



Court Funds Office

# Turning 18

## How to have funds released from Court

serving  
the community  
through the  
administration  
of justice

Northern Ireland Court Service  
[www.courtsni.gov.uk](http://www.courtsni.gov.uk)

We can provide this booklet in a wide range of alternative formats please contact the Information Centre at:

**Northern Ireland Court Service**

Information Centre

Windsor House

Bedford Street

Belfast BT2 7LT

Telephone 028 9032 8594

Facsimile 028 9041 2390

Textphone 028 9041 2920

Email [informationcentre@courtsni.gov.uk](mailto:informationcentre@courtsni.gov.uk)

[www.courtsni.gov.uk](http://www.courtsni.gov.uk)



When a young person is awarded compensation, for example due to an accident or other injury, the money awarded is held by the court on their behalf until they legally become an adult at 18. The branch of the NI Court Service that looks after that money is the Court Funds Office (CFO).

This leaflet explains what the young person will need to do when they turn 18 so that CFO can ensure that they receive their money as quickly as possible.

A **“Request for payment or transfer of funds form”** will be sent, by 2<sup>nd</sup> class post, to the young person the day before their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday (if the form has not arrived within a few days of the young person turning 18, please contact CFO). This is to ensure that the form does not arrive before they turn 18. **For legal reasons they are not entitled to sign the form until they are 18 years old and legally an adult.**

A covering letter, a certificate of funds detailing the funds held in court on behalf of the young person, and guidance notes explaining how to complete the form should also be enclosed with this form. We have tried to make these as easy to understand as possible and we would urge the young person to read all the documentation through carefully before they complete the form.

There are a number of options shown on the form, and the young person must indicate which option they wish to choose.

- If the fund is held as cash in a deposit account this sum will be paid out when properly completed forms are received by CFO.
- If the fund has been invested in government stocks or equities (as detailed on the certificate of funds), the young person may choose to sell the investments and receive the money from the proceeds of the sales.
- Alternatively, the young person may choose to transfer some or all of the government stocks or equities into their own name. Once transferred into their name we will send them the appropriate certificates as confirmation. They will then receive future dividend payments directly and can retain or sell the investments in the future as they wish.

Young persons turning 18 are encouraged to seek **professional financial advice** before deciding whether to sell or transfer government stocks and equities in their fund. Useful websites on where to obtain independent advice include [www.fsa.gov.uk](http://www.fsa.gov.uk), [www.unbiased.co.uk](http://www.unbiased.co.uk) and [www.aifa.net](http://www.aifa.net).

Prices on the stock market continually change. They can go down as well as up and the value of the stock may differ between the date on the certificate of funds and the date that payment is made. A certificate of funds, showing how the funds are invested can be requested at any time by e-mail or writing to CFO.

**We need details of the young person's bank account so that we can transfer any money held electronically into their account.** If the young person does not have a bank account they may wish to consider opening one now. Electronic money transfer is quicker, cheaper and reduces the risk of fraud.

The young person's bank can help them make sure that the correct details are provided; we need the **sort code (this is a 6 digit number)** and the **account number (this is an 8 digit number)**. We would urge particular care when completing this section as most of the payments that are late are because the wrong details have been given to us. For example, sometimes people give the cash card number or a roll number instead of the account number. If that happens, the bank will reject the payment and we will have to contact the young person to get the correct details, which will delay the process.

**Once the form is completed, the 18 year old should sign and date it in the presence of a witness.** The witness must hold one of the jobs on the following list, **they cannot be retired or related to the young person.** After watching the young person sign, the witness must themselves sign and date the completed form.

The people that we can accept as witnesses are those in one of the following jobs:

- Bank managers
- Dentists
- Medical doctors
- Members of the clergy
- Teachers
- Social workers
- Solicitors
- Barristers
- Judges
- Justices of the Peace
- Officers of the Armed Forces
- Police Officers
- Probation officers

In order to ensure that we are making payment to the right person, **two forms of identification must also be provided.** Please be aware that any identification provided must be originals.

**One form of identification to be provided MUST be an original birth certificate. The second form of identification must be one of the following:**

- Current student card
- Medical card
- Current passport
- Valid driving licence
- National insurance card

If there is a problem with finding an original birth certificate or other identification, please refer to the details on the back of this leaflet. We have included contact details of organisations that will help you to get replacements for the originals

If the young person has changed their name since the date of the award, by virtue of adoption, marriage or deed poll, evidence of the change will also need to be enclosed with the completed form, before the funds can be paid out.

The young person should return the completed form with the proper identifications to CFO either by calling at our public counter (we are open from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday, except for public holidays); or by post to the address at the back of this leaflet. If you are concerned about sending original documents by post, you may come to our office in Belfast and we will inspect the documents in your presence and give them back to

you. Alternatively, you should speak to the Post Office about the types of delivery service they offer. Unfortunately we cannot take responsibility for items lost in the post. Providing all the information is correct, payment should be made within 10 working days.

**If the young person is not capable of managing their own funds** on reaching 18, the Office of Care and Protection may administer their money on their behalf. They can be contacted on 028 9072 4732 or 028 9072 4733, and will be able to explain how to make an application to the court.

We hope that this leaflet is useful in helping speed up the payment process, but if you have any questions regarding this, or any other aspect of our service, please do not hesitate to contact us at the CFO. You can get more information about CFO by visiting our web site at [www.courtsni.gov.uk](http://www.courtsni.gov.uk). Click on 'Services' then 'Funds Held In Court'.

**For further information on the Court Funds Office,  
please contact:**

Customer Services Officer  
Court Funds Office  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Bedford House,  
16 – 22 Bedford Street,  
Belfast BT2 7FD  
Telephone: 028 9072 8900  
Fax: 028 9072 8866  
E-mail: [courtfundsoffice@courtsni.gov.uk](mailto:courtfundsoffice@courtsni.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.courtsni.gov.uk](http://www.courtsni.gov.uk)

**Other useful contact details:**

**Birth and Adoption Certificates**  
The General Register Office  
Oxford House,  
49 – 55 Chichester Street,  
Belfast BT1 4HL  
Telephone: 028 9025 2000  
Website: [www.groni.gov.uk](http://www.groni.gov.uk)

**Medical Card**

Northern Ireland Health and Social Services  
Central Services Agency  
2 Franklin Street,  
Belfast BT2 8DQ  
Telephone: 028 9032 4431  
Website: [www.centralservicesagency.n-i.nhs.uk](http://www.centralservicesagency.n-i.nhs.uk)

**National Insurance Number Card**

Contact your nearest Social Security Office or National Insurance Contributions Office at HM Revenue & Customs  
Website: [www.hmrc.gov.uk](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk)

**Passport**

Belfast Passport Office,  
Hampton House,  
47 - 53 High Street,  
Belfast BT1 2QS  
Telephone: 0870 521 0410  
Website: [www.ukpa.gov.uk](http://www.ukpa.gov.uk)

**Driving Licence**

Driver Licensing Division  
DVLNI  
County Hall, Castlerock Road,  
Coleraine BT51 3TB  
Telephone: 0845 4024000  
Website: [dvlni.gov.uk](http://dvlni.gov.uk)



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Northern Ireland Court Service please contact

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Windsor House  
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