

LEAVING CARE CHECKLIST

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE LEAVING CARE

Your step-by-step guide to getting ready for life after the system and your journey to independence.

START EARLY (AGE 15-16)

- I have started my Leaving Care Plan
- I understand what's in my Leaving Care Plan
- I have been involved in making decisions about my future

It is important that your caseworker assists you with your Leaving Care Plan & that you keep asking your caseworker for everything you need in relation to preparing for leaving care.

IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

- Birth Certificate
- Medicare Card
- Photo ID (License of proof of age card)
- Centrelink Account (MyGov)
- Bank account details
- Tax File Number (TFN)
- Confirmation of Aboriginality documents

START PUTTING YOUR PLAN INTO ACTION (16-17)

This is one of the most important stages. Housing and support applications should be started now, not when you are almost 18.

- I have applied for housing (Housing Pathways)
- I understand what priority housing is and I have asked if I qualify for priority housing
- My application clearly says I am leaving OOHC
- I have supporting documents (caseworker letter, risk info, etc.)
- I have a backup plan if housing is not ready

Apply for housing here: <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/housing/help/applying-assistance>

MONEY & PAYMENTS

- I have applied for Centrelink Allowances (Youth Allowance / JobSeeker etc)
- I have asked about Rent Assistance and applied if eligible
- I know what leaving care payments and grants I can access (TILA, Aftercare, etc.)
- I have applied for TILA (up to \$1,500)
- I have a bank account

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HEALTH & WELLBEING

- I have a GP (doctor)
- I know how to access mental health support
- I have any medications I need
- I know who to contact if I'm struggling and need support

SUPPORT NETWORK

- I know who my support people are and where to go to ask for help
- I have contact details for:
 - Caseworker
 - Aftercare service
 - Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations
 - Trusted Adult / Mentor

SUPPORT NETWORK

- I have a plan to stay connected to:
 - Family
 - Community
 - Culture
 - Country
- I know which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services can support me

EDUCATION / WORK

- I have a plan for:
 - School / TAFE / training OR
 - Job / employment
- I know where to get help finding work or study

LIFE SKILLS (IT'S OK TO LEARN)

- I know how to:
 - Budget my money
 - Cook basic meals
 - Clean and maintain a home



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→ Pay rent and bills

I know where to get help if I don't

IF THINGS GO WRONG

I know who to call if I have nowhere to stay and I need help

Crisis numbers and helplines

Link2Home: [1800 152 152](tel:1800152152)

Lifeline: [13 11 14](tel:131114)

Kids Helpline: [1800 55 1800](tel:1800551800)

Domestic Violence Line: [1800 656 463](tel:1800656463)

Child Protection Helpline: [13 21 11](tel:132111)

BEFORE YOU TURN 18 – FINAL CHECK

- I know where I will be living
- My income is set up
- I have my ID and documents
- I have support contacts saved
- I know where to go to for help and support

FINAL MESSAGE

You don't need to have everything figured out straight away. Life after care can feel overwhelming at times, but you are not expected to do it alone. What matters most is having support, taking things one step at a time and believing in your future — even on the hard days.

Keep asking questions. Keep reaching out. Keep backing yourself.

There will be challenges along the way, but there will also be opportunities, growth and people who genuinely want to see you succeed.

You deserve:

- ✓ A safe place to live
- ✓ Support around you
- ✓ Connection to culture, family and community
- ✓ Opportunities to learn, grow and thrive
- ✓ A future filled with stability, strength and hope

**BE PROUD OF HOW FAR YOU'VE ALREADY COME.
YOUR STORY DOES NOT END WHEN YOU LEAVE CARE —
THIS IS THE BEGINNING OF YOUR NEXT CHAPTER.**