

SPENT?

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 gives people with spent cautions and convictions the right not to disclose them when applying for most jobs, courses, insurance, or other purposes.

Important changes reducing the rehabilitation periods of custodial and community sentences under the Act were implemented on 28 October 2023.

Rehabilitation periods for non-custodial sentences - which start from date of conviction

Sentence/disposal	Rehabilitation period for adults (aged 18 or over at the time of conviction, or at the time the disposal is administered)	Rehabilitation period for young people (aged under 18 at the time of conviction, or at the time the disposal is administered)
Absolute discharge	Spent immediately	Spent immediately
Bind over	At the end of the order	At the end of the order
Compensation order	When paid in full	When paid in full
Community order or youth rehabilitation order	At the end of the order	At the end of the order
Conditional caution/ diversionary caution/ youth conditional caution	3 months or when caution ceases to have effect if earlier	3 months or when caution ceases to have effect if earlier
Conditional discharge order	At the end of the order	At the end of the order
Cautions/youth cautions	Spent immediately	Spent immediately
Endorsements (imposed by a court/FPN)	5 years	2½ years
Fine	1 year	6 months
Hospital order (with or without restriction)	When order ceases to have effect	When order ceases to have effect
Referral order	N/A	At the end of the order
Relevant order	When order ceases to have effect	When order ceases to have effect
Reparation order	N/A	Spent immediately

Rehabilitation periods for custodial sentences – which have a buffer period

Prison sentence or detention in a young offender institution for 12 months or less	Total length of sentence (including licence period) plus 1 year	Total length of sentence (including licence period) plus 6 months
Prison sentence or detention in a young offender institution for over 12 months and up to and including 48 months (4 years)	Total length of sentence (including licence period) plus 4 years	Total length of sentence (including licence period) plus 2 years
Prison sentence or detention in a young offender institution for over 48 months (4 years)	Total length of sentence (including licence period) plus 7 years	Total length of sentence (including licence period) plus 3½ years
Prison sentence or detention in a young offender institution for over 48 months (4 years) following a conviction for any serious violent, sexual, or terrorist offences listed in Schedule 18 of the Sentencing Act 2020, or a public protection sentence (of any length)	Never spent	Never spent

Contact our Criminal Record Support Service

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