dating. If you do not agree with the rules, you should talk with your regional and state Youth Advisory Board about how to get the county to change its policy.

Can I get my driver's license?

There is no easy yes or no answer to this question. Check with your caseworker to find out about your county's rules and to discuss your particular situation.

Can I own a car while I am in care?

Maybe—if you can afford it, if you can find an adult willing to put you on their insurance, and if your placement and county allows it. Check with your caseworker, IL worker or lawyer.