



# About your Order

The court has sentenced you to do a Suspended Sentence Order. This might be:

- to punish you;
- to reduce crime;
- to change the way you behave and help you stay away from crime;
- to protect the public; or
- to make you pay back something to the community or to the victims of your crime.

Your Suspended Sentence Order is made up of one or more 'Requirements'. The court has chosen a Requirement or Requirements based on the seriousness of your crime and your personal circumstances. You will be given a separate leaflet about each of the Requirements in your Suspended Sentence Order.

## About your responsible officer

You will have one person who you must keep in contact with while you are on the community part of your Suspended Sentence Order.

This person is called your 'responsible officer'. They may be an officer of the probation service, or the officer in charge of an Attendance Centre, or an electronic monitoring officer (if the court has said you must be tagged). You might be told to keep in contact with other people too.

The court expects your responsible officer to make sure that you stick to the rules of your Requirements and complete your order successfully. If you do not do this, the court expects your responsible officer to do something about it.

# What you should do

While you are on your Suspended Sentence Order you **must**:

- listen carefully to what your responsible officer says and do what they ask you to do;
- do what you are told to do for each of the Requirements you are given (different leaflets will tell you what this means);
- turn up for appointments to do with your sentence and be on time;
- make sure you turn up in a fit state to take part;
- show respect to probation staff and other people you meet during your sentence;
- tell your responsible officer straight away if you plan to change your address or phone number;
- tell your responsible officer straight away if you are unable to keep an appointment;
- tell your responsible officer if you are having any other problems with completing your sentence;
- carry out any other instructions you may be given as part of your sentence; and
- stay out of trouble.

The Suspended Sentence Order is a prison sentence, but the court has given you the chance to avoid going to prison if you complete the community Requirements in your Order.

# What if you break the rules?

If you miss an appointment or break the rules of any of the Requirements you are given, your supervising officer will ask you to explain why. If there is a good reason for not being able to keep an appointment you should provide your responsible officer with evidence. This might be a doctor's note or a letter from your employer, for example.

If your reason is not acceptable, the responsible officer must take action.

- The first time anyone on a Suspended Sentence Order breaks the rules of any Requirement, they might receive a final warning – or, if their behaviour is particularly serious, they might be sent back to court.
- If anyone breaks the rules for a second time within 12 months without a good reason, they must be taken back to court.

**It is very important that you attend your appointments and work hard to complete your Suspended Sentence Order.**

**If you commit another offence while on a Suspended Sentence Order you will be sent back to court.**