

Agreed Positions on Covid Safety for Members working in Courts and Prison OMUs

PRISONS

Napo has been raising concerns for some months about the demands being made of NPS and CRC staff to work more in the Prisons than is safe. Katie Lomas has been liaising with NPS and Prison Recovery Leads to try to resolve the issues. Today the Trade Unions agreed a position with NPS (following consultation with both NPS and Prison recovery leads). This has been communicated through both NPS and Prison command structures. All members working in prisons should raise concerns initially with their local reps who can take it to the Regional JCC. Where this does not provide a resolution reps should contact Katie for further escalation.

Where members employed by a CRC are working in a prison they should have a risk assessment and exceptional delivery plan (or safe system of work) in place. Please raise issues with the CRC in the first instance, if they cannot be resolved the Link Official will be able to get the matter escalated to HMPPS.

NPS staff based in prisons should work from home where possible, except when they need to be present in an establishment in order to complete tasks or activities which require their presence. Their attendance at the establishment should only be as required, even if only for part of a day.

The staffing arrangements are to be determined locally by the Head of Offender Management Delivery (SPO) in conjunction with prisons managers; Head of Offender Management Services and the Governor. This will be guided by local risk assessments and the detail provided below, which sets out the requirements of when staff need to be in establishments and the tasks which can be completed from home. If the SPO feels they need support with this, they should involve their link Head of Service.

These temporary arrangements will be reviewed on the 25th January nationally, and every 2 weeks thereafter. Reviews will also be triggered by establishment regime level changes.

Further detail of tasks to be completed in the workplace / at home:

The rationale for face to face contact should be linked to sentence progression as well as risk management and public protection issues, including work around parole and safe release arrangements.

A co-ordinated approach to when NPS staff are due to attend the establishment should be taken, to maximise the NPS presence across the week. This will allow for on-site support of prison offender managers, specifically in the areas of risk management and public protection and will allow for NPS attendance at meetings required at short notice.

Exceptions requiring NPS staff to attend establishments will vary due to local circumstances, e.g. type of prison, local arrangements etc., but include:

To complete the tasks set out in the current regime level of the OMU EDM which cannot be completed from home (see list below). This includes participation in required meetings where this cannot be facilitated remotely, recognising that not all local meetings will be explicitly referenced in the EDM.

To undertake the supervision of prisoners, interviews of prisoners or handover meetings where these should be facilitated face to face with POM/COM and prisoner in attendance, plus any difficult conversations such as recall discussions and safeguarding.

The table below provides an overview of the types of tasks that could be undertaken remotely:

Completion of OASys assessments once the interview has been conducted (excludes co-worked CMSM assessments)

Completion of reports once required interview has been conducted (excludes co-worked CMSM assessments)

Victim Liaison Officer contact

Offender Personality Disorder Screenings and recording of NSI on Delius

Completion of referrals provided all available information to inform them is present

Writing up of any Digital Prison Services (DPS) OMiC Case Notes. These should be completed in a timely manner and not wait until a day when the POM is working remotely.

Attendance at Parole Hearings, if this can be facilitated remotely and approved by the Parole Board.

Attendance at MAPPA, child and adult safeguarding meetings, if this can be facilitated remotely.

Completion of RC1's and Recategorisation recommendations where these are required and can be facilitated remotely.

Engagement in local internal meetings where remote access is available, e.g. conference calls.

This guidance should be read and actioned in line with NPS Risk Assessments, Health and Safety guidance around Social Distancing and PPE as well as Corona Virus HR Policy Guidance (NPS).