



# **Prisoners Information Booklet**



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# Section 1 - Staff, Reception and Committal

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## Foreword by Director General Caron McCaffrey



**Director General  
Caron McCaffrey**

The information in this booklet has been prepared to familiarise you with some of the rules, procedures and activities that make up the daily routine in Irish prisons. It is not a legal document and does not include information about every matter in the Prison Rules. The booklet contains basic information regarding prison routine; staff; services; prison rules; education; work and training; healthcare and prison discipline and security. Our staff are available at all times to help you with any questions or queries.

You are responsible for your own behaviour whilst in custody. Your behaviour will be an important factor to be considered when determining whether or not you receive any privileges. Treating prison staff with respect, participation in education, work and training, library, recreation and self-development programmes will also be considered when applying for temporary release or other privileges.

The Irish Prison service will ensure that, each prison maintains a safe and healthy environment which safeguards all individual's health, safety and welfare. An updated Smoking Policy was implemented across the Irish Prison Service Estate in 2018 to incorporate smoking in any form, including all vaping devices and e-cigarettes. Smoking and vaping is strictly only within your cell and in outdoor designated smoking areas.

I would encourage you to get involved in the many educational, vocational and recreational activities that are offered in your institution. Your participation in these programmes may improve the quality of your life in prison through our incentivised regimes programme but will more importantly enhance your life and employment skills when you are released.

A full copy of the Prison Rules 2007 (SI 252/2007) and the Prisons Act 2007 are available in the Library. Throughout this booklet, reference is made to your Class Officer, your Class Officer is the Prison Officer in charge of your landing. For further information you may contact your Class Officer who will be able to help you.

# Section 1 - Staff, Reception and Committal

## Prison Staff

The Staff in the prison are available to help you. All staff must treat you with dignity and respect and must be courteous and fair in their dealings with you. You must treat staff with the same respect and you should obey their instructions at all times.

**The Governor** is in charge of the prison. A Governor or his representative will meet with you within 24 hours of your committal to the prison. Think about what you want to say to the Governor and any questions you may wish to ask him/her.

**Governor's Parade** is an opportunity for you to meet with a prison Governor. Parades are held each weekday morning. You may meet a Governor at parade by submitting your name to your Class Officer at breakfast.



**Class/Unit Officer** is the officer in charge of your landing. If you need anything, you should ask them first. For any requests such as transfers etc., you should see your Class Officer who will give you the appropriate forms. If your request is of a higher importance, you can arrange to see the Governor at the Governors Parade.



**Chief Officers II & III** have operational responsibility for the prison.



**Assistant Chief Officers** have responsibility for different areas of the prison.



**Nurse Officers:** Nurse Officers/Prison Nurses are available to you 24 hours a day in the surgery of the prison. Nurses are the first point of contact for all your healthcare needs. Nurses are there to help you with all aspects of your healthcare needs & wellness. You will be seen by a Nurse for your initial health assessment within hours of being committed to prison.



**Chief Nurse Officer:** The Chief Nurse Officer manages and oversees the nursing service within the prison and works with other health professionals to co-ordinate and plan your care whilst in prison.

**Medical Officer:** is the prison doctor. The doctor attends the prison each day. You will see the doctor on the morning after your committal to prison for your initial health assessment. Thereafter you can request to see the doctor at any time by contacting your divisional nurse at the 8 am medication round. The nurse will discuss your healthcare issue with you and ensure you get the best outcome. This is your opportunity to inform the doctor if you are suffering from any illness or injury, are undergoing any medical

treatment or taking any prescribed medication. You should advise them if you suffer from any disabilities. You should also inform them if you have any addictions such as alcohol or drugs. You should also advise if you have any medical appointments outside the prison.

**(See section 7 Healthcare Services)**

***All information given to the doctor or medical staff is confidential.***



#### **Chief Officer II Work & Training**

Is in charge of the workshops area and can give you information of training programmes and employment opportunities in the Prison.



#### **Work Training Officer**

Work training officers are responsible for providing training in multipliable areas such as Kitchens, Laundry, Workshops, Waste Management and Gyms.

#### **Head Teacher**

Is in charge of the prison school and can give you information on the courses available and can provide you with a timetable for classes. If you have adult literacy needs the head teacher can provide you with information re: suitable classes.

#### **General Office**

The General Office is the main administration office in each prison. The General Office provides all administrative functions such as processing of warrants and applications for transfer or temporary release.

**Integrated Sentence Management Coordinator (ISM)** is responsible for assisting you with the management of your sentence through the ISM process. **(See Section 4).**

Chaplains are responsible for the pastoral and spiritual care of the entire prison community, regardless of religion. You can talk to the Chaplains about any issue in private.

#### **Prison Rules 2007 (SI252/2007)**

Is the legal document that sets out the rules and regulations which operate in prisons in Ireland including: Reception and Registration; Treatment of Prisoners; Control, Discipline and Sanction; Young Prisoners and Remand Prisoners; Staff; Accommodation; Healthcare; Education and Work Training; Services.

***You can receive further information  
on the Prison Rules 2007 (SI 252/2007)  
from your Class Officer  
or you may access a copy of the Prison Rules  
in the Prison Library.***

When you arrive in prison you are brought to the reception area where your personal details and physical description are recorded. A reception officer will conduct a committal interview where you must give your name, address, date of birth, next of kin, occupation and religion.

You must tell reception and medical staff if you were in prison before, if you take drugs or if you suffer from any illness. You should also tell the staff if you do not feel safe in the general population. Your height and weight will be taken, and any marks or scars on your body will be noted. You will also have a shower.

You will be allowed to make a telephone call as soon as possible so you may tell a family member or friend where you are. If it is the first time you are committed to prison you will be given your prisoner identification number. Should you be committed to prison again in the future your identification number will remain the same. You should include this number on any requests or correspondence within the prison.

Following your committal you will be held in the Committal Unit/Area for 24 hours after which you will be moved to the general prison population.

### **Clothes**

In reception you will change into prison clothes. You will be given: vests, underwear, trousers, shirt, pullover, socks and shoes. Articles such as razors, toothbrushes, toothpaste, and soap are issued as required by your Class Officer. You may be allowed to wear your own clothing and the reception officer will explain to you the rules regarding the wearing of your own clothes.



### **Photograph**

You will have your measurements and photograph taken.

### **Your property**

You will be searched on arrival at the prison. Any items that you cannot keep or are not permitted to keep on your person will be taken away and stored securely until your release. All personal items will be recorded and all valuable items will be recorded and stored securely in the General Office such as:

- **Mobile phone**
- **Watch**
- **Money**
- **Jewellery**



All other personal property will be stored in the reception area. You must get permission to keep any personal property in your cell. You keep this property at your own risk. You may not give any of your property to another prisoner. You may not sell it or swap it with another prisoner. If you want any of your property from Reception you must get permission from the Governor.

### **Safety in Prison**

When you arrive in the prison or at any time during your custodial period, if you do not feel safe and secure in the general population, you should inform the Governor or any staff member of your reason/concerns and they will discuss the options that are available with you. These may include a transfer to another prison.

### **Release date**

If you are sentenced to a term of imprisonment (other than life), you will be informed as soon as possible after committal of your release date. If during your time in prison your release date changes, you will be informed.

### **Foreign Nationals**

If you are a foreign national you will be provided with the means to contact your local Embassy or Consul should you wish to do so. If you are arrested or detained be given notice "without delay" you have the right to inform your embassy or consulate of your arrest, and "consular officers shall have the right to visit you in prison, custody or detention, to converse and correspond with you and to arrange for your legal representation.

### **Prison Cell**

Your cell must be kept clean and tidy at all times. You must only have items in your cell that have been given to you by the prison staff or personal items that you have received permission to keep. Being in possession of prohibited items in your cell is a breach of prison discipline and will lead to disciplinary action.

You must not damage your cell in any way. Any damage will result in disciplinary action and you will have to repay the cost of replacing the broken item or items through deductions from your daily gratuity ([see section 2 Gratuity or daily payment](#)) or, with your permission, deductions from your private cash in your account. Observation windows and cell windows must not be covered.





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### **Personal property**

You must get permission to keep any personal property in your cell. The Assistant Chief Officer or Class Officer can give you permission or you can apply to the Governor. All property is kept at your own risk. You may not give, sell or swap property with another prisoner. You may only have property in your cell that is appropriate to your incentivised regime privilege level.

You may have three sets of normal clothing and sufficient sports clothing for gym use. Certain items such as guitars for recreational or educational purposes may also be permitted. Should you transfer to another prison your property will be sent to the new prison with you. If this is not possible your property will be sent to the new prison within a week of your transfer. On release from prison all your property must be taken with you.



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### **Prisoner Service Escort Corp - PSEC**

#### **Prisoner Transportation**

If you are being transferred to another prison or any place outside the prison such as hospital or court you will be transported by the Prison Service Escort Corp (PSEC) and you will be accompanied by a prison officer at all times.

You will be transported in PSEC vehicles. The vast majority of which are “Cellular”. This means that you will be transported in a vehicle that has cells within. While in these cells you will be required to be handcuffed. While out of these cells and until placed in a holding cell you will be required to wear a second set of cuffs and this will be attached to the officer escorting you. This will operate for any period that you are outside the prison.



The Prison Officers in charge of escorting you are responsible for your custody and care. The officers will search you and take any items from you that you should not have or any article of clothing not deemed safe or appropriate for your detention in a holding cell.

You must declare and surrender any prohibited or dangerous items to the Prison Officers. You are required to follow all directions by Prison Officers for your safety whilst in custody. If you have any urgent medical requirements or needs you should let the Prison Officers know without delay and medical attention will be provided if necessary. You must follow any directions given to you by Prison Officers who are tasked with processing you through your court appearance. In the event of an emergency such as a fire, you must also follow any instruction given.

Failure to follow instruction or misbehaviour by any person in custody may be dealt with by the Gardaí or the Prison Authorities if you are further remanded/sentenced to custody. Smoking is not allowed in Irish Prison Service vehicles or in any Courthouse or public building. The Prison Rules will apply at all times while under escort.



## Section 2 – Prison Routine

In many cases you will find that prison life is very structured, with specific times for meals or activities such as school, work and recreation. Arrangement at weekends and bank holidays may be different. You will find that times for access to services may differ depending on the area of the prison that you are accommodated in.

### Clothing and Laundry

At committal stage you will be provided with prison issue clothing however, you may be permitted to wear your own clothes subject to local arrangement. You must have at least three sets of clothes (*See section 1 personal Property*). You are required to change your clothing at least once a week. The rules governing the wearing of your own clothing will be explained to you by your Class Officer. Headgear, such as hats and bandanas, are not permitted in the prison at any time and are strictly forbidden. You should speak to your Class Officer for more information.

### Smoking

The Smoking Policy in all Irish Prisons requires that all smoking and vaping is permitted only by prisoners within their cells (defined as their home) and in outdoor designated smoking areas.



Smoking is **NOT** permitted in the following areas:

- Kitchen & food preparation areas
- Libraries
- Classrooms and conference room
- Medical Areas
- Gymnasiums and exercise rooms
- Recreation Rooms and Halls
- Halls, corridors and landings
- Workshops

Smoking is permitted in a prison cell and designated smoking areas only.

If you would like help to quit smoking the following programmes are available, HSE Quit Smoking – [www.quit.ie](http://www.quit.ie), Red Cross Programmes are in the prisons, prisons run smoking cessation courses.

For information on these courses contact your Class Officer or Medical Staff who can advise you.

### Money

You are not allowed to handle money in prison. Any money you have when you arrive into prison is put into an account in the General Office. Foreign currency will be lodged in your property in the General Office.

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## Gratuity (or daily payment)

While in prison you are entitled to a daily payment or “gratuity” which is lodged to your account. You can use this payment to purchase items in the prison shop or save money which you can send to your family. The amount of money you receive depends on whether you are on the basic, standard or enhanced level of Incentivised Regime. The criteria for each level is set out in the Incentivised Regimes Policy ([\*see section 4 Incentivised Regimes Policy\*](#)). If you are on an enhanced regime you will be entitled to €2.20c per day. If you are on a standard regime you will be entitled to €1.70c per day and if you are have been reduced to a basic regime (this may happen because of poor behaviour) you will be entitled to €0.95c per day. If you are in a prison you may also have an opportunity to earn more through approved work such as work in the kitchen, laundry, industrial cleaning, ground maintenance, waste management and stores. The daily payment for work is fixed at €0.50 per session with a maximum of €3.50 per week. Your family and friends can also leave money in for you and they will be given a written receipt. Any money in this account will be given to you when you are released. If you want to send money out to your family you must get the Governor’s permission. You may get a copy of the Gratuity and Private Cash policy from your Class Officer.

## Food in Prison

You will be provided with three meals per day to include:

- **Breakfast**
- **Dinner**
- **Evening Tea**

Communal dining areas are not provided in prisons except (Dóchas, Shelton Abbey, Loughan House. All meals are served at the servery on your landing and eaten in your cell.

**28 Day Menu** - All prisons operate a 28 day menu cycle. This is in use across all the prisons and is based on healthy eating and nutrition. In addition to the daily meals provided, you have access to the prison tuck shop where additional food items such as confectionary, fresh fruit etc., are available for purchase using your daily payment.

**Specialist Diets** – If the prison doctor advises that you suffer from a medical condition, a special provision will be made in relation to your food. If you are a member of a particular religion or culture and you require a particular type of diet the prison will try, in so far as practical, to provide you with appropriate food. You should talk to your Class Officer if you have particular needs.

## **The Tuck Shop**

All prisons have a prison shop or a tuck shop as it is also known. In the shop you can buy items including newspapers, toiletries, cards, stamps, soft drinks, sweets, biscuits and batteries. There is a standard price list for tuck shop items across all prisons. Any purchase from the shop will be deducted from your account. The operation of the tuck shop may vary depending on local management. For more information you can ask your Class Officer.



## Section 3 - Your Sentence

### Integrated Sentence Management (ISM) Coordinator

- Prison staff and prison services will help you make the best use of your time in prison, and help you prepare for your release through the Integrated Sentence Management (ISM) process.
- The ISM Coordinator is a service provided to sentenced prisoners to help you take responsibility for your own personal development and to get involved with services and activities in prison.
- The ISM Coordinator can refer you to different services and provide you with information regarding services both in prison and in the community to support you in your rehabilitation.
- The services available to you while you are in prison will vary from prison-to-prison but can include:
  - The Healthcare Service (including The Addiction Service)
  - The Education Service
  - The Work & Training Service
  - The Probation Service
  - The Psychology Service
  - The Chaplaincy Service
  - The Resettlement Service
  - The Training & Employment Service
- The ISM Coordinator works with you and services in the prison to prepare a plan for you to follow in prison.



- The plan will help you set goals for activities, self-development and learning while you are in prison.
- The ISM Coordinator works with you and services in the prison and in the community to prepare a release plan to help you make arrangements to support you on your release.

The release plan will help you with important issues such as accessing accommodation, social welfare supports, or healthcare supports on release.

You can get more information from your Class Officer, ISM Coordinator initially or the Governor.



### **Resettlement Coordinator**

- Prison staff and prison services will help you prepare for your release and reintegration into the community.
- The Resettlement Service is provided to sentenced prisoners serving 3 months or more.
- The Resettlement Service can help you with information and support on:
  - ✓ Accessing accommodation on release
  - ✓ Applying for Social Housing
  - ✓ Applying for Social Welfare Benefits
  - ✓ Applying for a Medical Card
  - ✓ Making contact with other support services in the community
- The Resettlement Service offers at 'through-the-gate' support service and you can link in with your Resettlement Coordinator in the community after your release from prison.

You can get more information from your ISM Coordinator initially or the Governor.

### **Training & Employment Officer (TEO)**

- Prison staff and prison services will help you make the best use of your time in prison, and help you prepare for your release through the Integrated Sentence Management (ISM) process.
- Training and Employment Officers (TEOs) are available in some but not all prisons. Your Class Officer will tell you if you have a TEO in your prison.
- The Training and Employment Service is provided to sentenced prisoners serving more than 1 year.

### **Training & Employment Officer (TEO) - continued**

- The Training & Employment Officer (TEO) will provide you with advice and guidance to identify your training and education needs.
- The Training & Employment Officer (TEO) will help you prepare CVs, and job or work placement applications in preparation for your release.
- The Training & Employment Officer (TEO) will help you make contact with employers.

Ask your Class Officer or ISM Coordinator to refer you to the TEO if there is one available in your prison.

### **Transfer to another Prison**

You can fill out an application form to request to be transferred to another prison for a valid reason, such as to be closer to your family for visits, and to assist in your rehabilitation and rebuilding relationships in society.

The Irish Prison Service may transfer prisoners to another prison for various reasons including for court appearances, for hospital appointments on a temporary basis as well as on a permanent basis for sentence management or safety and security reasons.

A number of factors are taken into account when considering a transfer including your offence, the length of your sentence and the period of time you have served, your medical requirements and your conduct while in prison as well as the number of vacancies available.

If you have any problems understanding these matters tell your Class Officer of your difficulties and they will explain what you need to do.



## Transfer to an Open Centre

If you have a proven track record of good behaviour in a closed prison during your sentence, you can apply to the Governor on the Governor's parade.

Your application will be considered at a Prison Review attended by the Governor, the services and the Operations Directorate.

The Irish Prison Service operates two Open Centres in Shelton Abbey in Co Wicklow and Loughan House in Co Cavan. Prisoners who are trusted to serve their sentence in a centre with minimal supervision and perimeter security. Those prisoners who breach that trust will be returned to a closed prison until their release date.

Prisoners in open prisons may be permitted to take up employment in the community, returning to the prison each evening. Enhanced regimes are available to prisoners in open centres including increased out of cell time and visiting arrangements. If approved you will be transferred when a suitable vacancy is available.

If you are transferred to an Open Centre, you will be expected to engage fully with the organised structured activities in the centre.

(see Section 2 Gratuity or payment).

You can get more information from your Class Officer, ISM Coordinator initially or the Governor.



*The Irish Prison Service two Open Centres  
Shelton Abbey (left) and Loughan House (right)*

## Section 39 Escorted Visits for Specific Reason

Section 39(1) of the Prisons Act 2007 provides that the Minister, and by delegated authority Operations Directorate, may order that a prisoner is granted an escort to be taken to a specified person or place for the following purposes; compassionate grounds or the purpose of assessing suitability for early release, facilitating re-integration into society, or to enable a prisoner to assist in the investigation of an offence.

In cases where temporary release is not considered appropriate an escorted visit may be approved for the same purpose.

You can get more information from the Chief Officer or Governor.

## Temporary release (TR)

TR can be either special short term release from custody for specific events or early release from prison towards the end of your sentence. It is approved by the Irish Prison Service on behalf of the Minister for Justice and Equality.

### Criteria considered for Temporary Release

Before it is decided that you will be granted TR a number of factors may be taken into account including:

- The nature and gravity of the offence to which the sentence being served relates.
- The sentence concerned and any recommendation made by the Court in relation to the sentence imposed.
- The period of the sentence served.
- The potential threat to the safety and security of the public.
- The risk of you failing to return to prison at the expiration of the period of temporary release your conduct while in custody or while previously on temporary release.
- Any report or recommendation made by the Governor, the Garda Síochána, a Probation Officer, or any other person whom the Minister considers may be of assistance in coming to a decision as to whether to grant you temporary release.
- The risk that you might commit an offence during any period of temporary release.

- The risk of you failing to comply with any of the conditions of temporary release.
- The likelihood that a period of temporary release might accelerate your reintegration into society or improve your prospects of obtaining employment.

You can ask your Class Officer or the Governor about temporary release and/or a transfer. If your application for temporary release or a transfer is refused, you are entitled to a written explanation of the decision from the Irish Prison Service, should you request it.

### Temporary Release for Specific Reason

If you are a sentenced prisoner without a remand or trial warrant, you can apply to the Governor for temporary release for a certain reason.

Temporary Release can be granted subject to conditions that must be complied with in full. Breach of these conditions may result in you being returned to prison and may affect other TR applications you may make in the future.

Release can vary from day release, to a specific number of days.

The time and date of return will be clearly understood.

You can get more information from your Class Officer, ISM Coordinator initially or the Governor.

### Temporary Release for Resocialisation Reasons

If you are a sentenced prisoner without a remand or trial warrant, you may apply to the Governor for temporary release for resocialisation reasons.

Temporary Release may be granted subject to conditions that must be complied with in full. Breach of these conditions may result in you being returned to a closed prison and may affect other applications you may make in the future.

Release for resocialisation may be granted initially for day release, for overnight release or for a number of overnights, to lead to Weekly Reviewable Temporary Release.

The time and date of return will be clearly understood.

You can get more information from your Class Officer, ISM Coordinator initially or the Governor.



### Temporary Release for Resocialisation - Community Return Scheme (CRS)

If you are a sentenced prisoner without a remand or trial warrant, serving a sentence of 1-8 years, you may be considered for temporary release to the Community Return Scheme. This is a structured form of temporary release administered in conjunction with the Probation Service. One of the requirements is that you perform community service while on release from prison. Persons serving 1 to 3 years are eligible for consideration after serving half of your remitted sentence, e.g. a person serving one year can be considered after serving 4.5 months in prison. Persons serving over 3 years to 8 years are eligible for consideration once they have served half of their full sentence, e.g., a person serving a 4 year sentence must have 2 years served.

Temporary Release may be granted subject to conditions that must be complied with in full. Breach of these conditions may result in you being returned to a closed prison and may affect other applications you may make in the future.

You can get more information from your Class Officer, ISM Coordinator initially or the Governor.

### Temporary Release for Resocialisation - Community Support Scheme (CSS)

If you are a sentenced prisoner without a remand or trial warrant, serving a sentence greater than 3 months and less than 12 months. You may be considered for release to the community support scheme (CSS).

Temporary Release may be granted subject to conditions that must be complied with in full. Breach of these conditions may result in you being returned to a closed prison and may affect other applications you may make in the future.

Release for Community Return Scheme (CRS) is initially on the basis of weekly Release for Resocialisation (RTR).

Before it is decided that you will be granted any form of temporary release, a number of factors may be taken into account including:

- The nature and gravity of the offence to which the sentence being served relates.
- The sentence concerned and any recommendation made by the Court in relation to the sentence imposed.
- The period of the sentence served.
- The potential threat to the safety and security of the public.

### Temporary Release for Resocialisation - Community Support Scheme (CSS) continued

- The risk of you failing to return to prison at the expiration of the period of temporary release.
- Your conduct while in custody or while previously on temporary release.
- Any report or recommendation made by the Governor, the Garda Síochána, a Probation Officer, or any other person whom the Minister considers may be of assistance in coming to a decision as to whether to grant you temporary release.
- The risk that you might commit an offence during any period of temporary release.
- The risk of you failing to comply with any of the conditions of temporary release.
- The likelihood that a period of temporary release might accelerate your reintegration into society or improve your prospects of obtaining employment.

You can get more information from your Class Officer, ISM Coordinator initially or the Governor.

## Enhanced Remission

Under the Prison Rules if you have engaged in authorised structured activities you may apply to the Minister for enhanced remission of your sentence up to one third. If you wish to apply for enhanced remission you should ask your Class Officer for an application form and a copy of the amended Rule 59 of the 2007 Prison Rules. An application shall not be made earlier than 6 months prior to the date on which you would be released if enhanced remission of one third were to be granted to you. The Minister shall as soon as practicable after verifying the information submitted in your application, make a decision on your application and notify you in writing of the decision.

In deciding your application, whether you are less likely to reoffend and better able to integrate into the community, the Minister will have regard to the following:

- the manner and extent to which the prisoner has engaged constructively in authorised structured activity.
- the manner and extent to which the prisoner has taken steps to address his or offending behaviour.
- the nature and gravity of the offence to which the sentence of imprisonment being served by the prisoner relates.
- the sentence of imprisonment concerned and any recommendations of the court that imposed that sentence in relation there to.

## Enhanced Remission continued

- the period of the sentence served by the prisoner.
- the potential threat to the safety and security of members of the public (including the victim of the offence to which the sentence of imprisonment being served by the prisoner relates) should the prisoner be released from prison.
- any offence of which the prisoner was convicted before being convicted of the offence to which the sentence of imprisonment being served by him or relates.
- the conduct of the prisoner while in custody or during a period of temporary release.
- any report of, or recommendation made by the Governor of the prison, an Garda Síochána, any probation officer or any other person whom the Minister would consider would be of assistance in enabling me to make a decision on an application.

For further details on Enhanced Remission, contact your Class Officer.

## The Parole Board Process

The Board will review (i) cases of eligible prisoners sentenced to 8 years or more but less than 14 years once half of that sentence has been served and (ii) cases of prisoners sentenced to 14 years or more or to a life sentence after 7 years has been served. There are certain categories of prisoners that are not eligible for review by the board including, among others, prisoners serving sentences for:

- Treason or attempted treason.
- Murder or attempted murder of a member of the Gardaí or a Prison Officer.
- Possession of Drugs under subsection 3A and 3B section 27 of the Misuse of Drugs Act, 1977.

The Parole Board reviews the cases of prisoners with longer term sentences and provides advice to the Minister for Justice and Equality in relation to the administration of those sentences.

The Parole Board will review your case if you are sentenced to eight years or more. The board, by way of recommendation to the Minister, advises of your progress to date, the degree to which you have engaged with the various therapeutic services and how best to proceed with the future administration of the sentence. The final decision regarding the recommendations of the Parole Board rests with the Minister, who may accept them in their entirety, in part or reject them. You can speak to your Class Officer or Governor for more information.

## Review Process

The review process which takes around 6 months and involves a number of stages including:

- Referral - The Minister for Justice and Equality refers the cases of eligible prisoners to the Board.
- Invitation to participate - The Board writes to you if your case has been referred to the Board and invites you to be involved in the review process. You must say if you wish to participate in the process.
- Assembling a Review File - The Review File includes a number of reports from relevant agencies such as the Governor, the Probation Service, the Psychology Service, the local Prison Review committee and the Gardaí.
- Disclosure of the Review File - The Review File is sent to you and you may send written comments on its content and send any further information that you feel the Board should have.
- Interview – The interview allows you to talk to the Parole Board in person and allows the Board members to discuss the contents of the Review File with you. Following the interview a written report is prepared. Board Meeting The Parole board meets regularly to discuss cases and to formulate recommendations to the Minister.

## Repatriation to another country

Should you wish to transfer to a prison in another country you should discuss the matter with the Governor. The relevant Acts are “The Transfer of Sentenced Persons Act 1995 and the Transfer of Sentenced Persons (Amendment) Act 1997”, allows for prisoners from certain other countries, serving sentences in Ireland to apply to serve the remainder of their sentence in their own country.

For a transfer to take place there must be a three-way agreement, meaning you must agree and the prison authorities both in Ireland and the country you wish to transfer to, must also agree.  
No one is entitled to a transfer under this law.

## NOTES



## Section 4 - Incentivised Regimes and Constructive Activities

The Irish Prison Service allows for on average seven and a half hours per day out of cell time. One of the best things you can do for yourself while you are in prison is take part in structured activities such as education or work and training. Taking part in structured activity including work, training, education or programmes will be a help to you when you are released from prison.

### The Incentivised Regimes Programme

- The Incentivised Regimes Programme is a programme to encourage you to make the most of your time while in prison.
- The programme offers incentives for:
  - Maintaining good behaviour;
  - Following the prison rules;
  - Showing respect to others;
  - Getting involved in activities while in prison that will help you on release.
- The incentives available are called 'privileges'.
- The privileges are different for each prison and different for each level you achieve on the programme;
- Everyone starts the programme at 'Standard' level.

### The Incentivised Regimes Programme continued

- You can progress to 'Enhanced' level if you are attending activities at least 5 times in a week, and if you are of good behaviour for at least 8 weeks;
- The extra privileges available for people who achieve 'Enhanced' level include: additional money in your gratuity account, additional phone calls, and additional visit times.
- There are other privileges given to people who achieve 'Enhanced' level, such as access to games consoles or more open landings.
- The privileges available are different in each prison and you can ask your class officer for a list of the privileges available in your prison;
- You can be put back to 'Basic' level because of your involvement in activities or because of your poor behaviour.
- If you are moved back to 'Basic' level you may have privileges taken away. This will mean you may have less money in your gratuity account, less phone calls and less visits.
- Your class officer can help you work towards 'Enhanced' level. Your class officer can ask the ISM Coordinator to help you look at activities that might help or interest you while you are in prison.

### The Incentivised Regimes Programme continued

- Your class officer keeps a record of your behaviour and activities daily.
- At the end of the week the class officer will mark the week as 'Acceptable' or 'Unacceptable'.
- Your level will be reviewed every 56 days if you are on 'standard' or 'enhanced' and every 28 days if you are on 'basic'.
- Your class officer will make a recommendation to the Assistant Chief Officer about what level you should have.
- The Assistant Chief Officer will look at the record of your behaviour and the record of your attendance at activities and make a recommendation to the Chief Officer.
- The Chief Officer will look at the record of your behaviour and the record of your attendance at activities. The Chief Officer, Assistant Chief Officer and Class Officer will speak to the other services in the prison about your participation in activities and your behaviour while participating in those activities;
- The Chief Officer will then take a decision regarding the level you are to be placed on.
- If you are moved down a level you can appeal this decision in writing for up to 5 days after the decision.

### The Incentivised Regimes Programme continued

- If you appeal the decision, an Assistant Governor will look at your record of behaviour, your record of attendance at activities and discuss your behaviour and attendance with services and officers.
- The Assistant Governor will then make a decision to put you back to the higher level or, agree with the decision to move you down to the lower level.
- The Assistant Chief Officer may give you a warning if your behaviour is slipping or you are not attending enough activities. This is called a 'Formal Warning'. This warning gives you time to change your behaviour or attendance before being moved down to a lower level.

For more information talk to your Class Officer/Assistant Chief Officer/Chief Officer/Governor.

## Privileges

Each Prison will be required to provide a standard set of core privileges and Governors may provide different additional privileges in accordance with local possibilities. The list of available additional privileges is likely to vary between prisons and within different areas of a prison, depending on the operational and infrastructure requirements of each prison.

	Basic IR Level	Standard IR Level	Enhanced IR Level
<b><u>Gratuity</u></b>			
	€0.95 per day	€1.70 per day	€2.20 per day
<b><u>Visits</u></b>			
Visits per week <b>(Sentenced)</b>	1 X (30 min slot)	2 X (30 min slots) can be taken as one 1 hour visit	4 X (30 min slots) - to the max of two visits, can be taken as two 1 hour visits
Visits per week <b>(Remand)</b>	5	5	5
Visits – approved names	12	12	12
Family visits	Not eligible	Eligible	Priority
<b><u>Phone Calls</u></b>			
Personal Phone calls <b>(Sentenced)</b> <i>Duration of each call – 6 Minutes</i>	3 per week (1 per day)	7 per week (1 per day)	14 per week ( 2 per day)
Personal Phone calls <b>(Remand)</b> <i>Duration of each call – 6 Minutes</i>	5 per week (1 per day)	7 per week (1 per day)	14 per week ( 2 per day)
Phone calls – names on cards	6 (including solicitor)	10 (including solicitor)	12 (including solicitor)
Calls to Legal Representative	7 per week (1 per day)	7 per week (1 per day)	7 per week (1 per day)

## Structured Activities

As previously mentioned one of the best things you can do for yourself while you are in prison is take part in structured activities such as education or work and training. Keeping busy is a good way to pass the day. As mentioned above taking part in structured activities could result in a better quality of life for you after your release but also mean you receiving extra privileges while in custody.

There are a number of activities available to you in prison including:

### Education

Education Centres are available at all institutions and offer a wide range of classes and courses suited to students of every level of ability.





You can ask the Class Officer on your landing or ask to speak to the Head Teacher for full details of the courses and subject available in your institution. Subjects may include literacy (reading and writing), maths, art, addiction studies, business, computers, crafts, cooking, English, Irish, history, geography, health education, music, parenting skills, physical education, pre-release course. You may be interviewed by the Head Teacher within days of committal to the prison. The interview may include questions about your previous education and exams, certificates and training you have previously done, any literacy difficulties and is English your first language.

Junior and Leaving Certificate courses are available in some but not all Education Centres but increasing numbers of people in custody do QQI (Quality Qualification Ireland) courses which you may find are more flexible and have multiple entry and exit points.

QQI accreditation is widely used with assessment by folders compilation and you can continue with further modules on release. Some of the QQI modules available may include the following preparation for work, food & cookery, communications, stress management, health related fitness, personal & interpersonal skills.

Also subject to certain educational attainment and after studying and engaging in education within prison environment for a year, you may apply to complete a suitable Open University course.

To summarise

Subjects that can be studied include literacy (reading, spelling and writing), maths, art, addiction studies, business, computers, crafts, cooking, English, Irish, history, geography, health education, music, parenting skills, physical education, pre-release course.

QQI courses are available including – preparation for work, QQI – career information, QQI – food & cookery, QQI – communications, QQI – stress management, QQI – maths, QQI – health related fitness, QQI – personal & interpersonal skills, QQI – Irish, QQI – science and QQI – self-advocacy.

You can do the junior certificate, leaving certificate or an open university course. By doing a QQI courses you can then continue with further modules after your release.

### **Library**

There is a library available in all prisons and you are encouraged to borrow books and library materials.

## Work and Training

Training activities are chosen to give you as much employment as possible while you are in prison and also to give you the opportunity to learn new skills which will help you get a job on your release. You will be interviewed for work as soon as possible after committal. Your working history and plans for the future will be noted and if possible your preference will be taken into account. Interviews take place daily and if you wish to change your activity, you may do so by applying through your current Work and Training Officer or through the Chief Officer Work and Training. A wide range of training workshops operate within the institutions including the following:

**Laundry**

**Industrial Cleaning**

**Carpentry**

**Building Skills**

**Waste Management**

**Computers**

**Fabric**

**Paint and light Maintenance**

**Catering**

**Horticulture**

**Construction**

**Metalwork**

**Industrial Skills**

**Print**

**Framing**

Recognised accreditation (such as City and Guilds) is available for many of the skills that are offered in the workshops. The Governor or the Chief Officer Work & Training will be able to give you details of the training available in your prison. To participate in work and training you should talk to the Chief Officer Work Training in your prison.

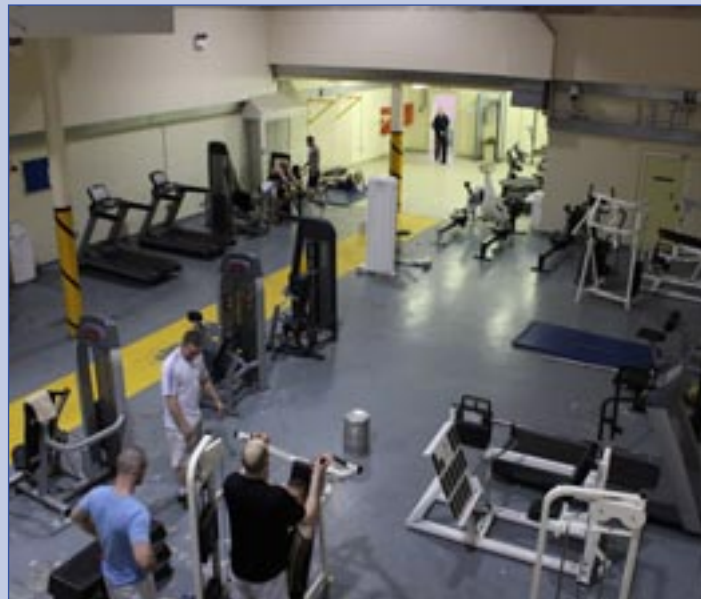


## Recreation

Recreational facilities are available to all inmates every day and at weekends. Recreational facilities and activities include football, table tennis, pool and television. All prisoners have regular access to exercise both indoor and outdoor.

### The facilities available to you are:

**Gym,** there are significant benefits from using the gym. Physical education affords you the opportunity to take control of your physical well-being. Prisons have large sports halls and gymnasiums staffed by trained gym instructors who are available to help you with training. Your Class Officer will be able to advise you on the times that you can use the gym.



### Exercise Yards

Daily exercise is permitted in the yards weather permitting. Most prison wings have separate yards.

### In Cell activities

Certain activities may be allowed in your cell. Normally these include drawing, painting and similar hobbies, word games and handicraft work. You may also play music or musical instruments however, you should be mindful if you are sharing a cell with others.



## Section 5 - Discipline, Complaints and Appeals



### ***Breaches of Prison Discipline, Stage 1 Being Placed on Report (P19 Form)***

All Prisoners while in custody must behave properly and have respect for other people and prison property.

How you behave in prison is described in the Prison Rules. Breaking of the Prison Rules includes amongst other things:

- Not following orders.
- Disrespecting the Governor, any prison officer, prisoner, visitor or any other person.
- Preparing or consuming intoxicating liquor or substance, controlled or medicinal product.
- Assaulting any person.
- Intentionally obstructing a prison officer in the execution of their duties.
- Damaging prison property.
- Having possession of any banned or dangerous article.
- Refusing to be searched.

If you are placed on report (P19 form) by an officer, a disciplinary process will follow with a formal hearing within 7 days. Punishments may be imposed on you if you are found to have broken prison discipline rules. If you are unclear about what is expected of you, ask your Class Officer.

### **Breaches of Prison Discipline, Stage 2 Disciplinary Hearing**

If a Prisoner has been placed on P19, a Disciplinary Hearing may be held within 7 days. You will be notified in writing and you have the right to attend the hearing. You will be told the specific rule you have broken. You may reply to the allegation made against you and you may question, through the Governor, any witness. You may also make “a plea in defending yourself” to the Governor before he/she gives a penalty meaning you may try to explain your actions so that the penalty given by the Governor is appropriate. If the Governor finds you guilty s/he will decide whether you should receive a sanction. If you are unclear about how the disciplinary process works, ask your Class Officer.

### **Breaches of Prison Discipline, Stage 3 Sanctions**

If a prisoner has been found to have broken the prisoner rules by a Governor after an enquiry you should be aware that any breach of prison discipline is considered serious and if you are found guilty, at the disciplinary hearing, the Governor may give you a caution or reprimand you for your behaviour. In addition, there are also a number of actions or sanctions which the Governor may choose to impose which may result in you not being allowed to do certain things or losing certain privileges including:



- Taking part in certain activities or recreation
- Have an ordinary visit\*
- Use money, credit or other facilities such as telephones\*
- Receive letters\*
- Wear your own clothes

#### **You may also**

- Lose some of your daily gratuity
- Lose up to 14 days remission

*\* Family visits, phone calls or letters or contact from or with certain named bodies such as the Inspector of Prison, the Doctor, the Visiting Committee and the CPT (among others) will not be prevented under sanctions.*

The sanction imposed, if any, will match the seriousness of the breach of discipline. You will not lose the right to communicate with your family. If you are unclear about how the disciplinary process operates, ask your Class Officer.

#### **Appeal of a Disciplinary Sanction**

A prisoner who has received a sanction from the Governor as a result of a disciplinary hearing. If you are found guilty of a breach of prison discipline you may appeal to the Minister on the finding or the sanction, and the Minister, following consultation with the

Governor, may affirm, alter, suspend or revoke the sanction imposed. If you are unclear about how the disciplinary process operates, ask your Class Officer.

#### **How to Appeal a Disciplinary Sanction in the case where you lose remission**

Remission applies to almost all prisoners except those who are (1) serving a Life Sentence, (2) in prison for not paying a debt, (3) in prison for contempt of court. The Prison Rules state that you are entitled to remission at a rate of 25%. The Governor can reduce your remission for up to 14 days for each breach of prison discipline. If after losing remission your behaviour improves and you do not break the rules again, the Governor may give you back your lost remission. If you lose remission you can appeal the decision. You may appeal to the Minister for Justice and Equality. This must be done within 7 days of knowing that you have lost remission. You may also appeal to an Appeals Tribunal through the Governor. This is an independent legal person who will hear your appeal and make a decision. You can apply to be legally represented at such an appeal. If your appeal is unsuccessful, the Governor will not be able to restore your remission at any time.

Should you wish to appeal lost remission to the Appeals Tribunal you should inform the Governor who will inform the Prison Service who will make arrangements to organise a hearing. If you are unclear about how the disciplinary process operates, ask your Class Officer.

### Close Supervision Cell

You may be placed in a Close Supervision Cell if you represent a threat to your own safety or that of another person. Once the Governor is satisfied that you no longer pose a threat to yourself, other prisoners or the security of the prison you will be returned to your cell. Behaviour that would result in you being moved to the Close Supervision Cell may result in disciplinary action. If you are unclear about how the disciplinary process operates, ask your Class Officer.



### Making a Complaint

A Prisoner who wishes to make a complaint.

You have the right to make a complaint at any time and all complaints are treated with the utmost seriousness. You should feel free to make a complaint or bring any issue of concern to the attention of the Governors, Chief Officers or any member of staff at all times.

Complaints can vary in nature. Some may relate to, for example, conditions of your cell or quality of food, access to the tuck shop or complaints about access to the phone or visits. Other complaints can be more serious such as claims of assault, mistreatment or intimidation. All complaints will be treated as serious and will be investigated.

Under the Prison Service Complaints System there are two categories of complaints depending on the seriousness of your complaint.

The most serious complaints (Category A Complaints) are investigated by persons outside of the Prison Service. If you wish to make a complaint you may do so to any staff member either verbally or in writing.

Complaint forms are available at the complaint boxes throughout the prison. You will be kept informed about the investigation into your complaint.

If you are not happy with the response to your complaint, you have the right to appeal and have your complaint considered by someone at a level, more senior than the person who provided the response to your original complaint.

If your complaint is a Category A complaint and you are not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation you may write to the Inspector of Prisons and the Director General of the Irish Prison Service stating why you are not satisfied. If you are unclear about how the disciplinary process operates, ask your Class Officer.



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### **Correspondence to Other Bodies Rule 44**

A Prisoner who wishes to raise an issue of concern to a party / body external to the Irish Prison Service.

You have a number of other options open to you if you wish to raise an issue of concern, such as the Prison Visiting Committee, the Gardaí, the Prison Chaplain, the Prison Doctor, the Minister and the Courts. You may also request to meet with officials from Irish Prison Service Headquarters to discuss any issue of concern. The officer of the Minister can make a recommendation to the Governor or bring the complaint to the attention of the Governor for him or her to deal with. If you are unclear about how the disciplinary process operates, ask your Class Officer.

### **A Prisoner who wishes to correspond with confidentially.**

#### **Sending and Receiving Mail**

You are entitled to send and receive letters from family or friends or letters regarding your legal or business affairs. You are in addition, entitled to send a letter to, or receive a letter from one or more of the following bodies or persons:

- (a) Your legal adviser,
- (b) A member of the Prison Visiting Committee,
- (c) The Minister,
- (d) The Chief Justice, the President of the High Court, The President of the Circuit Court, the President of the District Court or the Presiding Judge of the Special Criminal Court,

- (e) The European Court of Human Rights,
- (f) The European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, known as CPT,
- (g) The Parole Board,
- (h) The Inspector of Prisons,
- (i) The Irish Human Rights Commission,
- (j) The International Committee of the Red Cross.

A letter other than a letter to the authorities listed above may be opened and examined by the Governor. Under Rule 44 of the Prison Rules, a letter sent to you from any of the previous mentioned authorities. If you are unclear about how the disciplinary process operates, ask your Class Officer.

### **The Prison Visiting Committee**

The role of Prison Visiting Committee is to visit at frequent intervals the prison to which they are appointed and hear any complaints which may be made to them by any prisoner. They report to the Minister for Justice & Equality any issues observed or found by them in the prison. The Visiting Committee members have free access either collectively or individually to every part



VISITING COMMITTEE  
MIDLANDS PRISON  
ANNUAL REPORT 2018

of their prison. A Visiting Committee is appointed to each prison under the Prisons (Visiting Committees) Act, 1925 and Prisons (Visiting Committees) Order, 1925. Members of the 12 Visiting Committees are appointed by the Minister for a term not exceeding three years. For more information ask your Class Officer.

### **The Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment**

The Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT), which operates under the rules of the Council of Europe, was established under the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment in 1987. The committee is composed of lawyers, medical doctors, prison experts, parliamentarians, etc. from the member states and carries out its task by periodic and ad hoc visits. During these visits, the committee has the right to access any location at any time of the day or night to any place where persons are detained, whether it be a prison, a Garda station or a mental hospital, and are entitled to speak in private to any detained person. If you are unclear about how the disciplinary process operates, ask your Governor.

Contact Details:

**Secretariat of the CPT  
Human Rights Building  
Council of Europe  
F-67075 Strasbourg**

### **The Office of the Inspector of Prisons**

You may bring any issues of concern to the attention of the Office of the Inspector of Prisons. While the Inspector does not investigate prisoner complaints they have an oversight role in relation to all complaints which means they can discuss the complaint with the Governor of the Prison. The Inspector can also investigate any issue they wish, if they are not satisfied with the investigation into a particular complaint. If you are unclear about how the disciplinary process operates, ask your Class Officer.

You can write to the Inspector at:

**The Office of the Inspector of Prisons  
24 Cecil Walk  
Kenyon Street  
Nenagh  
Co. Tipperary**

## Section 6 - Security, Drugs and Contraband

### Daily Security Cell Searches

For security reasons the Class Officer may check your cell on a daily basis. This can feel intrusive, but it is necessary to keep the prison safe for everyone. Staff will carry out these searches in an efficient way so that you can resume your activities. Staff will respect your belongings and leave your cell just as it was before the search.

### BOSS Chair

All prisoners entering or leaving a prison are searched. You will also be subject to screening by the BOSS Chair. The BOSS Chair is a highly sensitive metal detector which can detect items such as mobile phones which may be concealed internally.



### Screening

All persons entering prisons are subject to airport style walk through detectors. In addition, x ray scanners are also provided to all closed prisons and all handbags, briefcases, packages, coats etc. are subject to scanning. In addition a Drug Detection Dog Unit is established and anyone entering a prison may be screened by a drug dog prior to entry to a prison. If you are unclear about how the disciplinary process operates, ask your Class Officer. For people visiting you in prison, they can ring the prison or check on the website [www.irishprisons.ie](http://www.irishprisons.ie) for details.

### **Prohibited and Restricted Articles of Contraband**

All Prisoners entering a prison will be deemed to be in possession of contraband. If you have in your possession any prohibited article or material for which permission has not been granted or which has been received in an unlawful way. Types of contraband include, but are not limited to Drugs, alcohol, weapons, mobile phones, sim cards and cameras. You may not receive anything from a person outside the prison without the permission of the Governor. Staff may search your cell at any time if the Governor is of the opinion that such searches are necessary to ensure the maintenance or good order and safe and secure custody.

### **Fire and Emergency/Fire Drill/Incident/ Accident or Emergency**

In the event of a fire, fire drill or in the event of an incident, accident or other emergency please obey the instructions of the officer in charge of the unit/area who will lead you to a place of safety. Staff are trained in Fire and Emergency procedures and have specialist equipment in the event they need to remove you from your cell.

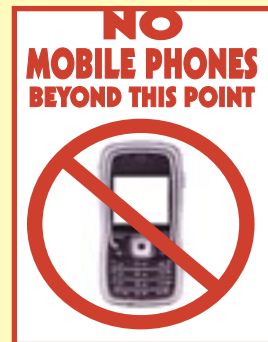


### **In Cell call and Sprinkler Systems**

All cells have a cell call system so that assistance from staff may be requested particularly in the case of injury or illness. Your Class Officer will show you how to use it. Some cells may also have a sprinkler system/fire detection system in place for your own protection in the event of a fire. You should not interfere with this life saving equipment.

### **Mobile Phones**

It is an offence for you to have a mobile phone in prison without the Governor's permission. If you are caught with a mobile phone you will be subject to disciplinary proceedings and you may be charged with an offence by the Gardaí. This could result in a further period of imprisonment or a fine.



### **Restricted items**

You may be given permission to have certain items with you, or in your cell, such as electronic equipment, razors (issued by prisons) or your medication. If you are found with a prohibited items it will be seized and may be forfeited. You may be subject to disciplinary action and charged with an offence under the Prison Rules. If you are unclear about how the disciplinary process operates, ask your Class Officer.

## Section 7 - Services for Prisoners

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### Healthcare Services

There are various services available to you while you are in prison, including healthcare/medical services. Healthcare services are provided in prison on an equivalent basis to that available to those with medical cards in the community. It is important to note that the prison service will require your consent to release any information to any person outside of the prison healthcare teams, as your healthcare information is confidential and private. Prison healthcare services include primary care, addiction services, mental health services, dental services, optical and chiropody as well as addiction counselling services. In some prisons, specialists from the HSE will attend the prison to provide additional addiction or other services. There are no in-patient beds in the prison system and if you require in-patient treatment you will be transferred to the relevant hospital. Healthcare services within the prison are delivered by a team of professionals, who all meet regularly to provide the best care for you. Regular meetings are held to ensure that you are provided with the care and treatment you require. All information given to healthcare staff is confidential and is recorded electronically on the prison healthcare record system, PHMS (Prisoners Health Management System) . This information can only be accessed by healthcare staff and will not be discussed with others in the prison without your consent. In addition, no medical information relating to you will be requested from the community healthcare services without your consent and none of your information will be shared with the community services without your written consent. None of your healthcare information can be shared with your family or legal representatives without your consent. You can talk to your Class Officer, Nurse or any staff member about any services which you might need. Where can I get more information, contact your Chief Nurse Officer or Nurse Officer.

The Healthcare Services in prisons are provided by doctors, dentists, nurses and pharmacists. The services of psychiatrists, opticians and chiropodist are provided as necessary.

If you have any concerns about your health, you should ask to speak with one of the nurses and they can arrange for you to be seen by the appropriate healthcare person.

### Health services available in the prison include:

Primary care (GP services)

Chronic Diseases Management for conditions such as asthma, cardiac disease, diabetes

Mental Health/Psychiatric services

Dental services

Chiropody services

Optical services

Addiction treatment services

Vaccination services

Blood Screening, including Sexually Transmitted Diseases testing and treatment

Smoking cessation

Wound care

Addiction Counselling

Where can I get more information, contact your Chief Nurse Officer/Divisional Nurse.



### **Committal Exam**

All persons committed to prison are seen by a nurse within hours of committal. This is to see what healthcare requirement you may have and begin to plan any follow up care that might be necessary. The next morning you will be seen by the prison doctor for a full examination. In order that the doctor and healthcare staff can fully assess your healthcare needs, it is important that you tell them if you are suffering from any illness or injury, are undergoing any medical treatment or taking any prescribed medication. It is also really important that you let the healthcare staff know if you are, or have ever, suffered with a mental health problem such as anxiety, depression or other illness.

In order to best meet your healthcare needs you should advise the doctor if you suffer from any disabilities such as deafness, sight impairment or other condition that would require special attention. You should also inform him/her if you have any addiction issues such as addiction to alcohol or drugs. If you have been prescribed methadone or any other substitution treatment in the community, you should tell the nurse at the time of your committal so that arrangements can be made for your treatment to be continued, if appropriate, by the prison doctor. To ensure continuity of care, it is important that you advise healthcare staff if you have any medical appointments outside the prison so that appropriate follow up can be put in place.



### **Release Planning**

In planning for your release from prison, the healthcare team will make contact with the appropriate community services to ensure that you can link with the necessary health services on your release. This will require us to seek your consent to discuss your future care with these services. For those serving a sentence, when you are close to your release date (expiration or full TR), you can make an application for an emergency medical card, with the assistance of the ISM/Resettlement Coordinator. If you are eligible, a card will be issued to you at the prison on the day of release. This card will be valid for 6 months and the HSE will contact you to review this card 3 months after your release date.

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## Medication

On committal, if you have been taking medication prescribed for you in the community, the doctor will review this medication and may continue the same medication, or may change to another, more suitable, medication while you are in prison. The use of certain medication in prison presents many challenges, such as the potential for misuse, diversion, bullying etc. so these issues need to be considered in relation to the prescribing of these medications, to maintain the safety of the patient and the prison environment. Therefore, while the prison doctor will prescribe the required medication for you, this does not mean that the doctor will necessarily prescribe the same medication that you were prescribed in the community. Misusing a prescribed medication, misusing multiple medications or using illicit drugs increases the potential risk of harm that could be caused to you through overdose and interactions. All medication prescribed for you while in prison will be dispensed by a pharmacist, on an individual patient basis. In certain cases, following a risk assessment by the healthcare team, you may be offered the privilege of holding your own weekly supply of medication and being responsible for the safe storage and management of this medication. This is referred to as holding medication “In-possession”. Any questions you may have about your medication can be answered by the healthcare team (doctor, nurse or pharmacist).

## Safety Observation Cell

Safety observation Cells (SOC) are available in all prisons. Should a doctor or nurse feel that it is in your best interest, for medical

reasons, they may advise to move you to a SOC. Your placement in a SOC can only be authorised by the Governor. The healthcare staff will advise when you are fit to return to your normal accommodation.



## Chaplains and Religion

The Chaplains are responsible for the pastoral and spiritual care of the entire prison population. You may speak privately to a Chaplain about any issue that may be of concern to you. On a day to day basis Chaplains visit prisoners in all parts of the prison. They also spend time with people at times of bereavement and loss and liaise with families through phone calls, meetings and home visits.

**Irish Red Cross**  
Crois Dhearg na hÉireann

**Want to be a  
Red Cross  
Volunteer?**

**contact:**

**The Head  
Teacher**

\* You need to have a minimum of 8  
months left on your sentence

Lois O'Leary  
ETB

Irish Prison Service

Irish Red Cross

### The Probation Service

Probation Officers also work in all of the prisons and places of detention. Our work in custody includes advising and assisting prisoners with issues which have led to their offending behaviour and principally in coping with the impact of imprisonment.



### Their work involves:

- Motivating offenders to use the period of imprisonment to address his/her offending behaviour.
- Contributing to the through care process where the offender will be subject to supervision by the Probation Service post release.
- Helping prisoners, their families and social supports in preparing for positive re-settlement in the community.
- Providing assessments and reports to the Department of Justice and Equality, Irish Prison Service, Parole Board and other appropriate bodies as required. Further details on Probation's work with prisoners.
- Contributing to multi-disciplinary working in prisons, for effective sentence management and delivery of services.
- Co-ordinating and assisting community based bodies in the provision of services to prisoners, their families and communities, aimed at reducing offending and assisting prisoners' resettlement within the community; The Probation Officer who can give you further details on Probation Service work in prisons and places of detention.



### **Listener Scheme**

The Listener Scheme is a peer support scheme whereby selected prisoners are trained and supported by Samaritans, using their same guidelines, to listen, in complete confidence to their fellow prisoners who may be experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those which may lead to suicide. The objectives of the scheme are to assist in reducing the number of self-inflicted deaths, reducing self-harm and helping to alleviate the feelings of those in distress. Samaritan volunteers select and train prisoners that have expressed an interest in becoming a Listener and have been cleared by the prison's Security team.

The policy of confidentiality for Listeners is the same as for Samaritans volunteers. This is vital in encouraging prisoners at risk of taking their own life to use the service. Even after a Listener has left prison, their work as a Listener must remain completely confidential. Should you need to contact a Listener you should contact any member of staff, your Class Officer or see their information on the notice board.

Alcoholics (AA), Gamblers (GA) & Narcotics Anonymous (NA) group meetings are organised locally in prisons. You can ask your Class Officer for details of these meeting in your prison. There are arrange of community based organisations who provide in-reach services to prisons. If you were involved with a community organisation prior to your incarceration and wish to make contact with your keyworker in this organisation, you can do so through your class officer, Governor or ISM Co-ordinator or Probation officer.

## Section 8 - Prisoners contact with the Outside community

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Keeping contact and maintaining relationships with your family and friends while in prison is important. Every effort will be made to help you to meet with and talk to your family and friends.

### Visits

If you are a sentenced prisoner you are entitled to at least one visit per week. If you are a remand prisoner you are entitled to one 15 minute visit per day, six days a week, where practicable, but on not less than three days a week. Additional or longer visits may be granted where circumstances permit at the Governor's discretion. You can also apply to the Governor for a special, visit or family visit. The number of visits you get is dependent on your regime level (*See Section 4: Incentivised Regimes*) Prisoners may nominate up to eight visitors and can request changes once per month.



### Booked visits

The Irish Prison Service is committed to making visiting a prison as easy as possible for visitors. All visitors to closed prisons must book their visit in advance and provide identification on each visit. Any person entering a prison to visit you must make an appointment in advance providing specific personal details in order to gain admittance to the prison. These include the visitor name, address, date of birth, prisoner being visited, relationship of prisoner to visitor and date of visit.

Photographic identification will be required from the visitor on arrival. All details are recorded on the electronic system. This procedure also applies for professional visitors.

There is no automatic right to an open visit and the Governor may insist on screened visits on occasions for security reasons. Reasons why screened visits may be applied include previous attempts to retrieve contraband, evidence of drug misuse, previous attempts by the visitor to pass contraband and / or positive indications on the visitor by the drug dogs. These triggers could reasonably lead the Governor to believe there would be a risk in relation to contraband if an open visit were to take place.

### Professional visits

You may receive a visit from your legal adviser or person approved by your legal advisor at any reasonable time for the purposes of consulting on legal matters or matters relating to proceedings

before the courts. These visits shall take place within the view but out of the hearing of a prison officer unless you or your visitor requests otherwise. Professional visits must be booked in advance in accordance with the booked visit system.

### **Telephone Calls**

You are allowed to communicate with members of your family and friends by means of telephone calls. Under the Prison Rules if you are serving a sentence you are entitled to at least one telephone call per week and if you are on remand you are entitled to at least five telephone calls per week. You are also entitled to contact your legal representative and the Samaritans. The number of telephone calls you get is dependent on your regime level (see Section 4: Incentivised Regimes).

### **Prisoner Telephone System**

Prisons have a telephone system which has pre-entered phone numbers and is accessed by using a PIN number. You will be given a form to complete on which you should include the names and phone numbers of the persons you wish to be able to contact by telephone. You should give the completed form to your Class Officer.

Once the contact numbers have been checked and approved you will receive your phone card and PIN. The first number on the phone card will be your solicitor. The number of contacts you can

add to your phone card is dependent on your regime level (see Section 4 Incentivised Regimes). Your Class Officer will explain how to use the system.

### **ALL CALLS (Except SAMARITANS & SOLICITORS) WILL BE MONITORED AND RECORDED.**

Any abuse of the phone system will result in the loss of privilege of phone calls. Do not give your PIN to anyone else. If you lose or forget your PIN number inform your Class Officer and they will re-issue another one to you. You can change one personal phone number per month. Change of number forms will be available from your Class Officer on the last day of each month only. Changes may take up to one week to take effect.

## Section 9 - Independent Monitoring, Voting & Media

### Office of the Inspector of Prisons

The Office of the Inspector of Prisons is a statutory, independent office established under the Prisons Act, 2007.

The key role assigned to the Inspector is to carry out regular inspections of the 12 Prisons and Places of Detention in the State and to present their report(s) on each institution visited as well as an Annual Report to the Minister for Justice and Equality. The Minister publishes the Annual Report and reports on visits to prisons. The Minister may omit any matter from the Inspector's reports where there are of the opinion that a matter may adversely impact on the security of the prison or of the State, or after consultation with the Secretary General of the Government that disclosure of the matter would not be in the public interest or may infringe the constitutional rights of any person. Where matters are omitted, the Minister is required to attach a statement to that effect to the report concerned.

Under Section 31 of the Act the Inspector of Prisons is obliged to carry out regular inspections of prisons and for this purpose may:

- (a) At any time enter any prison or any part of a prison.
- (b) Request and obtain from the Governor a copy of any books, records, other documents or extracts from such documents, and.
- (c) In the course of an inspection or arising out of an inspection bring any issues of concern to the notice of the governor of the prison concerned, the Director General of the Irish Prison Service or the Minister as the Inspector considers appropriate.

The Inspector may, and shall if so requested by the Minister, investigate any matter arising out of the management or operation of a prison and shall submit to the Minister a report on any such investigation. The Inspector of Prisons investigates the deaths of prisoners in custody. Such independent investigations will apply to prisoners who are in the custody of the Irish Prison Service, whether or not the death actually occurs within the prison walls, and to prisoners who have recently been let out on temporary release. The Inspector of Prisons has oversight of the new Prisoner Complaints Procedure. Governors, prison officers, other persons employed in prisons and prisoners, shall as far as reasonably practicable, comply with any request for information that the Inspector may make in the performance of his or her functions.

Rule 44 entitles a prisoner to confidently send a letter to or receive a letter from an number of persons or bodies, one of which is the Inspector of Prisons. A prisoner letter to the Inspector must be sent to the Inspector without delay and shall not be opened before it is sent to her. A letter from the Inspector to a prisoner must be given to him/her without delay and must not be examined to any greater extent than is necessary to determine that it is such a letter. If any letter from the Inspector to a prisoner is to be examined it must only be opened in the presence of the prisoner to whom it is addressed. It should be noted that the Inspector has no statutory authority to address individual complaints, but they may examine the circumstances relating to the complaint where necessary for performing their inspections.



Copies of all Reports from the Inspector of Prisons are available from the Prison Libraries or at [www.inspectorofprisons.gov.ie](http://www.inspectorofprisons.gov.ie)

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**Contact Details**

The Inspectorate can be contacted by post at:

**Office of the Inspector of Prisons  
24 Cecil Walk,  
Kenyon Street,  
Nenagh,  
Co. Tipperary**

**Voting**

You may vote from prison via a postal vote. The IPS has made considerable efforts to facilitate prisoner voting, but the fact remains that you are responsible for ensuring that you are registered on the appropriate voters list and therefore eligible to cast your vote. If you are eligible to vote and you wish to avail of this postal voting facility you must complete a form called Form RFG 1. If you are not already on the register, you can apply to be included on the supplementary register. In these circumstances, you should also complete (as well as the above Form) the Form RFA, or Form RFA4. Each postal list only lasts for one year. You must renew your application every year. Application forms are available in all prisons. For further information on voting contact you Class Officer or the appointed Voting Officer in your prison.

**Media**

Any requests for contact with a member of the media should be done so in writing to the Governor who will in turn refer the request to the Irish Prison Service for consideration. Your request should state the reason why you want to contact a media person. Prisoners do not have an automatic right for access to the media however; all requests will be considered on a case by case basis. Should you be contacted by a member of the media you should inform your Class Officer or the Governor. Members of the media wishing to make contact with prisoners should do so through the Irish Prison Service Press Office.

**Prison Visiting Committee**

The function of Visiting Committees is to visit, at frequent intervals, the prison to which they are appointed and The Visiting Committee reports to the Minister any abuses observed or found by them in the prison and any repairs which they think may be urgently needed. The Visiting Committee has free access, either collectively or individually, to every part of their prison. In inspecting prisons, the Visiting Committees focus on issues such as the quality of accommodation and the catering, medical, educational and welfare services and recreational facilities.

You can talk to the visiting committee when they visit the prison or if you wish to contact the Visiting Committee, you can do so by submitting a letter to the Governor.

Your letter will not be opened by the Governor or any other prison staff. The visiting committee will then discuss the matter with the prison governor on your behalf.



## HOW THE PRESS OMBUDSMAN CAN ASSIST PRISONERS

The Code of Practice of the Press Council of Ireland contains ten Principles. The Code states, among other things, that member publications must strive for truth and accuracy (Principle 1)

- cannot publish comment or rumour as if it were fact (Principle 2)
- should not obtain information through misrepresentation, subterfuge or harassment, unless justified in the public interest (Principle 3)
- must respect the private family life and home of everyone (Principle 5.3)
- must strive to ensure that court reports are fair and accurate (Principle 7)

A complaint to the Office of the Press Ombudsman must present evidence that a member publication may have breached one or more of the Principles of the Code of Practice. Member publications include:

- All daily and Sunday newspapers published in the Republic of Ireland
- The majority of local newspapers
- Many Irish-published magazines
- Some online news publications
- The associated digital outlets of member publications

**All information in relation to a complaint must be received within three months of publication of the article, or of the behaviour of a journalist taking place.**

## How to make a complaint

You, or somebody you have nominated to act on your behalf, must first complain in writing to the editor of the publication. You should mark your complaint “Confidential – not for publication”. It is very important that you address the complaint to the editor.

If, within two weeks from the date of your complaint to the editor, you do not receive a reply, or you are dissatisfied with the reply you have received, you can then complain in writing to the Office of the Press Ombudsman. You should let Press Ombudsman have a copy of the article, a copy of your correspondence with the editor and an outline of how and why you believe the article breached the Code of Practice.

If the subject matter of your complaint is the subject matter of court proceedings in Ireland, consideration of your complaint will have to be postponed.

## Consideration by the Office of the Press Ombudsman

A copy of your complaint will be sent to the editor for his consideration.

If your complaint cannot be resolved to your satisfaction, it will be forwarded to the Press Ombudsman for a decision.

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### **Decision by the Press Ombudsman**

The Press Ombudsman will make a decision on your complaint after considering all of the correspondence on file.

The Press Ombudsman may decide to uphold your complaint, not to uphold your complaint, that action offered by the editor was sufficient to resolve the complaint, or that they have insufficient evidence before them to make a decision one way or the other. If you wish, the Press Ombudsman will anonymise their decision so that you cannot be identified.

Instead of making a decision on your complaint, the Press Ombudsman may exercise their discretion to refer the complaint directly to the Press Council of Ireland for decision. If they do that, the Press Council will then appoint a sub-committee from among its members to consider the complaint.

### **Appeals procedure**

Either party can appeal a decision of the Press Ombudsman or of a sub-committee of the Press Council. An appeal can be made on one or more of three grounds: that there has been an error in procedure, that significant new information is available or that there has been an error in the application of the Code of Practice. Mere disagreement with the decision cannot be grounds for appeal.

### **Publication of decisions**

All decisions of the Press Ombudsman upholding a complaint must be published by the publication concerned along set guidelines laid down by the Press Council (The Publication Guidelines). All decisions of the Press Ombudsman are published on the websites of the Press Ombudsman and Press Council, and are circulated to the media generally.

### **Contact us**

You, or a person nominated to act on your behalf, should feel free to contact the Office in advance of making a formal complaint if you have any queries about our complaints process.

**The Office of the Press Ombudsman,  
3 Westland Square,  
Pearse Street,  
Dublin  
D02 N567.**

**Tel: 01 6489130 or local 1890 208 080**

**Email: [info@pressombudsman.ie](mailto:info@pressombudsman.ie)**

## Section 10 - Psychology Service



Irish Prison Service (IPS) Psychologists work as part of a broad multi-disciplinary team (MDT) within all prisons across the country. The Service is made up of a Head of Psychology, a Principal Psychologist, Senior Psychologists, Staff Grade Psychologists and Assistant Psychologists. Each year we also supervise a number of Trainee Psychologists, who are working toward their Doctoral qualification as a Psychologist, and a number of Masters Students who are studying Psychology. We are working toward having a team of Psychologists in each closed prison, led by a Senior Psychologist, with a number of Staff Grade and Assistant Psychologists.

### Psychologists working in the IPS have four key aims:

- We work with people struggling with their mental health, through talking therapy (we do not prescribe medication for mental health difficulties; however, we work closely with Psychiatry and Healthcare in prisons if a combination of medication and talking therapy is thought to be the most appropriate treatment for someone);
- We work with people in custody to help them to reduce re-offending (this includes completing risk assessments, providing group and individual work focused on offence related issues, and writing Parole Board reports);

- We work with other prison staff and community services;
- We help prison staff and managers to keep prisons safe by providing training and helping with some decision making, where appropriate.

Prison based Psychologists will accept referrals from anyone: people can refer themselves, we accept referrals from friends and family, from staff and prison management, from ISM coordinators, from other prison based services and from community services. We call this an 'open referral policy'. However, we do ask that people make referrals as soon as possible. Where someone is referred but only has a couple of months left to serve, it is unlikely we will be able to provide a Service to them. In a situation like this, we strive to signpost the person to the most appropriate service in the community instead.

Referrals to Psychology include, but are not exclusive to:

- **Anxiety** (including phobias, health anxiety, social anxiety, Obsession Compulsive Disorder)
- **Depression**
- **Eating Difficulties / Disorders**
- **Trauma related difficulties** (e.g., childhood physical, emotional, sexual abuse and neglect, other adverse childhood experiences, or witnessing / the experience of violence where someone may meet criteria for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder)
- **Psychosis, Schizophrenia and Bipolar Affective Disorder** (after initial assessment by Healthcare and Psychiatry)

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- **Personality Difficulties / Attachment (Relationship) Difficulties**
  - **Emotional, Thinking or Behavioural impulsivity** (rapid changes of mood or 'thinking before acting' for example)
  - **Family / Relationship difficulties**
  - **Intellectual difficulties**
  - **Difficulties with emotions**
  - **Self-Harm or suicidal thoughts** (following assessment and engagement by Healthcare. If Healthcare deem it appropriate they may make a referral to the Psychology Service)
  - **Cognitive decline** e.g. Dementia, and other age related illnesses / difficulties
  - **Addictions**
  - **Developmental Disorders** (e.g. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and Autistic Spectrum Disorders)
  - **Other specific offence related needs**
  - **Traumatic Brain Injury and related difficulties**

The following people are also *automatically* referred to the Psychology Service by ISM coordinators, on committal:

1. **People aged 18 – 24 years old who have a sentence of ONE year or more, but who do not have a Post Release Supervision Order with the Probation Service;**

2. **People sentenced to life imprisonment**
3. **People convicted of a violent offence and sentenced to TWO years or more, but who do not have a Post Release Supervision Order with the Probation Service;**
4. **People convicted of sexual offending.**

#### **What happens to your referral:**

- Once a referral is made on a 'Psychology Referral form', the Senior Psychologist in that prison will assess the referral to see if it is appropriate.
- The referral will then be placed on our confidential computer Psychology Case Tracking System.
- You will receive a letter inviting you to a 'triage' appointment with a Psychologist. If you receive an appointment and you cannot attend at that time e.g. you have a visit, please take all reasonable steps to let the Psychology Service know (e.g. by asking your class officer, Governor or ISM know that you cannot attend) – this allows us not to waste appointment times.
- Where possible, we aim to see people for triage within 8 to 12 weeks of referral, which is in line with national standards for many Psychology / Mental Health Services.
  - This triage appointment will usually last two sessions of approximately 50 minutes each, and the time together allows:

- You to talk to the Psychologist about what you are experiencing, and
- You and the Psychologist to make a decision about the best way forward for you.
- Typically there are three options:
  - that it might be helpful for you to work with the Psychology Service; you and the assessing Psychologist will develop a care plan based on information taken during the triage assessment,
  - that your needs might be better met by referring you to a difference Service,
  - you do not need to work with the Psychology Service or another Service (sometimes just talking things out during the triage appointment can be helpful in itself).
- If it is agreed that you will work with the Psychology Service, you will be placed on the 'intervention wait list' and as soon as your name reaches the top of the list and a Psychologist is available to meet with you, you will be called by them by appointment letter.

### **Managing prison transfers:**

The IPS Psychology Service is a National Service. Therefore, if you transfer prisons, your referral will automatically transfer with you. You will not start at the bottom of the wait list in the new prison, you will enter the wait list in the new prison based on your referral date. Please note however, that some prisons have much longer wait lists than others.

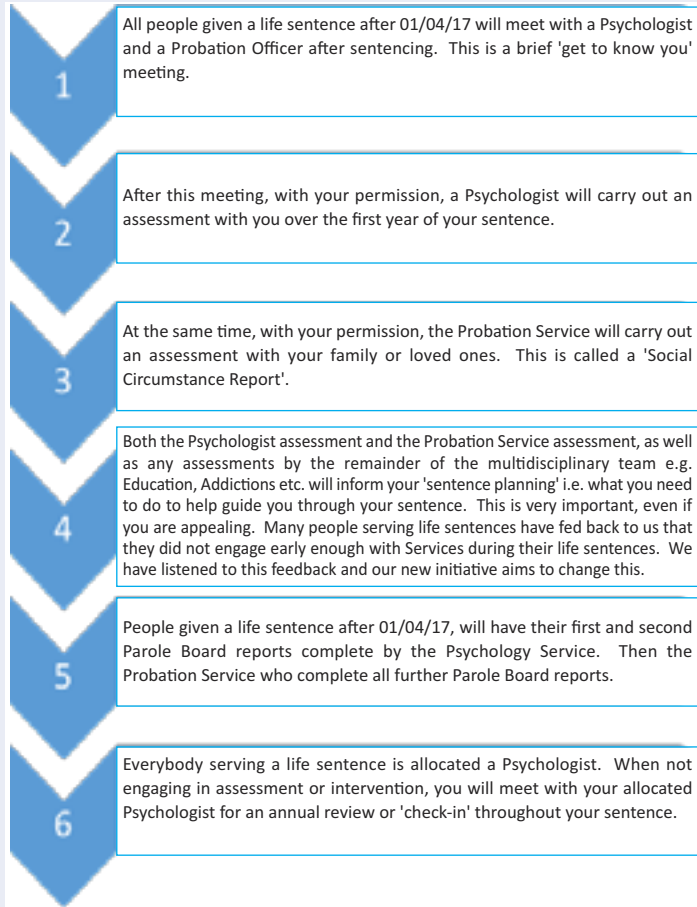
### **Managing Declines to the Psychology Service:**

- When we are triaging people, we sometimes get declines. If this happens and we have space, we might call the next person on the list 'on spec' i.e. without a letter of appointment. If you can attend, please do so. If you cannot e.g. you have a visit, then please do not worry – we will set up a formal appointment to see you for triage. We use 'on spec' appointments to try use our time productively when clients decline an appointment.
- If people decline two planned triage appointments or two planned intervention appointments, they will be removed from the Psychology Service lists. This does not affect any new referrals, but any new referrals will automatically return to the bottom of the wait list.
- If you have been referred to the Psychology Service and do not wish to attend, please speak to a Psychologist face to face about this when you are called by the Officer. This will prevent any further correspondence in relation to the referral. Otherwise, we have to send two formal appointment letters before we close off the referral – this is our policy.

### **Working with others:**

Prison based Psychologists have regular contact with community agencies involved in the support and resettlement of people leaving custody. They also work with the families and carers of those in custody. Where clinically appropriate, IPS Psychologists may provide time-limited community intervention(s) to support a client's transition from custody to community.

## Life Sentence Initiative



## Parole Board Reports:

Similar to the Probation Service, the Psychology Service write Parole Board Reports, though typically only for people who are serving life sentences. An initiative was introduced on 01/04/17 which has streamlined the work of the Psychology Service and Probation Service with people who are serving life sentences. The primary focus for us is working with people much earlier on in their life sentence, rather than starting this work in the lead up to the first Parole Board hearing (year six or seven). See the flow chart below for a summary of the new initiative which started on 01/04/17.

## Types of Intervention with the Psychology Service: Group work

Mostly the Psychology Service work through group work. Sometimes we offer one to one sessions when group work might not be that helpful at that particular time. The Psychology Service use a variety of approaches, depending on the needs of the person, for example:

- **Pathways to Change:** This is a 10 to 12 week group that helps people understand why they might have come to prison, and what they might need to do in person and in the community to support a crime free life;
- **Managing Emotions / Dialectical Behaviour Therapy Skills Groups:** There are typically six to eight week groups (sometimes longer) to help people manage difficult feelings;
- **Mentalisation Based Therapy Groups (MBT):** The ability to 'mentalise' is a normal part of everyday life. It helps us manage human relationships. However, sometimes our



ability to mentalise (to understand what is going on in our own mind, and that of others) does not work as well as we might need it to. MBT groups are particularly useful for people who suffer from long-term difficulties in relationships, people who experience intense emotional distress and overwhelming feelings which may result in destructive behaviours such as self-harm or aggression towards others. It is also helpful for people who may be distrustful of other people and have difficulty in reading other people's responses to them. The Psychology Service run two MBT groups – an introductory group and a longer term group.

- **Post-Traumatic Stress Group (PTS Group):** This is a six week group in which people learn about trauma, its effects and how to manage it better.
- **Building Better Lives Group Programme:** This group is run by the Psychology and Probation Services for people who are sexually offended in order to understand their violence and build better lives for themselves. This group is divided into three parts: Exploring Better Lives (approximately two to three months), Practicing Better Lives (approximately six months) and Maintaining Better Lives (approximately one group every 1-2 months following completion of parts one and two).
- **The Psychology Service provides various other groups and individual work using approaches including Cognitive Behaviour Therapy, Schema Therapy, Solution Focused Therapy, Emotion Focused Therapy, to name a few. Again, the approach taken depends on the needs of the person.**

### **What do Assistant Psychologists do?**

Assistant Psychologists are people who are working toward becoming Qualified Psychologists. They gain experience by working in clinical settings such as prisons and other healthcare settings, and are closely supervised by Qualified Psychologists. Assistant Psychologists complete the following work in the IPS:

**Mental Health Groups:** Weekly 1-1 or group sessions to help people in prison with:

- Sleep
- Coping with prison
- Anxiety
- Depression

**Working with Young People in Custody:** Assistant Psychologists work with people aged 18-24, serving a sentence of one year or more who do not have Probation Service Post Release Supervision Order. Work involves a) helping the young person understand why they have come to prison and, b) setting out a plan to work on their difficulties and strengthen things they are good at while in prison and back in the community.

**Red Cross:** Assistant Psychologists are also involved in selection and training of Red Cross volunteers and they help with mental health training for volunteers.

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