



6

Prison Service Victims  
Charter

## 6: Prison Service Victims Charter

### WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM THE PRISON SERVICE

We will:

- try to rehabilitate all offenders sentenced to prison, so that other people will not become victims of their crimes;
- make sure that in all cases of temporary release, we will take into account any possible risk to the victim;
- make every effort to prevent an offender in prison from causing further upset to victims;
- tell the Garda Síochána about the release of all sex offenders;
- tell you when the offender is to be released from prison – either on temporary release or at the end of their sentence – if you or a member of your family ask for this. In cases where the release is ordered by the Court, we will usually tell you after the event; and
- tell you about other relevant developments regarding the prisoner's sentence if you ask us – such as transfers between prisons or parole board hearings (for prisoners sentenced to eight years or more).

If you want us to tell you about the release or any other important developments, please send your request to the Prisons Victim Liaison Officer at the address below.

### IF WE DO NOT MEET YOUR EXPECTATIONS

If you have any questions or complaints about the Irish Prison Service, you can contact the:

Victim Liaison Officer  
Irish Prison Service Headquarters  
IDA Business Park  
Ballinalee Road  
Co. Longford.

Tel: (043) 333 5100  
Fax: (043) 333 5101  
Email: [vlo@irishprisons.ie](mailto:vlo@irishprisons.ie)  
Website: [www.irishprisons.ie](http://www.irishprisons.ie)

## ROLE OF THE PRISON SERVICE

The Prison Service manages prisons in Ireland.

Our role covers the following areas:

- **prisons** – we provide safe, secure custody for people sent to prison by the courts. Prisons range from high security institutions to ‘open’ arrangements with lower levels of security. Each prisoner is placed in a prison, consistent with their offence, length of sentence and degree of risk. You can get more information about prisons and places of detention in Ireland in the next section;
- **rehabilitation** – in order to prevent prisoners from re-offending when they get out of prison, we aim to rehabilitate all offenders. Rehabilitation services treat and address issues such as offending behaviour, drug and alcohol addiction, lack of education and training, anger management and self-management. This encourages the personal development of prisoners and prepares them for their release when they will have to resettle into the community;
- **sentence remission** – the law allows for prisoners to have their sentences reduced by one quarter for good behaviour. This is taken into account by judges when passing sentence. Prisoners serving life sentences have no release date and are only freed with the approval of the Minister for Justice and Law Reform, following a recommendation by the Parole Board;
- **release from prison** – offenders are usually released from prison when they complete their sentence or when they are approved for early or temporary release. A life sentence prisoner released from prison will have to follow certain conditions for life – including supervision by the Probation Service and other conditions designed to protect the public. If they break these conditions, the prisoner may have to return to prison. Prisoners may be released as a result of an appeal or some other legal process. In certain cases, a prisoner who has not been convicted may be released on bail, after an application to the courts;

- **sex offenders** – all sex offenders released from prison after 27 September 2001 are subject to certain restrictions. They must notify the Garda Síochána of their current address and of any future change;
- **temporary release** – this allows us to re-integrate an offender into the community in a planned way. Temporary release arrangements include:
  - release under the direct supervision of the Probation Service;
  - release to employment or training programmes;
  - compassionate release because of ill-health or family circumstances; or
  - release to help the offender reintegrate when they are nearing the end of their sentence.

We take many factors into account when considering prisoners for temporary release, including any possible danger to the public and to their victim. When we let an offender out on temporary release, we try to make sure that they do not come into contact with the victim of their crime; and

- **Parole Board** – the Board advises the Minister for Justice and Law Reform about long-term prison sentences. As with temporary and early releases, the Board takes a wide range of factors into account when it makes a recommendation. A victim, or the family of a victim who has died as a result of the crime, may make a submission to the Parole Board. The Minister may fully or partly accept the recommendations of the Parole Board, or reject them completely.

## YOUR GUIDE TO PRISONS AND PLACES OF DETENTION

We do our best to place prisoners in an institution as near as possible to their homes, so that relatives and friends can visit. This is not always possible – for example, in the case of prisoners who may be a threat to the public and must be kept in a high security prison. A ‘committal prison’ is a prison to which a court can send a person directly. The Prison Service can move prisoners from a committal prison to other prisons or institutions.

Prison	Type of prison	Location and telephone
Mountjoy Prison	A closed committal prison for males aged 18 years and over who are sentenced in the Dublin area	North Circular Road Dublin 7 (01) 806 2800
Dóchas Centre	A closed committal prison for females aged 18 years and over – opened in January 2000, it is the committal prison for females on remand (that is, prisoners who have not yet been convicted) or sentenced from all courts outside the Munster area	North Circular Road Dublin 7 (01) 885 8987
The Training Unit	A semi-open institution, with lower levels of security, for male prisoners aged 18 years and over – it operates a drug-free environment, with a strong emphasis on work and training	Glengarriff Parade North Circular Road Dublin 7 (01) 806 2890
Wheatfield Prison	A closed committal prison for male prisoners aged 18 years and over, who are sentenced in the North Leinster area	Cloverhill Road Clondalkin Dublin 22 (01) 626 0011
Limerick Prison	A closed committal prison for male and female prisoners aged 18 years and over	Mulgrave Street Limerick (061) 204 700

Prison	Type of prison	Location and telephone
Portlaoise Prison	A high security closed prison for male prisoners aged 18 years and over – it is the committal prison for the Special Criminal Court	Dublin Road Portlaoise Co. Laois (057) 862 1318
Midlands Prison	A closed prison for male prisoners aged 18 years and over – opened in November 2000, it was recently chosen as the committal prison for males sentenced in the South Leinster area	Dublin Road Portlaoise Co. Laois (057) 867 2110 or (057) 867 2100
St. Patrick's Institution	A closed institution for young males aged 16 to 21 years	North Circular Road Dublin 7 (01) 806 2896
Shelton Abbey	An open centre for male prisoners aged 19 years and over – it holds prisoners who require lower levels of security and who are serving short sentences or nearing the end of long sentences	Arklow Co. Wicklow (0402) 423 00
Cork Prison	A closed prison for male prisoners aged 18 years and over	Rathmore Road Cork City (021) 451 8800
Loughan House	An open centre for male prisoners aged 18 years and over – it holds prisoners who require lower levels of security and who are serving either short sentences or nearing the end of long sentences	Open Centre Blacklion Co. Cavan (071) 985 3020

Prison	Type of prison	Location and telephone
Castlerea Prison	A closed prison for male prisoners aged 18 years and over – it is the committal prison for remand and sentenced prisoners in the Ulster and Connaught regions	Harristown Castlerea Co. Roscommon (094) 962 5213
Cloverhill Prison	A closed prison for male prisoners aged 18 years and over – opened in October 1999, it mainly caters for remand prisoners and is the committal prison for those sent to custody on remand in the Leinster area	Cloverhill Road Clondalkin Dublin 22 (01) 630 4530
Arbour Hill Prison	A closed prison for male prisoners aged 18 years and over – most of the prisoners are on long-term sentences or sex offenders	Arbour Hill Dublin 7 (01) 671 9333

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