



Opening Hours

Monday to Friday
9.00am - 8.00pm

Saturday and Sunday
10.00am - 3.00pm

Release Date

When will a prisoner be released?

A number of factors may affect the release date of a prisoner serving a standard determinate sentence. This includes the length of sentence and the date of the offence. Other factors that can have an impact on when a prisoner will be released are outlined below.

Home Detention Curfew (HDC or Tag)

Home Detention Curfew or HDC is more commonly referred to as 'tagging' and enables some prisoners to be released early subject to a curfew, monitored electronically, for a minimum of nine hours a day. It allows them to live at home or at an alternative approved address and is designed to help prisoners prepare for life after their release. A prisoner can be released on HDC up to 135 days prior to the half way point of their sentence (depending on the length of sentence). Only prisoners serving sentences of between 3 months and four years are eligible for HDC and certain offences are automatically ruled out.

For more information, ring the HDC policy helpline on one of the following numbers: 0203 334 5043 and 0203 334 5044. Staff cannot comment on individual cases but can offer general advice on the HDC process.

If you have a practical query or require support in relation to a current curfew affecting you or a family member you can contact the G4S 24 hour free-phone helpline on 0800 137 291.

Remand Time

Time spent in prison on remand will be deducted from the overall custody portion of the offence. Time spent in police custody is not taken into account.

Adjudications

Adjudications in prisons are similar to disciplinary hearings. The main purpose of adjudications is to help maintain order, control, discipline and a safe environment by investigating offences and punishing those responsible. It also ensures that the use of authority in the establishment is lawful, reasonable and fair. Adjudications are carried out by either prison governors or independent adjudicators. Independent adjudicators have the power to impose up to 42 extra days in prison for each finding of guilt. Whilst extra days can take the time served in prison over the halfway point of the sentence it can never exceed the original sentence expiry date. However, if a prisoner commits a further imprisonable offence whilst in prison, he can reasonably expect to serve

a further sentence either consecutively or concurrently to the one he is already serving.

Early Removal Scheme (ERS)

The Early Removal Scheme (ERS) allows eligible prisoners, who are liable to be removed from the UK at the end of their custodial term, to be removed up to 135 days before their release date, depending on the length of their sentence. Under the scheme prisoners must serve a minimum of 30 days, or one quarter of their sentence, before becoming eligible to be removed.

Parole

Prisoners given sentences of more than 4 years whose offence was committed before 4 April 2005, and prisoners given extended sentences for the public protection (EPP/IPP) for offences committed on or after 4 April 2005, will only be released subject to approval by the Parole Board. The Parole Board considers whether these prisoners are safe to release into the community once they have completed the minimum time they must spend in prison (never earlier than the halfway point).

Tariff

'Tariff' is the term used to describe the mandatory period of time a prisoner serving a life, IPP or extended sentence must serve in custody prior to being considered for release. No prisoner serving a life, IPP or extended sentence should expect to be released at any point prior to their tariff expiry date. There is no guarantee that a prisoner will be released once the tariff has been served. Release is dependent once the level of risk the prisoner would pose to the general public if in the community.

'18 Day Early Release Scheme'

Up until March 2010, there was a scheme in place whereby certain prisoners could be released up to 18 days prior to the halfway point in their sentence providing they had served at least two weeks in custody. This scheme is no longer in operation in England and Wales.

'Time Off for Good Behaviour'

Contrary to popular myth and belief there is no such thing as 'time off for good behaviour'. A prisoner will never be released earlier than their conditional release date (with the exception of those released on HDC or under the ERS). A prisoner can, however, have days added to their sentence as a consequence of an adjudication.

Extended Sentences.

These replace previous 'IPP' sentences and are thus only given to those considered a significant risk to the public. This extended period cannot exceed 5 years for those serving time for a violent offence, and 8 years for those serving for a sexual offence.

