



5. FAQs

1. My bail sheet says I have to report to a police station/court on a certain date – What happens if I cannot make that date?

If, for whatever reason, you are unable to report to a police station/court on the date given on your bail sheet, you should let your solicitor know at the earliest possible opportunity. If you are representing yourself please get in contact with us.

2. What happens if I fail to turn up at all?

Failure to surrender to bail – failing to turn on the date given on your bail sheet whether to a court or to return to a police station – is a crime (Section 6 Bail Act 1976). Although it should be said, the courts take failure to surrender to the cops far less seriously than skipping court and CPS guidelines state that failure to answer police bail should not be prosecuted at all where the substantive case is dropped. The likelihood of the police actively pursuing your arrest and the severity of any punishment you may eventually incur will depend on the perceived severity of the offence (and, of course, whether you are convicted). But if you fail to attend a court hearing, we recommend getting in touch with your lawyer and/or us as soon as possible.

3. Will a conviction impact my employability?

Employers can't turn someone down for a job because they've been convicted of an offence if the conviction or caution is 'spent' – unless an exception applies (see below). Convictions with a sentence of 4 years or less will become spent after a certain period of time. This is known as a 'rehabilitation period'. Its length depends on how severe the penalty was. You can find out the rehabilitation periods of different penalties [here](#).

A very small number of jobs do require you to disclose spent convictions, as these jobs are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act. These exceptions include working in the medical profession, solicitors, accountants, school-based jobs and other roles involving the supervision of people under the age of 18. Criminal record checks are typically required to take up these roles and spent convictions and cautions will be recorded by them.

Very few jobs (outside of being a police officer) require you to have no criminal record at all, although certain convictions can debar you from becoming a solicitor (and even minor offences can make it significantly harder). Unless you have been convicted for a serious violence offence, supplying drugs or sexual offences, having a criminal record will not necessarily prevent you from working with children. Whether or not it makes it harder depends on the attitudes of your potential employer and the circumstances of your supposed wrongdoing.

More information on how a criminal record might impact your paid or voluntary work is available from the [Unlock Information Hub](#).

4. Can I crowdfund the money I need to pay a fine?

We advise against explicitly crowd funding to pay fines, as it could – in theory – encourage the court to increase the figure you have to pay (as a crowdfunder campaign could be seen as increasing your means). However, there is no problem with crowd funding for court costs and general campaign expenses – including travel expenses.