**Prisons and Probation Ombudsman Covid-19 April Update**

**Notice to Staff**

Following the latest Government advice about the COVID-19 emergency, the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (PPO) will continue to work remotely during the lockdown. In March the PPO’s office building was closed until further notice and all staff were instructed to work from home.

We have since been working hard to ensure we can support prisoners and continue the work of the PPO.

**Complaints**

People in prison who want to complain to the PPO can phone us on 020 7633 4100 and raise urgent issues. We will listen to all voicemails and respond to these calls where appropriate.

Unfortunately, as our offices are closed we are currently unable to access post to deal with letters but we are working to find a way to be able to receive letters and write back to them, mindful of the need for confidentiality.

As we have suspended visits to prisons, we have asked prisons to preserve evidence we will need for our Fatal Incident and Complaints investigations if they cannot send it to us immediately. A list of the documents and items that must be preserved has been issued as part of the COVID-19 Operational Guidance from HMPPS.

We will continue to operate our PPO mailbox, so that families and other stakeholders can email us at mail@ppo.gov.uk if they have any concerns.

We are sorry about the impact to our service, especially at this time. However, we are doing all that we can to ensure you can access our services.

These changes are temporary and we will review them regularly in line with Government advice. We will ensure that all stakeholders receive the most accurate and up to date information.



**Sue McAllister CB**

Prisons and Probation Ombudsman

April 2020