

National Probation Directorate Publication Scheme



INTRODUCTION

1. Under Section 19 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the National Probation Directorate has undertaken to adopt and maintain a scheme for the publication of probation service information.
2. This publication scheme has been designed to help you understand how the National Probation Service (NPS) carries out its aims and objectives. The NPS is a law enforcement agency that:
 - delivers community punishments,
 - supervises and works with offenders within the terms set by the court or Parole Board in ways that help offenders to reduce their offending and that better protect the public, and
 - gives support to the victims of serious crimes.

Its aims are to:

- protect the public
- reduce re-offending
- ensure the proper punishment of offenders
- ensure offenders are aware of the effects of crime on victims and the public, and
- rehabilitate offenders.

PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THE SCHEME

3. The purpose of this publication scheme is to make information readily available before you need to ask for it. The scheme specifies:
 - the classes of information we publish
 - the manner in which we publish information in each class and
 - whether material in each class is available in Welsh.
4. The National Probation Directorate seeks to be as open as possible, and to comply fully with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, which can be downloaded from www.foi.gov.uk

RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE SCHEME

5. George Barrow, Head of Communications, has overall responsibility for this publication scheme, alongside Russell Yates, Head of Open Government Unit of the National Offender Management Service (NOMS). The person responsible for maintaining the publication scheme on a daily basis is the Information Access Officer:

Phil McDonough
Tel: 020 7217 8483
Email: philip.mcdonough@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

6. The Freedom of Information (FOI) Act received Royal Assent on 30 November 2000. It creates a general right of access to all types of recorded information held by public authorities, sets out exemptions from that right and places a number of obligations on public authorities. The National Probation Service for England and Wales is a public authority under the Act and is therefore bound by its provisions. The general right of access was introduced on 1st January 2005.
7. The Department for Constitutional Affairs leads on policy related to the Act and the Codes of Practice for public authorities on compliance and records management for which the Act provides.
8. The Information Commissioner has a duty to promote best practice under the Act and to ensure compliance. The address is

The Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow SK9 5AF

Enquiry line: 01625 545745
9. The Commissioner's website www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk carries useful guidance and reports, as well as information about the role of the Commissioner.
10. Subject to certain prescribed conditions and the exemptions set out in Sections 21 to 44 in Part II of the Act, the public have a statutory right:
 - to be told whether the NPD holds information of the description specified in the request and, if so
 - to have that information communicated to them.
11. The NPD is committed to the principles of openness embodied in the Act and will release information to the greatest extent possible, consistent with the public interest.

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12. The material available through the publication scheme may be reproduced free of charge in any format or medium, provided that it is reproduced accurately and not used in a misleading manner. Where, exceptionally, information is included which is subject to copyright or there is a restriction on its use this will be indicated in the scheme and an application for a licence to reproduce the material concerned should be made to Phil McDonough who will consult the copyright holders concerned.

OBTAINING DOCUMENTS AND INFORMATION UNDER THE PUBLICATION SCHEME

13. The National Probation Directorate routinely places information on a national probation website www.probation.homeoffice.gov.uk. It is all freely available for downloading, if you have internet access; otherwise copies will be provided on request. Other information published in accordance with this scheme, but not available electronically, will also be sent on request.
14. You can request published information by e-mailing the NPD at NPS.Publications@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk or by telephoning 020 7217 0653 or writing to the NPD Communications Team at

Horseferry House
Dean Ryle Street
London
SW1P 2AW

Alternatively, general enquiries can be made by e-mailing the NPD at NPD.publicenquiry@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk or by telephoning 020 7217 0659 or writing to the Director of the Probation Service's Office at the address above.

CHARGING

15. Information will be provided free of charge, except where:
 - there is a substantial administrative cost in providing it – where this is the case we will provide details
 - there is a cover charge indicated for a published document
 - glossy or other bound paper copies, or in some cases a CD-ROM, video or other mediums, are provided.
16. No charge will be made for information carried on the website. For those without internet access, an electronic copy or a single printout as on the website will be available by post from the request contact point shown above.

TIMESCALES

17. The National Probation Directorate aims to respond to written requests for information within 20 days. The NPD will also endeavour to provide advice to people who have made, or who are thinking of making, a request. This will help applicants understand their rights under the Act and identify the information they want.

Some of the exemptions will require the NPD to consider whether it is in the public interest to withhold information. In some instances consideration of the public interest may take longer than the 20 days. In these cases an estimate of when a decision will have been reached will be provided within 20 days of receiving the request.

COMPLAINTS

18. If you have a complaint about the operation of the publication scheme or how the Probation Board has dealt with a request for information, you should write to the Information Access Officer, Phil McDonough at:

Horseferry House
Dean Ryle Street
London
SW1P 2AW

19. You must clearly state when and to whom the original request was made.
20. If you are unhappy with the outcome, or do not wish to discuss the matter with that officer, then you may contact the Head of Communications at the same address.

REVIEW

21. The NPD will review the publication scheme regularly and will monitor its operation.

INFORMATION CLASSES

22. This publication scheme aims to make large amounts of probation information readily accessible to the public, on a continuous basis. The NPD is committed to releasing more material in the future.
23. The NPD will make available information under the following classes:
 - Development and Implementation of Probation Policy
 - Role, Function and Management of the National Probation Service
 - Probation Practice
 - Information for the Public and Stakeholders
 - Press Notices
 - Newsletters

Development and Implementation of Probation Policy

Class: Circulars
Description: Probation Circulars communicate formal, significant or long-term guidance, instructions, and requests for action or information from the head office of the National Probation Service to the local probation boards.
Availability: post or email; website contains PCs issued in current year
Notes: Available from 1996

Class: Studies, research reports, statistical compilations by internal staff and external specialists that are relevant to current performance and the development of policy proposals
Description: Includes annual probation statistics; and reports from the Correctional Services Accreditation Panel, a non-departmental public body, which advises and decides on programmes and integrated systems seeking accreditation.
Availability: post or email; website
Notes: Reports of the CSAP from the previous three years are also available on website

Role, Function and Management of the National Probation Service

Class: Business plans, strategies and reports for the NPS
Description: Summary of the priorities, objectives and targets and reviews of achievements
Availability: post or email; website
Notes: Available since the inception of a nationalised service in 2001; strategy documents also available in Welsh

Class: Staff Directory
Description: Staff directory of the National Probation Directorate
Availability: email; website
Notes: Only the latest edition is available

Class: Performance Information
Description: Quarterly reports providing detailed information on performance against targets set by Ministers
Availability: email; website
Notes:

Probation Practice

Class: Rules, procedures and internal guidance when working with offenders
Description: Includes national standards to which Local Probation Boards should ensure offenders are supervised and services are provided and guidance on Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA), which provide the framework for the co-ordinated risk management of serious sexual and violent offenders once they are given community sentences from the courts or released from prison.
Availability: post or email; website

Notes:

Class: Diversity strategies and good practice guidance for probation staff
Description: Various publications distributed to staff which outline and explain how the NPS is committed to progress on race equality and the wider diversity issues
Availability: email; website
Notes: Core diversity strategy document for the NPS is also available in Welsh

Class: Human Resources policies and strategies
Description: Including the people management strategy of the NPS, workforce information and health and safety strategies
Availability: post or email; website
Notes: Core HR strategy document is also available in Welsh

Information for the Public and Stakeholders

Class: Careers in the National Probation Service
Description: Recruitment booklet for the public
Availability: post or email; website
Notes: Also available in Welsh

Class: Complaints procedure
Description: 'Making a Complaint' leaflet outlines process for making a complaint about an action or decision made by staff working for the National Probation Service or failure to take an action or decision by these people
Availability: post or email; website
Notes: Also available in Welsh, Spanish, Hindi, Punjabi, Arabic and Cantonese

Class: Information for offenders
Description: 'You and the Probation Service' leaflet gives general information about supervision
Availability: post or email; website
Notes: Also available in Welsh, Spanish, Hindi, Punjabi, Arabic and Cantonese

Class: Information for offenders
Description: Enhanced Community Punishment 'Information for You' leaflet provides general information about the community punishment order and what it means for an offender
Availability: post or email; website
Notes: ECP leaflet also available in Welsh, Punjabi, Arabic, Chinese, Bengali, Urdu and Gujarati

Class: Accredited Programmes leaflets for offenders
Description: 'Information for You' leaflets outline programme aims and what an offender would have to do on different programmes: Drink Impaired Drivers, Think First, Enhanced Thinking Skills, Reasoning & Rehabilitation, One to One and the Intensive Control & Change Programme
Availability: post or email; website
Notes: Also available in Welsh for those programmes which are carried out in Wales

Class: Accredited Programmes leaflets for sentencers
Description: 'Information for Sentencers' leaflets outline the content and target group of programmes: Drink Impaired Drivers, Think First, Enhanced Thinking Skills, Reasoning & Rehabilitation, One to One and the Intensive Control & Change Programme
Availability: post or email; website
Notes: Also available in Welsh for those programmes which are carried out in Wales

Press Notices

Class: National press releases
Description: Home Office press releases from the last three years
Availability: Can be downloaded from the Home Office website:
<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/pressreleases.asp>
Notes:

Newsletters

Class: Information for sentencers
Description: 'Important Information for Sentencers' – periodic newsletter for sentencers, aimed at promoting better understanding of National Probation Service initiatives, including the Offender Assessment System (OASys) and Enhanced Community Punishment (ECP)
Availability: by post or e-mail; website
Notes: Four issues currently available

Class: Information for practitioners
Description: Including the 'NPS Bulletin', designed to carry short items of interest between the component parts of the NPS, with contact details for further information; the 'NPS Briefing', summarising major new initiatives or programmes relevant to all probation staff; and specialist updates, informing staff of developments and events particular to individual areas of work
Availability: e-mail; website
Notes: 'NPS Bulletin' is issued monthly; other newsletters are issued on an ad hoc basis