



# Teen Manual

For teens with a parent in Lancaster County Prison



This manual was prepared by AMBASSADORS FOR HOPE, an organization that supports children with a parent in prison. Every effort has been made to assure all information is correct. Errors and/or misinformation shall be sent to [amforhope@comcast.net](mailto:amforhope@comcast.net)

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## **I. What happens when someone is arrested?**

***No quick answers!*** Lots of time may pass from when your parent is arrested until a decision is made about what happens next. In this section we'll try to explain why that is and what is happening to your parent!



### **1. I was in school when my dad/mom was arrested. How can I find out why they were arrested and where they are now?**

Call the local police dept. For example, if your parent was arrested in Lancaster City you can call 717-735-3300. Be polite and don't panic. Give them your name and address and ask them why your parent was arrested. You can also ask them where your parent is now. (If your parent was not arrested in Lancaster you can find the number of all county police departments at the end of this manual.

***City of Lancaster Police Department Information: 735-3300***

### **2. What happens when someone is arrested?**

In most circumstances, the police will take your parent to a District Magistrate who will consider how serious the crime was that your parent committed and may: 1) release your parent to come home; 2) send them to jail and set bail which must be paid before they are released. The purpose of bail is to assure that your parent will not leave the area nor fail to show for a scheduled hearing.

### **3. How can we pay the bail?**

There are bail bond agents in Lancaster who will assist your parent in getting the required bail.

### **4. How soon will I find out how long my parent will be in jail?**

If your parent is unable to secure bail they will stay in prison indefinitely pending other actions.

### **5. Where can I find information about the prison?**

The best source of information is the prison website:

[web.co.lancaster.pa.us/153/Prison](http://web.co.lancaster.pa.us/153/Prison).

## **II. Visiting prison!**

*This section only deals with visitation at Lancaster County Prison (LCP). If your parent is sentenced to a state prison, you will need to check with them for their visitation regulations.*

*Visitation at LCP is a very tightly controlled process with concern for the safety of both the visitors and inmate. For visitors it is "nothing in, nothing out" including gifts. Visitors are searched; so empty your pockets and purse before visiting.*



### **1. How soon can I see my parent or talk with them?**

Generally, new inmates may not use the phone or have visitors for two weeks.

### **2. How can I locate my parent in jail?**

You can go to Inmate locator: <http://www.co.lancaster.pa.us/757/Look-Up>

### **3. How can I visit my parent?**

Your parent determines who they want to see by giving the warden a list of who he/she want to see. You and your legal guardian must be listed on your parent's visitation list.

. To visit you must bring your birth certificate and, if under 18, be accompanied by your other parent or legal guardian (must bring guardianship papers with you). You may not visit alone nor may you bring a friend.

Visitation policies: <http://web.co.lancaster.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/263>

### **4. Does it matter what I wear?**

Yes! Check with the prison for what you should NOT wear. NO gang identified clothing or symbols are permitted!

### **5. May we take them gifts, books or magazines?**

No! Very strict rules control what may be given to your parent.

You may take nothing with you when you visit. If you do, security will take if from you and return it to you when you leave. You may buy something on *Amazon* or *Barnes and Noble* and have it sent directly to the prison. Local newspapers must be sent from the publisher directly to your parent. You may not take food/drink to your parent. Cell phones and electronics are not permitted inside the prison and will be confiscated.

**6. How often may I visit and how long can I stay?**

You may visit your parent once a week for one hour according to a schedule provided by the prison. You can see that schedule at <http://web.co.lancaster.pa.us/892/Visitation-Information>

**7. May I touch my dad/mom?**

In Lancaster County Prison you may touch and sit with your parent.

**8. Can I call them?**

Inmates cannot receive phone calls but they can call you after the first two weeks. Phone calls are very expensive and your caregiver will have to pay for the call.

**9. May I write to my parent?**

Yes, you are encouraged to do so. This is the best way to share information. You may include a photo or a pencil drawing. You may not use crayon or painted pictures-just pencil. You may not include cash, newspaper clippings or photocopies. All mail is searched for unauthorized items prior to your parent receiving it. You may not drop off any letters or packages. All letters must be mailed! [www.co.lancaster.pa.us/757/Look-Up](http://www.co.lancaster.pa.us/757/Look-Up)

**10. How can I contact my parent if there is a family emergency?**

You may contact the Prison Chaplain's office at 717-295-2089.

### **III. Now, what happens to me?**

*This section contains some typical issues facing children whose parent is in prison. Few of these issues have only one answer. One of the greatest friends you have during this time is your school counselor. They can get information for you and help in some of the decisions you must make.*

*(NOTE: We use the term "caregiver" to refer to the family you are living with.)*



#### **1. Where will we live?**

- a. The first choice will always be with the parent who is not incarcerated.
- b. If that parent is not available you will be placed with any relative who agrees to care for you. That means that you will actually live in their home. They are responsible to provide all your needs just like a parent would do. You will go to the school in the district where you will live.

#### **2. Does that mean they will adopt us?**

No! Your parents will be asked to sign a guardianship agreement that gives your caregivers permission to act in the role of parents so long as your parents are not able to do so. When they can again care for you the guardianship will no longer be in effect.

#### **3. If no relatives or friends are available, what will happen?**

If relatives are not available a social worker from Children and Youth might look for a family willing to have you live with them. Every effort will be made to keep you and your brothers and sisters together.

#### **4. Can I live alone?**

Pennsylvania does not have a law concerning the age when you can live alone. You need to talk to your school counselor or social worker for specific information for your question.

#### **5. Will we have to change schools?**

You will need to attend the schools where you will now live.

#### **6. I turn 16 in two months. Can I still get my driver's license?**

Yes, with your caregiver's approval.

#### **7. Can I go live with my dad in Florida?**

That is one of the possibilities that may be considered. Generally, one of your parents will have an attorney who can answer your question.

**8. Who will pay for my doctor and dentist bills?**

All children are eligible for health and dental insurance from the state of Pennsylvania. The insurance is called "CHIP". If you don't have that insurance, insist that your caregiver call 800-986-KIDS (5437) to learn about the program.

CHIP telephone number: 800-986-KIDS (5437)

**9. Can I see a counselor/therapist/psychologist without my parent or guardian's approval or without their knowledge? Will they be notified of my visit? How will I pay for it?**

Check with your school counselor. They can advise you on this issue.

**IV.** *This section deals with more long term issues and suggests the parent will not be returning to the family in the foreseeable future. For most teens their best source of support and assistance are the school counselors.*



**1. My dad had been paying child support until he was arrested. Now he has no money to send to mom. What can we do? Can they make dad pay?**

Unfortunately, since your dad doesn't have a job or any income he cannot pay support.

**2. Do the people who care for me get paid?**

No, there is no pay to keep you and your brothers and sisters. If you are living with a blood relative they may be eligible for monthly income from *Temporary Assistance for Needy Families* (TANF). Your caregiver can apply for TANF by contacting the **Lancaster County Assistance Office**, 832 Manor Street, P.O. Box 4967, Lancaster, PA 17604-4967 (Phone: 717-299-7411) or by going to this website, <http://www.dpw.state.pa.us/foradults/cashassistance/tanfandmovingtoindependence/index.htm>

**7. My grandparents work until 6:00 and my brothers and I are finished school at 3:00. I don't want my brother/sister and I to be alone for 3 hours. What can we do to stay out of trouble for three hours?**

If you live in or near the City of Lancaster there are many after-school activities. You can call 211 or 584-6110 for a listing of after school activities.

**8. Where can I hang out and stay out of trouble?**

Ambassadors has published a guide (584-6110) for after school activities or you can call 211 and ask the receptionist for that information.

### **County Police Departments**

These telephone numbers are "non-emergency" numbers and will be answered during normal office hours, usually 8:00 to 4:30.

Akron Police 859-2410

Clay Twp. Police 733-0965

Columbia Police 684-7735

Conestoga Twp. Police 872-0352

East Cocalico Twp. Police 336-1725

East Donegal Twp. Police 426-1158

East Earl Twp. Police 354-5593

East Hempfield Police 898-3103

East Lampeter Police 291-4676

Elizabethtown Police 367-6540

Ephrata Boro Police 738-9200

Lancaster City Police 735-3300

Lititz Police 626-2044

Manheim Boro Police 665-2481

Manheim Twp. Police 664-1180

Millersville Boro Police 872-4657

Mt. Joy Boro Police 653-1650

Manor Twp. Police 299-5231

New Holland Police 354-4647

Penn Township Police 665-4508

Quarryville Police 786-2101

Southern Regional Police 872-0352

State Police 299-7650

Strasburg Boro Police 687-7128

Susquehanna Reg. Police 426-1164

Warwick Twp. Police 626-3162

West Earl Twp. Police 859-1411

West Hempfield Police 285-5191

West Lamp. Twp. Police 464-2421