



Oifig An Chigire Príosún
Office of the Inspector of Prisons

**A FRAMEWORK FOR THE
INSPECTION OF PRISONS IN
IRELAND
2024**

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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PREFACE

In December 2023, the Inspectorate undertook a review and revision of A Framework for the Inspection of Prisons in Ireland (2020). The 2020 Framework provided that a formal review was to be carried out no later than every three years. Following an extensive consultation process, the Inspectorate developed and adopted the 2024 Framework for the Inspection of Prisons in Ireland, which builds on the 2020 Framework.

Like, the 2020 Framework, the revised 2024 Framework is preventive in nature, and future-focused, with its purpose being to maintain a standard of prison inspection that fulfils the requirements of a National Preventive Mechanism, under the United Nations' Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT).

As a 'living' document, the 2020 Framework established the Office of the Inspector of Prisons' approach to inspections, and set out a number of ambitions for the Office to achieve over the lifetime of the Framework. The objectives outlined in the 2020 Framework included, amongst others:

- (i) operationalisation of the Framework through the carrying out of inspection activities;
- (ii) development of an inspection methodology in alignment with five inspection Focus Areas;
- (iii) creation and implementation of digital surveys to gather data from people in prison and prison staff;
- (iv) adoption of a recommendations self-assessment process in collaboration with the Irish Prison Service; and
- (v) development of an online recommendations monitoring database.

Each of these objectives was achieved during the lifespan of the 2020 Framework. The Inspectorate operationalised the 2020 Framework through inspection of all prisons in Ireland, including 12 short visits to prisons during the COVID-19 pandemic, two thematic inspections and seven General Inspections. In doing this, a detailed methodology and data collection process was developed and refined, leading to a human-rights centred, evidence-based and data-driven approach to inspection. For the first time, digital surveys were provided to people in prison and prison staff in seven prisons, as part of data collection during General Inspections. Through these surveys, the Inspectorate gathered information on the experiences of 740 people living in prison and 527 people working in prison. In 2022, the Inspectorate announced the establishment of the Inspection Recommendations Monitoring Database, which is hosted on the Inspectorate's website and is informed by Irish Prison Service recommendation self-assessments on a bi-annual basis as well as through updates provided by the Inspectorate.

A 2020 Framework for the Inspection of Prisons in Ireland was instrumental in establishing how the Inspectorate would approach the inspection of prisons. However, through operationalising the Framework, and based on practical application of the 2020 Framework, the Inspectorate identified a number of areas that required revision. The 2024 Framework for the Inspection of Prisons reflects the Inspectorate's learning over the duration of implementation of the 2020 Framework, as well as the incorporation of stakeholder feedback, including the voices of people in prison and prison staff and management. This feedback, much of which was provided by people directly engaged with the Inspectorate's inspection activities, was foundational to the development of the 2024 Framework as it provided reflections based on 'user-experience'.

Most notably, the 2024 Framework includes the following revisions:

- i) The 2024 Framework prioritises a people-centred approach to prison inspection through the adoption of strategies designed to promote collaboration, information-sharing and active citizenship. The 2024 Framework illustrates strategies employed by the Inspectorate to share information with stakeholders (2024 Framework, sections 1.1.9 - 1.11).
- ii) The five Focus Areas included in the 2020 Framework are amended to four Focus Areas, with the 2020 Rehabilitation & Development and Resettlement Focus Areas merged to become the Purposeful Activity & Resettlement Focus Area (2020 Framework, section 2.1.2 / 2024 Framework, section 2.1.1). This amendment is intended to emphasise the greater connectivity between access to activities and services available in prisons and prospects for positive release and re-integration outcomes.
- iii) A new internal performance indicator tracking tool is being developed to allow the Inspectorate to examine trends in systemic and individual prison performance (2020 Framework, sections 2.3.1 - 2.3.4 / 2024 Framework, section 2.2.8).
- iv) Focus Area Indicative Measures, which provide an overview of the areas under assessment by the Inspectorate, have been reviewed and refined, and are underpinned by national legislation and human rights law and standards (2020 Framework, section 2.4.3 / 2024 Framework, section 2.2.4).
- v) Taking account of Irish Prison Service feedback on the “self-assessment process” this is now done on a bi-annual basis, rather than on a quarterly basis (2020 Framework, section 3.3.16 / 2024 Framework, section 3.4.2). Additionally, Data Requests included in the 2020 Framework (Appendix D) are instead to be provided for through provision of access to Irish Prison Service Operational Dashboards (2024 Framework, section 3.3.2).

The changes summarised above reflect organisational learning on the part of the Inspectorate arising from implementation of the 2020 Framework, alongside important insights and proposals gathered through stakeholder consultation. The 2024 Framework for the Inspection of Prisons in Ireland, like its predecessor, is a ‘living document’, and is continuously subject to review.

CONTENTS

1	PURPOSE AND SCOPE	7
1.1	A Framework for the Inspection of Prisons in Ireland	7
1.2	Development of this Framework	9
1.3	Framework as a 'Living' Document	12
1.4	Structure of the 2024 Inspection Framework	12
2	FOCUS AREAS & ASSESSMENT MEASURES	13
2.1	Inspection Focus Areas	13
2.2	Inspection Assessment Measures	15
2.3	Immediate Action Notification (IAN)	35
3	INSPECTION PROCESS	37
3.1	Types of Inspection	37
3.2	Inspection Format	38
3.3	Access to Information	38
3.4	Recommendations	38
3.5	Publication of Inspection Reports	39

GLOSSARY

AGS	An Garda Síochána
Chief Inspector	Inspector of Prisons appointed pursuant to Section 30 Prisons Act 2007; to become Chief Inspector of Places of Detention upon enactment of the Inspection of Places of Detention legislation
CPT	European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
DE Inspectorate	Department of Education Inspectorate
DIC	Death in Custody
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
IAN	Immediate Action Notification
Inspectorate	Office of the Inspectorate of Prisons
IPS	Irish Prison Service
NALA	National Adult Literacy Agency
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPM	National Preventive Mechanism
OIP	Office of the Inspectorate of Prisons
OIPD	Office of the Inspectorate of Places of Detention
OPCAT	Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Punishment
SAI	Serious Adverse Incident ¹
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SPT	Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

¹ See, Department of Justice (June 2022) General Scheme of the Inspection of Places of Detention Bill; definition of Serious Adverse Incident as one that occurs within a prison or involves prison staff when carrying out their duties, or prisoners, may include any of the following: (a) serious injury to a person in custody; (b) a serious injury to a member of staff or a person interacting with the Irish Prison Service; (c) escape or significant attempted escape from lawful custody; (d) significant breach of security including physical and information security; (e) significant operational delivery issues.

1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

1.1 A Framework for the Inspection of Prisons in Ireland

1.1.1 International norms require a system of independent inspection and monitoring of prisons in order to achieve transparency and accountability of the prison system. This requirement is contained in the Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment.² The objective of prison inspection is outlined in other International Standards and Rules such as the 2015 United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (The Mandela Rules), which states, “...inspections shall be to ensure that prisons are managed in accordance with existing laws, regulations, policies and procedures, with a view to bringing about the objectives of penal and correction services, and that the rights of prisoners are protected”.³

Reports by national and international NGOs, the findings of the CPT and various decisions of the European Court of Human Rights show that even in countries with well-developed and relatively transparent prison systems, independent monitoring of conditions of detention and treatment of prisoners is essential to prevent inhuman and unjust treatment of people in prison and to enhance the quality of detention and prison management.

1.1.2 The European Prison Rules (2020) state that “All prisons shall be subject to regular inspection and independent monitoring”, and establishes that:

“To ensure that the conditions of detention and the treatment of prisoners meet the requirements of national and international law and the provisions of these rules, and that the rights and dignity of prisoners are upheld at all times, prisons shall be monitored by a designated independent body or bodies, whose findings shall be made public.”⁴

1.1.3 The United Nations Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (OPCAT) sets out the establishment of “one or several independent national preventive mechanisms for the prevention of torture at the domestic level”. The Office of the Inspector of Prisons (the “Inspectorate”) is the designated National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) for the criminal justice sector, and upon enactment of legislation will take on oversight of detention in An Garda Síochána (AGS) custody stations, court holding cells, and vehicles transporting persons between places of detention.

1.1.4 The Inspectorate conducts independent, transparent and prevention-focused inspections of Ireland’s prisons. The inspection programme is set by the Inspectorate and reviewed on an annual basis, with the scheduling of prison inspections based on factors including:

- Findings and recommendations from previous inspection reports
- Time elapsed since previous inspections were carried out at individual prisons
- Evidence based assessment of the prison estate, based on available data from a range of sources, including but not limited to the IPS, government bodies, Visiting Committee Reports, NGOs, Prison Chaplaincy and international bodies
- Reports, prisoner complaints, and letters to the Inspectorate from people in prison

² Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment, Principle 29. Adopted by General Assembly Resolution 43/173 of 9 December 1988.

³ The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (2015) Rule 83(2).

⁴ European Prison Rules (2020), Rule 93.1.

- 1.1.5** This Framework sets out how the Inspectorate conducts the inspections of prisons in Ireland. The Framework is informed by the statutory underpinning of the (Chief) Inspector in legislation, national legislation relating to prisons, the rights of people in prison and international obligations owing to people in prison. Given the Inspectorate’s preventive focus, and future remit, the Framework is underpinned by the OPCAT.

Framework Review Process

- 1.1.6** The 2020 Framework Review was carried out by the Inspectorate between December 2023 and April 2024. Learning from inspection activities carried out under the 2020 Framework directly informed the review and development of the 2024 Framework for the Inspection of Prisons in Ireland. In addition, the review incorporated various internal and external consultation components.
- 1.1.7** The review of the 2020 Framework incorporates voices, experiences and feedback from 31 people in prison,⁵ 16 family members and representatives of people who work with families of people in prison, and 46 external stakeholders representing the Irish Prison Service, the Department of Justice, civil society organisations, national and international human rights and oversight bodies, and members of the Inspectorate’s Expert Panel.⁶

Values that Govern the Design and Delivery of Inspections under this Framework

- 1.1.8** The Inspectorate has adopted the following values, and these inform its approach to inspections:
- **Independent & Impartial**
The Inspectorate is fair and reasonable in how it conducts its work, using evidence to arrive at its conclusions. The Inspectorate reports openly and uses evidence informed findings to influence policy and practice.
 - **Human Rights Focused**
The Inspectorate has a focus on human rights at the core of its work. This human rights focus applies to people detained in prison, visitors, staff and others who engage with the IPS.
 - **Transparent and Collaborative**
The Inspectorate publishes its approach to inspections, and the standards that it expects to be met by the IPS. The objective is to work in dialogue with IPS management, frontline staff, and people in prison to drive both compliance and good practice, leading to better outcomes. The Inspectorate also engages with other key stakeholders.
 - **Capable and Systematic**
The Inspectorate is professional and structured in both its approach and articulation of its findings, conclusions and recommendations.

⁵ The OIP facilitated Focus Groups with people in prison, using restorative circle practices, in four prisons: Cork Prison, Wheatfield Prison, Mountjoy Men’s Prison - Progression Unit and Mountjoy Women’s Prison - Dóchas Centre.

⁶ The OIP established an Expert Panel in 2023. The Panel is comprised of members such as healthcare professionals, people with operational experience of working in and/or monitoring places of detention, legal professionals and specialists in areas such as social sciences and social and cultural services. Members of the Expert Panel assist the OIP to carry out its statutory activities.

A People-Centred Approach to Inspection

- 1.1.9** The Inspectorate adopts a people-centred approach to its inspection activities. This means that the materials used by the Inspectorate are accessible, that feedback from people in prison and prison staff directly informs the Inspectorate's work, and that information shared by the Inspectorate centres the needs of people living in prison and people working in prisons. Engagement by the Inspectorate with people in prison and prison staff prioritises collaboration, information-sharing, and active citizenship.
- 1.1.10** All information materials provided to people in prison are reviewed by the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) to ensure they are accessible to a wide range of literacy levels. In addition, other information materials provided to people in prison (including the Inspectorate survey for people in prison) are translated into multiple languages.
- 1.1.11** The Inspectorate prepares summary booklets for people in prison upon publication of inspection reports. These summary booklets are distributed by the Inspectorate to every cell in the prison(s) to which the report applies.

The Inspectorate also prepares report summary infographics for people working in prisons, and coordinates with the Irish Prison Service to disseminate the infographic to all staff in the relevant prison.

1.2 Development of this Framework

National Legislative Requirements

- 1.2.1** The Office of the Inspector of Prisons is a statutory, independent office established pursuant to Part 5 of the Prisons Act 2007. The key role currently assigned to the Chief Inspector is to carry out regular inspections of prisons in Ireland and to present a report on each institution inspected as well as an annual report to the Minister for Justice for laying before the Houses of the Oireachtas and for publication.
- 1.2.2** In carrying out an inspection, the Inspectorate may, in accordance with the Prisons Act 2007:
- At any time enter any prison or any part of a prison
 - Request and obtain from the Governor a copy of any books, records, other documents or extracts from such documents, and
 - In the course of an inspection or arising out of an inspection, bring any issues of concern to the notice of the Governor of the prison concerned, the Director General of the IPS or the Minister for Justice, or each one of them, as the Inspector considers appropriate.⁷
- 1.2.3** The Prisons Act 2007 establishes that:
- Governors and other prison officers, other persons employed in prisons and prisoners shall, as far as reasonably practicable, comply with any request for information that the Inspector may make in the performance of his or her functions.*

⁷ Prisons Act 2007, Section 31(1)(c).

- 1.2.4** The Prison Rules 2007-2020 set out in some detail the statutory framework within which the IPS is to manage its estate. Certain rules stipulate minimum expectations in relation to a broad range of areas, including but not limited to, accommodation, hygiene, association and activity, support services, healthcare, education, contact with the outside community, privacy, grievance processes and preparation for release.
- 1.2.5** In addition, the IPS, as a public body, is subject to the duty in Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014. This obliges a public body in the performance of its functions to have regard to the need to “*protect the human rights of its members, staff and persons to whom it provides services.*”

National Policy

- 1.2.6** Imprisonment as a sanction of last resort is a guiding penal policy principle set out in Government policy: “*there should be a sparing approach to the use of imprisonment*” and that “*punishment with criminal sanctions should, as far as reasonably feasible, be subject to the principle of proportionality and assist in the offenders’ rehabilitation and reintegration*”.⁸
- 1.2.7** The IPS outlines its mission as “*providing safe and secure custody, dignity of care and rehabilitation to prisoners for safer communities.*”⁹ Its vision is a “*safer community through excellence in a prison service built on respect for human dignity.*”

The strategic goals of the IPS, as set out in its 2024 - 2027 Strategic Plan,¹⁰ include ensuring that the IPS “*deliver(s) a prisoner-centred, multi-disciplinary approach to working with prisoners and their families to achieve better outcomes*”. In addition, it aims to “*ensure that prisons are safe and rehabilitative places, and to support offenders to live crime-free lives and not reoffend upon release, thus creating beneficial outcomes for the individuals and society*”.

International Obligations and Standards

- 1.2.8** In addition to domestic legal requirements, a range of relevant international human rights obligations and standards inform the Inspectorate’s approach to inspection work.
- 1.2.9** These include, but are not limited to, international treaties which are ratified by Ireland:
- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)
 - The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)
 - The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)
 - The United Nations Convention Against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (UNCAT)
 - The United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
 - The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)
 - The European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)
 - The European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (ECPT)

⁸ Department of Justice (2022) Criminal Justice Policy Review of Policy Options for Prison and Penal Reform 2022-2024

⁹ IPS Mission and Values.

¹⁰ IPS 2023-2027 Strategic Plan.

Particularly relevant to the work of the Inspectorate are authoritative standards dealing with the treatment of prisoners; these are not legally binding but are accepted as best practice:

- The European Prison Rules (2020)
- The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Mandela Rules) (2015)
- The United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-Custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules) (2010)
- Council of Europe Recommendations and the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) standards, country reports and annual reports.

OPCAT

1.2.10 The OPCAT was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2002, and entered into force in 2006. It is a Treaty which seeks to assist States in the prevention of torture and ill-treatment. The OPCAT establishes a system of regular visits to all places of detention, conducted by national bodies which are called National Preventive Mechanisms (NPMs). In addition, the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (SPT), the international body established under the OPCAT, recognises that those who are deprived of their liberty are particularly vulnerable to ill-treatment and that the State's efforts should be focused on the prevention of such ill-treatment.

1.2.11 Ireland signed the Optional Protocol in 2007, but ratification remains outstanding. In 2022, the Draft General Scheme on the Inspection of Places of Detention Bill¹¹ was published, and set out legislative intent to:

- Ratify the UN Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (OPCAT)
- Expand the role of Inspector of Prisons to become the Chief Inspector of Places of Detention

Pre-legislative scrutiny of the legislation was completed in March 2023, with the Joint Committee on Justice issuing recommendations,¹² which included:

- A guarantee of the functional and financial independence of NPMs under relevant Heads, in order to align with corresponding guarantees within OPCAT
- Adequate funding and resourcing should be provided to the Office of the Inspectorate of Places of Detention (OIPD) to ensure that it can take on its expanded role
- The immediate ratification of the OPCAT prior to the legislation being enacted in full

In 2024, legislation was being drafted to enact a National Preventive Mechanism for the criminal justice sector in Ireland,¹³ the Office of the Inspectorate of Places of Detention (OIPD).

¹¹ Department of Justice (June 2022) [General Scheme of the Inspection of Places of Detention Bill](#).

¹² Joint Committee on Justice (March 2023) [Report on Pre-Legislative Scrutiny of the General Scheme of the Inspection of Places of Detention Bill 2022 33/JC/36](#).

¹³ Department of the Taoiseach, [Government Legislation Programme Spring 2024](#), pg 11.

1.3 Framework as a ‘Living’ Document

1.3.1 The Framework for the Inspection of Prisons in Ireland is maintained as a ‘living’ document. Its contents are continually reviewed and updated in light of developments, such as, amongst other things:

- new domestic legislation and policy, especially the legislation providing for the designation of National Preventive Mechanisms
- amendments to the Prison Rules
- emerging international good practice
- high-quality empirical research
- continuous experience-based improvement by the Inspectorate.

1.3.2 As originally established in the 2020 Framework, formal review of the 2024 Framework will be conducted as required, but no later than every three years.

1.4 Structure of the 2024 Inspection Framework

1.4.1 The structure of the Framework is divided into two parts:

- **Inspection Focus Areas and Assessment Measures**
- **Inspection Process**

2 FOCUS AREAS & ASSESSMENT MEASURES

2.1 Inspection Focus Areas

2.1.1 The Inspectorate assesses treatment and conditions in prisons across four Focus Areas:

- **Focus Area 1: Respect & Dignity**

People in prison are treated with respect for their human dignity, as are those working in and visiting prisons.

- **Focus Area 2: Security & Safety**

People in prison are held safely and securely, and the safety of staff and others is assured.

- **Focus Area 3: Health and Wellbeing**

People in prison have access to appropriate levels of healthcare, at a minimum, equivalent to that provided in the community.

- **Focus Area 4: Purposeful Activity & Resettlement**

People in prison are supported to access purposeful activity and to develop their capability to contribute positively to society. People in prison are prepared and supported for release back into the community and the likelihood of reoffending is reduced.

2.1.2 Each Focus Area is assessed using measures and standards drawn from a range of sources, including but not limited to:

- **National Law:** the Irish Constitution, European Convention on Human Rights Act 2003, Prisons Act 2007, Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014, Prison Rules 2007-2020, and wider human rights and equality obligations
- **International Obligations:** Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (ECPT), the United Nations Convention Against Torture (UNCAT), the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
- **International Guidance:** European Prison Rules 2020, Mandela Rules 2015, Bangkok Rules 2010, Yogyakarta Principles (2017), Council of Europe Recommendations, European Commission Recommendation on procedural rights of suspects and accused persons subject to pre-trial detention and on material detention conditions (2022)
- **Recognised Best Practice:** CPT standards and guidance documents, approaches / standards used in other jurisdictions and research on prisons in Ireland and internationally

2.1.3 In general, inspections assess the following themes across the four Focus Areas:



2.1.4 IPS compliance with legislation and standards and the environment within prison settings contribute to outcomes for people in prison across each of the Focus Areas. The Inspectorate assesses outcomes based on indicative measures, which are rooted in national legislation and policy, and international standards and guidance.

2.2 Inspection Assessment Measures

2.2.1 In conducting an Inspection, the Inspection Team defines specific assessment areas, such as a particular IPS establishment, theme or function.

2.2.2 An indicative list of the measures within each Focus Area may be used by the Inspectorate to assess the performance of an individual establishment. These measures are set out below (Section 2.2.4). Alongside each measure included in the indicative list is the legislation, standard or guidance (“Assessment Standard”) from which the measure is derived, and through which it is assessed.

2.2.3 This list of indicative measures is:

- not intended to be exhaustive (which would restrict the work of the Inspectorate)

These initial measures are drawn on and added to, as appropriate for each individual inspection. The Inspectorate shapes the specific areas of focus for each individual inspection, and that this is based on, amongst other things, the nature of the individual establishment, the complaints and issues that prisoners / staff / visitors / Chaplains / Visiting Committees have raised, the findings of previous inspections, the findings from Death in Custody (DIC) and other Inspectorate reports, and issues that the IPS has reported.

- not designed to simply reflect a lowest threshold of minimum / mandatory statutory requirements (which would not reflect the ambition of the Inspectorate), but rather to support better outcomes for the treatment and conditions of people in prison.
- not listed in any particular order of priority.

2.2.4 Focus Area Indicative Measures

RESPECT & DIGNITY		
<i>People in prison are treated with respect for their human dignity, as are those working in and visiting prisons.</i>		
	Indicative Measure	Assessment Standard
Respect & Dignity	1. People living in prison are treated with respect and dignity and protected from torture and inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules 75(2)(iii) and 85 (3) (c) (iii.), Prison Rules, 2007 – 2020 • Articles 7 and 10, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) • Article 3, European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1953) • Article 4, Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union • Rules 1 and 72.1, European Prison Rules (2020) • Rule 1, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • Principle 11, European Commission Recommendation on Procedural Rights of Suspects and Accused Persons subject to Pre-Trial Detention and on Material Detention Conditions (2022)
	2. Cells are occupied in accordance with the capacity for which they are designed and in line with minimum international human rights standards, but where possible single occupancy cells are provided where they are the option preferred. Safety Observation Cells and Close Supervision Cells are not included in prison capacity figures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 18, Prison Rules, 2007 - 2020 • Rule 18.5, 18.7 European Prison Rules (2020) • Rule 12, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • CPT Living Space per Prisoners in Prison Establishments (2015) • CPT 31st General Report (2021) • Principle 34, European Commission Recommendation on Procedural Rights of Suspects and Accused Persons subject to Pre-Trial Detention and on Material Detention Conditions (2022)
	3. Prison accommodation and facilities - with regard to cell size, occupancy, light, ventilation and temperature - are fit for purpose and maintained to an appropriate standard and meet requirements for health and well-being. Each cell is of adequate size and is fitted with a functioning, correctly calibrated and monitored call system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules 18 and 19, Prison Rules, 2007 - 2020 • Rule 18.1 and 18.2, European Prison Rules (2020) • Rule 13, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • CPT Living Space per Prisoner in Prison Establishments (2015) • Principles 34 - 36, European Commission Recommendation on Procedural Rights of Suspects and Accused Persons subject to Pre-Trial Detention and on Material Detention Conditions (2022)
	4. Unconvicted people in prison are accommodated separately from convicted people in prison.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 71, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Article 10(2)(a), International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) • Rule 18.8, European Prison Rules (2020) • Rule 11(b), UN Mandela Rules (2015) • CPT Standards on Remand Detention (2017) • Principle 38, European Commission Recommendation on Procedural Rights of Suspects and Accused Persons subject to Pre-Trial Detention and on Material Detention Conditions (2022)

Indicative Measure	Assessment Standard
5. Alternatives to imprisonment, including community-based sanctions, are considered by courts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criminal Justice (Community Service) Act 2011 • COE Recommendation on the Use of Remand in Custody (2006) • Preamble, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • Rules 57 - 62 , UN Bangkok Rules(2010) • CPT General Report (2021) • Principles 10, 14 - 16, European Commission Recommendation on Procedural Rights of Suspects and Accused Persons subject to Pre-Trial Detention and on Material Detention Conditions (2022) • The Economic and Social Council (2017) Draft Resolution II Promoting and Encouraging the Implementation of Alternatives to Imprisonment as part of Comprehensive Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Policies
6. Immigration detainees are not accommodated in prison. In exceptional cases where immigration detainees are detained in prison, immigration detainees should not be accommodated with the general population.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article 16 EU Directive 2008/115/EC - Common Standards and Procedures in Member States for Returning Illegally Staying Third-Country Nationals • CPT Factsheet Immigration Detention (2017)
7. People in prison have sufficient time out of their cells with opportunities for meaningful human interaction on a daily basis, which meets or exceeds the legal minimum requirement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 27(1), Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rule 25.2, European Prison Rules (2020) • CPT - A Decency Threshold for Prisoners: Criteria for Assessing Conditions of Detention (2021) • Principles 45 - 46, European Commission Recommendation on Procedural Rights of Suspects and Accused Persons subject to Pre-Trial Detention and on Material Detention Conditions (2022)
8. All people in prison have daily access to a minimum standard of meaningful human contact, as defined in the Prison Rules and international guidance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 27(4), Prison (Amendment) Rules 2017 • Essex Paper 3 Initial Guidance on the Interpretation and Implementation of the UN Nelson Mandela Rules (2017)
9. People in prison receive nutritious, well-balanced and varied meals that respond to their dietary and medical needs, cultural and religious beliefs and are served at an appropriate temperature and time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 23, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rule 22, European Prison Rules (2020) • Rule 22, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act (2014) • CPT - A Decency Threshold for Prisoners: Criteria for Assessing Conditions of Detention (2021) • Principles 43 - 44, European Commission Recommendation on Procedural Rights of Suspects and Accused Persons subject to Pre-Trial Detention and on Material Detention Conditions (2022)
10. Cleanliness and hygiene are observed throughout the prison and procedures for the prevention and control of infection are implemented.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 20, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rule 19(1) and (2), European Prison Rules (2020) • Rule 17, UN Mandela Rules (2015)

Respect & Dignity	Indicative Measure	Assessment Standard
	11. Cleaning materials, including toiletries and personal hygiene products, are available to all people in prison to maintain their personal living area to a clean and hygienic standard and to enable them to maintain a good standard of personal hygiene.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules 25, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rule 19, European Prison Rules (2020) • Rule 18, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • Rule 5, UN Bangkok Rules (2010) • CPT - A Decency Threshold for Prisoners: Criteria for Assessing Conditions of Detention (2021)
	12. All people in prison have ready access to shower and toilet facilities with sufficient screening to maintain their privacy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 25(2), Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rule 19(4), European Prison Rules (2020) • Rule 15 and 16, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • CPT - A Decency Threshold for Prisoners: Criteria for Assessing Conditions of Detention (2021) • CPT Living Space per Prisoner in Prison Establishments (2015) • Principles 40 - 41, European Commission Recommendation on Procedural Rights of Suspects and Accused Persons subject to Pre-Trial Detention and on Material Detention Conditions (2022)
	13. All people in prison have suitable clothing for the activities they undertake, including clothing that is weather-appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 21, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rule 20, European Prison Rules (2020) • Rule 19, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • CPT Transgender Persons: Core Principles to Ensure their Respectful and Decent Treatment in Prison (2024) • CPT - A Decency Threshold for Prisoners: Criteria for Assessing Conditions of Detention (2021) • Principle 42, European Commission Recommendation on Procedural Rights of Suspects and Accused Persons subject to Pre-Trial Detention and on Material Detention Conditions (2022)
	14. People in prison are supplied with a bed, mattress and sufficient clean bedding that is regularly laundered.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 22, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rule 21, European Prison Rules (2006) • Rule 21, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • Principle 42, European Commission Recommendation on Procedural Rights of Suspects and Accused Persons subject to Pre-Trial Detention and on Material Detention Conditions (2022)
	15. Prison staff know people in the prison in their assigned areas and staff interactions with people in prison are respectful and fair.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules 75 and 85, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • IPS Code of Ethics (2021) • Rules 72, 74 and 75, European Prison Rules (2020) • Rule 77, UN Mandela Rules (2015)
	16. Interviews / conversations of a sensitive nature take place in a private setting to encourage openness and respect privacy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules 55, 76 and 90, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rule 56, UN Mandela Rules (2015)
	17. Staff feel respected, valued and recognised by their colleagues and managers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IPS Code of Ethics (2021) • COE Recommendation European Code of Ethics for Prison Staff (2012)

Respect & Dignity	Indicative Measure	Assessment Standard
	18. The social environment is such that people in prison do not suffer from undue levels of stress and tension.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 83, European Prison Rules (2020) • Rule 1, UN Mandela Rules (2015)
	19. The Prison Rules are accessible to people in prison in a language and form they understand. Provisions are in place to ensure that information provided is understood.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 13(4), (5) and (7), Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rule 30, European Prison Rules (2020) • Rule 55, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act (2014)
	20. Rule 44 correspondence is processed in line with the requirements set out in the Prison Rules.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 44, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020
	21. People in prison who are foreign nationals are provided with information on how to contact their diplomatic or consular representative, and legal representation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 39, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rule 37, European Prison Rules (2020) • Rule 62, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • COE Recommendation on Foreign Prisoners (2012) • Principles 67 - 70, European Commission Recommendation on Procedural Rights of Suspects and Accused Persons subject to Pre-Trial Detention and on Material Detention Conditions (2022)
	22. Rules with regard to making / maintaining contact with family / friends, and how to arrange visits or telephone calls, are explained at committal and frequently thereafter.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules 5, 13 and 14, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020
	23. People in prison are aware of and will have access to support services, for example Chaplaincy and Addiction / Counselling Services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules 33 and 34, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020
	24. People in prison know about and can access the daily opportunities available to them in terms of association, exercise and purposeful activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 27, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rules 27.1 - 27.7, European Prison Rules (2020) • CPT - A Decency Threshold for Prisoners: Criteria for Assessing Conditions of Detention (2021) • 51, CPT Report to the United Kingdom from 8 June to 21 June 2021 (2022)
	25. Where restrictions are imposed on access to work training, education and/or exercise facilities, a procedure is followed to ensure that the decision is proportionate, justified and in place for the shortest time necessary, and records are maintained for inspection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules 27, 28, 31 and 32, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rules 3 and 60.2, European Prison Rules (2020) • Rule 36, UN Mandela Rules (2015)
	26. People in prison are facilitated to effectively participate in court proceedings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules 38 and 46(5), Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Article 14(3), International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights • Rules 23.1 - 23.3, European Prison Rules (2020) • Rule 61, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • Rule 2, UN Bangkok Rules (2010)

Respect & Dignity	Indicative Measure	Assessment Standard
	<p>27. People in prison are able to have visits with and make telephone calls to their legal representatives, at a minimum in accordance with the Prison Rules.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules 38 and 46(5) Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rules 98.1 and 98.2, European Prison Rules (2020) • Rule 61, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • Rule 2, UN Bangkok Rules (2010) • Principle 54, European Commission Recommendation on Procedural Rights of Suspects and Accused Persons subject to Pre-Trial Detention and on Material Detention Conditions (2022)
	<p>28. On committal, immigration detainees are afforded their rights, in particular access to legal representation, medical examination, contact with a third party (relative).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules 16 Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Article 16(2), EU Directive 2008/115/EC • CPT Factsheet Immigration Detention (2017) • Principles 67 - 70, European Commission Recommendation on Procedural Rights of Suspects and Accused Persons subject to Pre-Trial Detention and on Material Detention Conditions (2022)
	<p>29. People in prison are treated fairly and are not discriminated against; allegations of discriminatory treatment are promptly and adequately investigated.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 75(5), Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rule 13, 34(1), 37(1) and 38(1), European Prison Rules (2020) • Rules 2 and 5, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • Rule 1, UN Bangkok Rules (2010) • Article 1, UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965)
	<p>30. The needs of people in prison, relating to, for example, age, gender, sexual and gender identity, religion, culture, ethnicity and disability, are appropriately met.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article 5 and 14(2), UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2008) • Principles 9 and 10, Yogyakarta Principles (2006) • CPT Transgender Persons: Core Principles to Ensure their Respectful and Decent Treatment in Prison (2024) • Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act (2014) • COE Recommendation European Code of Ethics for Prison Staff (2012) • Council of Europe Resolution on Detainees with Disabilities (2018)
	<p>31. Staff are trained in the identification of vulnerable people in prison and appropriate steps are taken to address any vulnerabilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 81(3) and (4), European Prison Rules (2020) • Rule 76(2), UN Mandela Rules (2015) • Rule 29, 32, 33 and 35, UN Bangkok Rules (2010) • Principle 7.2, COE Guidelines Regarding Recruitment, Selection, Education, Training and Professional Development of Prison and Probation Staff
	<p>32. Staff receive appropriate and quality training to safeguard the respect and dignity of people in prison (for example, in equality, human rights, cultural awareness, access to justice, restorative justice, conflict mediation).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act (2014) • CPT Transgender Persons: Core Principles to Ensure their Respectful and Decent Treatment in Prison (2024) • Principles 77 - 78, European Commission Recommendation on Procedural Rights of Suspects and Accused Persons subject to Pre-Trial Detention and on Material Detention Conditions (2022)

SAFETY & SECURITY

People in prison are held safely and securely, and the safety of staff and others is assured.

Safety & Security	Indicative Measure	Assessment Standard
	1. All record books and electronic records, and in particular those related to restricted regimes, complaints, use of force / restraint, disciplinary processes and serious adverse incidents are accurately maintained and kept up-to-date.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules 4, 8, 11, 14, 55, 60, 62, 63, 64 and 65, 77, 78, 80, 81, 83, 102, 105 and 107, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rules 15-16, European Prison Rules (2020) • Rules 6-8, UN Mandela Rules (2015)
	2. People in prison who may be marginalised, or who require protection, are appropriately accommodated to ensure their safety.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 63, Prison Rules 2007 – 2020 • Rule 53A, European Prison Rules (2020) • CPT Transgender Persons: Core Principles to Ensure their Respectful and Decent Treatment in Prison (2024)
	3. People in prison on restricted regimes are formally supported to return to the general population.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules 62, 63 and 64, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rule 53A, European Prison Rules (2020) • Irish Prison Service (2017) Elimination of Solitary Confinement • CPT Transgender Persons: Core Principles to Ensure their Respectful and Decent Treatment in Prison (2024) • CPT Solitary Confinement of Prisoners (2011)
	4. All people in prison segregated from the general population are done so in accordance with the Prison Rules.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules 62, 63 and 64, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Irish Prison Service Policy on Elimination of Solitary Confinement (2017)
	5. People in prison are not subject to a regime amounting to effective solitary confinement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules 27(1), 62, 63 and 64, Prison Rules 2007-2020 • Rules 53A and 60.6, European Prison Rules (2020) • Rules 43 - 45, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • Irish Prison Service Policy on Elimination of Solitary Confinement (2017) • CPT Transgender Persons: Core Principles to Ensure their Respectful and Decent Treatment in Prison (2024) • CPT Solitary Confinement of Prisoners (2011)
	6. Security within the prison is proportionate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 51, European Prison Rules (2020) • Rule 36, UN Mandela Rules (2015)
	7. People in prison are risk assessed in relation to cell sharing prior to their allocation of accommodation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules 18(6), 18(7), 18(9), 18(10), and 52(1), European Prison Rules (2020) • Rule 12(2), UN Mandela Rules (2015)
	8. People in prison are allocated to accommodation within a prison having regard to their vulnerability, health status and security risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules 17, 18 and 52, European Prison Rules (2020) • Rule 5, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • Rules 4 and 41, UN Bangkok Rules (2010) • Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act (2014) • CPT Transgender Persons: Core Principles to Ensure their Respectful and Decent Treatment in Prison (2024)

Safety & Security	Indicative Measure	Assessment Standard
	9. Prison staff effectively implement their duty of care by protecting people in prison from those who wish to harm them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rules 63, 80, 85 and 86, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 IPS Code of Ethics (2021) COE Recommendation European Code of Ethics for Prison Staff (2012) CPT Transgender Persons: Core Principles to Ensure their Respectful and Decent Treatment in Prison (2024) Principles 52 - 53, European Commission Recommendation on Procedural Rights of Suspects and Accused Persons subject to Pre-Trial Detention and on Material Detention Conditions (2022)
	10. The prison takes appropriate steps to safeguard people in prison whose appearance, background or behaviour leave them at a heightened risk of harm or abuse from others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IPS Code of Ethics (2021) Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act (2014) COE Recommendation European Code of Ethics for Prison Staff (2012)
	11. Adequate resources (including healthcare-related approaches, see H & W Indicative Measure 21) are devoted to counteracting the supply of contraband into the prison, and records are made of contraband finds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rule 9, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020
	12. The use of intrusive search techniques is strictly limited and only carried out when required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rules 6 and 36, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 Rules 16A(2) and 54, European Prison Rules (2020) Rules 50 - 52 and 60, UN Mandela Rules (2015)
	13. Rub down and strip searches are conducted by officers whose gender aligns with the gender identity and preference of the person being searched; the person's search choice is recorded.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rules 19 - 21, UN Bangkok Rules (2010) CPT Transgender Persons: Core Principles to Ensure their Respectful and Decent Treatment in Prison (2024) COE Recommendation European Code of Ethics for Prison Staff (2012)
	14. People in prison are accommodated at the lowest security level necessary (based on risk assessment).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rules 51(1), 51(4) and 51(5), European Prison Rules (2020) Rule 89(2), UN Mandela Rules (2015) CPT Transgender Persons: Core Principles to Ensure their Respectful and Decent Treatment in Prison (2024) Rule 41, UN Bangkok Rules (2010)
	15. Visitors and other persons entering the prison can do so safely.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rule 36, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 Rules 52(2), 54(1) and 54(9), European Prison Rules (2020) Rule 21, UN Bangkok Rules (2010) Rule 1, UN Mandela Rules (2015)
	16. People in prison who leave the prison under escort are risk assessed and any restraint imposed upon them is the minimum required for the risk presented.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rule 32, 68, 16A(2)f and 16A(2)h, European Prison Rules (2020) Rule 47(2), 48 and 49, UN Mandela Rules (2015)
17. Transfers of people in prison are provided in safe and secure vehicles that are adequately staffed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CPT Transport of Detainees (2018) 	

Safety & Security	Indicative Measure	Assessment Standard
	18. The ratio of staff to people in prison is at an appropriate level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 83, European Prison Rules (2020) • CPT - A Decency Threshold for Prisoners: Criteria for Assessing Conditions of Detention (2021)
	19. Average daily staffing levels in the prison are adequate to facilitate access to activities and services for people in prison.	
	20. Staff training is adequate, of a high-quality, up-to-date, and suited to the needs of the population.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 81, European Prison Rules (2020) • Rules 75 - 76, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • Rules 29 – 35 , UN Bangkok Rules (2010)
	21. Effective work practices are shared across the prison, and are in line across the prison estate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 83, European Prison Rules (2020)
	22. An adequate internal complaints system capable of dealing with the complaints of people in prison in an effective and timely fashion is in place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 57A and 57B, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rule 70, European Prison Rules (2020) • Rules 56 - 57, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • Rule 25, UN Bangkok Rules (2010) • CPT Standards on Complaints Mechanisms (2018) • IPS Complaints Policy (2021) • Principles 62 -63, European Commission Recommendation on Procedural Rights of Suspects and Accused Persons subject to Pre-Trial Detention and on Material Detention Conditions (2022)
	23. People in prison are aware of the complaints system, feel safe / confident to use the system without risk or fear of adverse treatment, and are able to access the system confidentially.	
	24. Category A (most serious) complaints are appropriately categorised and investigated in a timely manner with outcomes recorded / followed up, in compliance with obligations under the law.	
	25. People in prison and staff are not punished or treated negatively for engaging with the Inspectorate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 93(3), European Prison Rules (2020) • Rule 56(2), UN Mandela Rules (2015) • Article 21, Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture
	26. Fair disciplinary processes are in operation in the prison.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part 3, Sections 11 - 16, Prisons Act 2007 • Rules 66 - 68, 92 Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rules 56 - 63, European Prison Rules (2020) • Rules 37 - 43, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • Rules 22 and 23, UN Bangkok Rules (2010) • IPS Guideline Document on the Imposition of Disciplinary Sanctions (2022)
27. Prison staff, when appropriate, use conflict prevention, mediation, restorative justice principles or other interventions to prevent and resolve conflicts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 56(2), European Prison Rules (2020) • Rule 38(1) and 76(1)(c), UN Mandela Rules (2015) • COE Recommendation concerning Restorative Justice in Criminal Matters (60 - 61) (2018) 	
28. When violent situations occur staff take appropriate action to de-escalate the incident and deal with those involved in a fair manner.		
29. The use of force / restraint is proportionate to the risk posed and is no more than necessary for the situation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 65 and 93, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rule 65, European Prison Rules (2020) • Rule 82, UN Mandela Rules (2015) 	

HEALTH & WELLBEING

People in prison have access to appropriate levels of healthcare, at a minimum, equivalent to that provided in the community.

Health & Wellbeing	Indicative Measure	Assessment Standard
	1. An adequate level of healthcare services and staffing are available to all people in prison.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 99, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rule 41, European Prison Rules (2020) • Rule 25, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • Rule 10, UN Bangkok Rules (2010) • CPT Healthcare Services in Prisons (1993) • COE Recommendation Ethical and Organisational Aspects of Health Care in Prison (1998) • COE Guidelines on Organisation and Management of Healthcare in Prison (2019) • Principle 49, European Commission Recommendation on Procedural Rights of Suspects and Accused Persons subject to Pre-Trial Detention and on Material Detention Conditions (2022)
	2. The provision of healthcare services in prisons is equivalent to that of healthcare services in the wider community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules 11, 33(1), 100 - 101, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rule 40, 42 and 43, European Prison Rules (2020)
	3. A full medical examination should be carried out as soon as possible on committal to a prison and subsequent to any transfer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 24, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • Rules 6, 10, UN Bangkok Rules (2010)
	4. Waiting times to access primary and secondary healthcare services are kept to a minimum, and are comparable to that found in the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPT Healthcare Services in Prisons (1993) • COE Recommendation Ethical and Organisational Aspects of Health Care in Prison (1998)
	5. Healthcare equipment, technologies and infrastructure are suitable to the needs of the population and align with those available in the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COE Guidelines on Organisation and Management of Healthcare in Prison (2019) • Principles 49 and 51, European Commission Recommendation on Procedural Rights of Suspects and Accused Persons subject to Pre-Trial Detention and on Material Detention Conditions (2022)
	6. Medical records are maintained for all people in prison and are kept accurate and up-to-date.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules 107(1), Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rule 26, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • CPT Healthcare Services in Prisons (1993) • COE Recommendation Ethical and Organisational Aspects of Health Care in Prison (1998) • COE Guidelines on Organisation and Management of Healthcare in Prison (2019)
7. The healthcare needs of all people in prison are adequately met.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules 73, 74 and Part 10, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rules 39 - 48, European Prison Rules (2020) • Rules 24 - 35, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • Rules 6 - 18, UN Bangkok Rules (2010) • CPT Healthcare Services in Prisons (1993) • CPT Transgender Persons: Core Principles to Ensure their Respectful and Decent Treatment in Prison (2024) • Article 12, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) 	

Indicative Measure	Assessment Standard
8. People in prison have access to primary health care services, national screening and immunisation programmes, sexual and reproductive healthcare and prevention programmes, on an equitable basis to those provided in the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 33(1), Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rule 17 - 18 UN Bangkok Rules (2010) • CPT Healthcare Services in Prisons (1993) • COE Recommendation Ethical and Organisational Aspects of Health Care in Prison (10, 28, 36) (1998) • Principle 50, European Commission Recommendation on Procedural Rights of Suspects and Accused Persons subject to Pre-Trial Detention and on Material Detention Conditions (2022)
9. Structures are in place and arrangements are made to ensure continuity of care for patients upon their release from prison.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 42(3j), European Prison Rules (2020) • Rule 110, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • Rule 47, UN Bangkok Rules (2010)
10. For pregnant people in custody, appropriate antenatal, postnatal and childcare supports are provided.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 17, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rules 34(4) and 36, European Prison Rules (2020) • Rules 28 and 29, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • Rules 48 - 52, UN Bangkok Rules (2010) • COE Recommendation Concerning the Ethical and Organisational Aspects of Health Care in Prison (8) (1998) • CPT Healthcare Services in Prisons (1993)
11. People in prison are referred to, and facilitated to attend external specialists, as appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules 74, 101(3), 102(3), 105, and 106, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rule 46(1), European Prison Rules (2020) • Rules 27(1) and 28, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • Rules 9 and 51, UN Bangkok Rules (2010) • COE Recommendation Concerning the Ethical and Organisational Aspects of Health Care in Prison (7) (8) (10) (1998) • CPT Transgender Persons: Core Principles to Ensure their Respectful and Decent Treatment in Prison (2024) • CPT Healthcare Services in Prisons (1993)
12. Where applicable, palliative and end-of-life care is provided, and, where possible, arrangements are made to facilitate compassionate release.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irish Prison Service End of Life Policy (2022) • CPT Healthcare Services in Prisons (1993) • COE Recommendation Concerning the Ethical and Organisational Aspects of Health Care in Prison (51) (1998)
13. Reasonable accommodation is made for people in prison with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article 14(2), UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities • Rec 7.6, Council of Europe Resolution 223 - Detainees with Disabilities in Europe (2018) • Rule 5, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act (2014) • Principles 75-76, European Commission Recommendation on Procedural Rights of Suspects and Accused Persons subject to Pre-Trial Detention and on Material Detention Conditions (2022)

Indicative Measure	Assessment Standard
14. The healthcare team ensures mental health treatment of all people in prison who are in need of such treatment and pays special attention to suicide prevention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rules 11(1), 64, 100(1)(h), 104, and 105(d), Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 Rules 40(4), 42(3), and 47(2), European Prison Rules (2020) Rules 25(1), 30, 32(1)(a) and 33, UN Mandela Rules (2015) Rules 6, 12, 13, and 16, UN Bangkok Rules (2010)
15. People in prison assessed as requiring treatment in a healthcare / mental healthcare setting are transferred in a timely manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rule 46(1), European Prison Rules (2020) Rule 109, UN Mandela Rules (2015) CPT Healthcare Services in Prisons (1993) COE Recommendation Concerning the Ethical and Organisational Aspects of Health Care in Prison (55) (1998)
16. A strategy to address suicide and self-harm is in place within the prison. Procedures are in place to allow for speedy intervention where there is cause for concern that a person in prison may attempt suicide or self-harm.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rules 64 and 80, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 Rules 47(2) and 52(1), European Prison Rules (2020) Rule 16, UN Bangkok Rules (2010) COE Recommendation Concerning the Ethical and Organisational Aspects of Health Care in Prison (58) (1998) CPT Healthcare Services in Prisons (1993)
17. Those identified as at risk of suicide or self-harm are reviewed by staff in line with standard operating procedures and the Prison Rules.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rule 81(3), European Prison Rules (2020) Rule 76(1)(d), UN Mandela Rules (2015) Rule 35, UN Bangkok Rules (2010) CPT Healthcare Services in Prisons (1993) COE Recommendation Concerning the Ethical and Organisational Aspects of Health Care in Prison (33) (1998)
18. Staff are proactive in recognising and responding to signs which indicate a person in prison may be at risk of suicide or self-harm and have the appropriate training to fulfil this function.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rule 4(d), Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 Irish Prison Service Drugs Strategy 2023 - 2026 Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery, National Drug Strategy 2017 - 2025 Rule 42(3)d, European Prison Rules (2020) Rules 24(2) and 30(c), UN Mandela Rules (2015) Rules 6 and 15, UN Bangkok Rules (2010) COE Recommendation Concerning the Ethical and Organisational Aspects of Health Care in Prison (7 and 43 - 49) (1998) World Health Organisation Factsheet on Opioid Overdose (2023)
19. People in prison have access to appropriate detoxification programmes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rule 100(1)(h), 100(1)(i), 100(1)(m), 103, 104, 105, and 107, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 Rules 44 and 45, European Prison Rules (2020) Rule 35, UN Mandela Rules (2015)
20. People in prison have access, in medically appropriate circumstances, to methadone substitution or maintenance programmes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rule 11, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020
21. Approaches to drug use in the prison incorporate a harm reduction response, including that opioid antidotes are readily available to people in prison and staff (see, S & S Indicative Measure 11).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rule 11, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020
22. Input made by the medical team on aspects of the prison regime and environment is considered by prison management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rule 11, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020
23. People in prison are examined by a doctor in accordance with the requirements of the Prison Rules.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rule 11, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020

Indicative Measure	Assessment Standard
<p>24. The prison takes appropriate steps to ensure that any visible injury and complaints about ill-treatment are noted and recorded at time of committal and subsequently by a registered nurse and registered medical practitioner as part of their committal assessments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules 4 and 11(1)(e), Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rule 15(1)e, European Prison Rules (2020) • Rule 7(d), UN Mandela Rules (2015) • CPT - Documenting and Reporting Medical Evidence of Ill-Treatment (2013) • Principle 11, European Commission Recommendation on Procedural Rights of Suspects and Accused Persons subject to Pre-Trial Detention and on Material Detention Conditions (2022)
<p>25. When separation adversely affects a person in prison's physical or mental health, action is taken to suspend the separation or replace it with a less restrictive measure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules 62(7), 64(4), 100(1)(h) and 103(1), Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rules 43(3), 53A(b) and 53A(i), European Prison Rules (2020) • Rules 45(2) and 46, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • CPT Transgender Persons: Core Principles to Ensure their Respectful and Decent Treatment in Prison (2024) • CPT - Solitary Confinement of Prisoners (2011)
<p>26. Isolation cells are used as a last resort, after other interventions have been explored, use is strictly proportionate to any identified risk, and are only used for the shortest time required.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules 62, 63 and 64, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rule 53A(c) and 53A(d), European Prison Rules (2020) • Rule 45, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • Rule 22, UN Bangkok Rules (2010) • CPT - Solitary Confinement of Prisoners (2011)
<p>27. Medical records are subject to appropriate levels of confidentiality.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules 16A(3) and 42(3)a, European Prison Rules (2020) • Rule 26, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • CPT Healthcare Services in Prisons (1993) • General Data Protection Regulation (2016) • Data Protection Act (2018)
<p>28. Special consideration is given by the healthcare team to the specific needs of vulnerable people and marginalised groups in prison.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules 2(2), 25(1), 28 and 29, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • Rules 6 - 18, UN Bangkok Rules (2010) • Article 14(2), UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities • CPT Healthcare Services in Prisons (1993) • CPT Transgender Persons: Core Principles to Ensure their Respectful and Decent Treatment in Prison (2024) • COE Recommendation European Code of Ethics for Prison Staff (2012) • COE Recommendation Concerning Foreign Prisoners (31) (2012) • Principles 64 - 66 and 71 - 73, European Commission Recommendation on Procedural Rights of Suspects and Accused Persons subject to Pre-Trial Detention and on Material Detention Conditions (2022)

Health & Wellbeing	Indicative Measure	Assessment Standard
	<p>29. Gender specific healthcare is available to all people in prison who require it.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules 28 and 29, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • Rules 6 - 18, UN Bangkok Rules (2010) • CPT Transgender Persons: Core Principles to Ensure their Respectful and Decent Treatment in Prison (2024) • COE Recommendation Ethical and Organisational Aspects of Health Care in Prison (8) (1998)
<p>30. Patients are encouraged to participate in decision-making in relation to their healthcare and information is provided to them to make informed healthcare decisions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 100(1), Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • COE Recommendation Ethical and Organisational Aspects of Health Care in Prison (26 - 29) (1998) • CPT Healthcare Services in Prisons (1993) 	

PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITY & RESETTLEMENT

People in prison are supported to access purposeful activity and to develop their capability to contribute positively to society. People in prison are prepared and supported for release back into the community and the likelihood of reoffending is reduced.

Purposeful Activity & Resettlement	Indicative Measure	Assessment Standard
	<p>1. The prison places a significant focus on quality of life for people in prison, including access to purposeful activity, access to meaningful human contact and an emphasis on post-release prospects.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules 27 and 75(3)(d), Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rules 5, 6, 25 and 107 European Prison Rules (2020) • Rules 4 and 5, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • Rules 42(1), 43, 45, 46, UN Bangkok Rules (2010) • CPT Standard - Women in Prison (2018) • CPT - A Decency Threshold for Prisoners: Criteria for Assessing Conditions of Detention (2021) • 51, CPT Report to the United Kingdom from 8 June to 21 June 2021 (2022)
	<p>2. The Incentivised Regime is accessible in an equitable and fair manner irrespective of the status of people in prison, category of offence, or individual challenges such as age or disability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IPS Incentivised Regimes Policy (2012) • Rule 95, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act (2014)
	<p>3. Education, skills and work opportunities are of good quality, and focused on improving outcomes for prisoners and society. People in prison are consulted and their views are taken into consideration as far as possible in the organisation of activities and work opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 110(1), Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rules 26.6, 28.1-28.3, and 104.2, European Prison Rules (2020) • Rules 92(1), 96(1) and 104(1), UN Mandela Rules (2015) • Rule 42(1), UN Bangkok Rules (2010) • Council of Europe, Recommendation 89(12) of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on Education in Prison • 51, CPT Report to the United Kingdom from 8 June to 21 June 2021 (2022)
	<p>4. Multi-disciplinary (teachers / psychologists / chaplains / probation officers / addiction counsellors / Integrated Sentence Management officers / frontline prison officers) input in the development and rehabilitation of prisoners is available and utilised.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules 85(3)(b), 85(3)(iv), 100(1)(j), 109(2)(d), 110(8)(c), 113(1)(e) and 115(e), Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rules 103.4 - 103.5, European Prison Rules (2020) • Rule 108, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • Rule 41(c) and 46, UN Bangkok Rules (2010)
	<p>5. People in prison are actively involved in the development, implementation and monitoring of their individual sentence plan, and plans show evidence of cooperation between operational, healthcare, work training, education, Probation Service, and in-reach staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules 85(3) (b), 85(3) (c.) (iv), 100(1)(j), 109(2)(d), 110(8)(c), 113(1)(e) and 115(e), Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rules 103.3 - 103.5, European Prison Rules (2020) • COE Recommendation on the Management of Life Sentence and Other Long Term Prisoners (2003) • CPT Standards in Respect of Imprisonment (2001)

Purposeful Activity & Resettlement	Indicative Measure	Assessment Standard
	6. People in prison are supported and encouraged to progress through appropriate levels of education and/or training and appropriate records are maintained for inspection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rules 110(1) and 111(1), Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 Rules 28.1 and 26.5, European Prison Rules (2020) Rule 104, UN Mandela Rules (2015) Rule 60, UN Bangkok Rules (2010)
	7. Effective use is made of capital infrastructure and other assets, such as workshop equipment and facilities and digital technologies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rule 27.4, European Prison Rules (2020) Principle 16, Public Procurement Guidelines for Goods and Services, Department of Public Expenditure NDP Delivery and Reform (2023)
	8. There are sufficient opportunities (education / training / work) for people in prison at all levels to engage with activities and services, in accordance with their abilities, and the impact of staffing shortages / absences on such opportunities is recorded.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rules 110 and 111, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 Rules 25.1, 26.2, 28.1 and 83(a), European Prison Rules (2020) Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act (2014)
	9. Work and work training offered to people in prison is of a type and quality that it results in formal certification, and is labour-market tested to promote support employment prospects on release.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rules 27(2) and 111(1)(e), Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 Rule 26.3, European Prison Rules (2020) Rule 98.1, UN Mandela Rules (2015) Rule 60, UN Bangkok Rules (2010) Principles 47 - 48, European Commission Recommendation on Procedural Rights of Suspects and Accused Persons subject to Pre-Trial Detention and on Material Detention Conditions (2022)
	10. Fair remuneration is in place for work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rule 30(1), Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 Rule 26.10, European Prison Rules (2020) Rule 103, UN Mandela Rules (2015) CPT - A Decency Threshold for Prisoners: Criteria for Assessing Conditions of Detention (2021)
	11. The system by which people in prison are selected for paid work is fair and thorough, and records of such assessments are retained. The rationale for allocating roles is clearly defined and understood by staff and people in prison and records are kept for inspection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rule 26.6, European Prison Rules (2020) Rules 98.3 and 102, UN Mandela Rules (2015) CPT - A Decency Threshold for Prisoners: Criteria for Assessing Conditions of Detention (2021)
	12. All people in prison are provided with access to sufficient exercise, at a minimum of one hour each day.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rule 32(1), Prison Rules 2007 – 2020 Rule 27.1, European Prison Rules (2020) Rule 23(1), UN Mandela Rules (2015) CPT - A Decency Threshold for Prisoners: Criteria for Assessing Conditions of Detention (2021) Principle 45, European Commission Recommendation on Procedural Rights of Suspects and Accused Persons subject to Pre-Trial Detention and on Material Detention Conditions (2022)

Indicative Measure	Assessment Standard
<p>13. People in prison have access to a library stocked with materials in formats suited to a range of different abilities, interests, cultural and religious backgrounds. Formal links with local authority libraries are in place and are availed of to support prison libraries access to materials.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules 110 (6) (7) (8), Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rules 28.6 and 28.7, European Prison Rules (2020) • Rule 64, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • COE Recommendation Concerning Foreign Prisoners (31) (2012) • Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act (2014)
<p>14. People in prison are encouraged to access educational opportunities, and where necessary, receive extra assistance to do so. Barriers to participation and barriers to learning are identified, analysed and addressed to ensure equal access for all.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules 110 (2) (3) (4), Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rule 28, European Prison Rules (2020) • COE Recommendation Concerning Foreign Prisoners (31) (2012) • Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act (2014) • Article 14(2), UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
<p>15. With appropriate safeguards, opportunities for e-learning and development of digital literacy skills are available to people in prison.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 28.1, European Prison Rules (2020) • IPS Strategy 2023 - 2027
<p>16. People in prison are supported and facilitated to maintain (or re-establish) contact with their families; in instances where there may be difficulties in maintaining contact (such as, family living abroad, limited access to technology, visitors or people in prison with disabilities), the prison makes effort to identify suitable solutions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules 35, 36, 43, and 46 Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rules 24.4, 37.2 and 99 (a) (b), European Prison Rules (2020) • Rules 58 and 59, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • Rules 26 - 29, 43, 58 and 59, UN Bangkok Rules (2010) • Article 9(3), UN Convention on the Rights of the Child • COE Recommendation Concerning Children with Imprisoned Parents (2018) • Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act (2014) • Rec 7.8, Council of Europe Resolution 2223 Detainees with Disabilities in Europe (2018) • Article 14(2), UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities • Principles 54 - 56, European Commission Recommendation on Procedural Rights of Suspects and Accused Persons subject to Pre-Trial Detention and on Material Detention Conditions (2022)
<p>17. People in prison are able to have visits with and make telephone calls to their families and/or friends, at a minimum in accordance with the Prison Rules.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules 35, 36 and 46 Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 • Rule 99, European Prison Rules (2020) • Rule 58, UN Mandela Rules (2015) • Rules 26 - 28, UN Bangkok Rules (2010) • Principles 55 - 56, European Commission Recommendation on Procedural Rights of Suspects and Accused Persons subject to Pre-Trial Detention and on Material Detention Conditions (2022)

Purposeful Activity & Resettlement	Indicative Measure	Assessment Standard
	18. Caring responsibilities are identified on committal and appropriate supports and resources are signposted to the relevant support services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rules 2 (1)(2) and 26, UN Bangkok Rules (2010) COE Recommendation Concerning Children with Imprisoned Parents (2018)
	19. Children have regular and direct contact with their parent in prison.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Article 9(3), UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Rule 58(1), UN Mandela Rules (2015) Rules 26, 28, 49, 50 and 52, UN Bangkok Rules (2010) COE Recommendation Concerning Children with Imprisoned Parents (2018)
	20. The arrangements for visits are such as to allow people in prison to maintain and develop family relationships in as normal a manner as possible. Visiting areas are designed so that they are family-friendly and that both people in prison and their visitors easily communicate with each other.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rules 35 - 36, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 Rule 24.4, European Prison Rules (2020) Rule 58, UN Mandela Rules (2015) Rule 28, UN Bangkok Rules (2010) COE Recommendation Concerning Children with Imprisoned Parents (2018)
	21. Progress reviews for people in prison are undertaken regularly, and appropriate records are maintained for inspection. Paths of progression are developed and the reaching of milestones are met appropriately.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rules 107.1 - 107.5, European Prison Rules (2020) Rules 87, UN Mandela Rules (2015) Rule 45, UN Bangkok Rules (2010) COE Recommendation on the Management of Life Sentence and Other Long Term Prisoners (2003) - "Progression Principle"
	22. People in prison are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and behaviours, and are supported to address their needs through appropriate interventions, including a range of self-help and/or peer support activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rules 75 (3) (ii.) (c) and 75(6), Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 Rules 103.7 - 103.8, European Prison Rules (2020) Rules 4 and 91, UN Mandela Rules (2015) Rules 40 and 67, UN Bangkok Rules (2010) COE Recommendation on the Management of Life Sentence and Other Long Term Prisoners (2003) - "Responsibility Principle"
	23. Community engagement is utilised to minimise institutionalisation while promoting rehabilitation and resettlement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rules 109(2)(c), 111(3)(d), 113(1)(h) and 115(f), Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 Rules 5, 107.4 – 107.5, European Prison Rules (2020) Rule 88(1), UN Mandela Rules (2015) Rules 45 - 47 and 62, UN Bangkok Rules (2010)
	24. People in prison subject to review by the Parole Board receive timely and adequate information about the parole process, and reports are prepared and submitted to the Parole Board in a timely manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 26, Parole Act (2019) COE Recommendation on the Management of Life Sentence and Other Long Term Prisoners (2003)
	25. Release dates are calculated correctly and communicated to people in prison.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rule 15, Prison Rules 2007 - 2020 Rules 16 A2(b) and 33.1 - 33.2, European Prison Rules (2020)

Purposeful Activity & Resettlement	Indicative Measure	Assessment Standard
	26. Arrangements for social welfare, social care needs, accommodation, healthcare services, and community supports are in place for prisoners prior to release.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 61, Prison Rules 2007 – 2020 • Rules 33.3, 107.31- 107.5, European Prison Rules (2020) • Rules 90, 91, 92(1), 98(1), 103(3), 106 - 108, UN Mandela Rules (2015)
27. Grounds for Temporary Release and approval procedures are clear and fairly applied.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criminal Justice Temporary Release of Prisoners Act (2003) • Rule 63, UN Bangkok Rules (2010) • COE Recommendation Concerning Foreign Prisoners (31) (2012) 	

2.2.5 In assessing Focus Area Indicative Measures, the Inspectorate also considers Compliance Indicative Measures, which include:

- **Compliance Area 1: Alignment & Coverage**

- Are the IPS operating policies, SOPs and Governor / Chief Orders aligned to legislative requirements, in particular the Irish Prison Rules, and recognised good practice?
- Do these operating policies and SOPs provide comprehensive coverage across all operational and service delivery areas?
- Are these operational policies and SOPs reviewed and, as required, updated to reflect any enhancements / changes to legislation, in particular the Irish Prison Rules.

- **Compliance Area 2: Adherence**

- Are IPS Governors, managers and staff appropriately familiar with and trained in these standards, do they have the necessary tools to comply with the policies and SOPs?
- Do IPS Governors, managers and staff comply with these standards?

2.2.6 Compliance Indicative Measures are applied across each of the four Focus Areas.

2.2.7 Compliance Indicative Measures

Alignment & Coverage	
<i>IPS operational delivery guidance and procedures are aligned to legal requirements and recognised good practice. IPS operational guidance and procedures are comprehensive across all areas of activity within the prison. IPS operational guidance and procedures are regularly formally reviewed.</i>	
Alignment & Coverage	Indicative Measure
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are IPS operational policies and SOPs aligned with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → overarching legislative and policy frameworks and do they reflect the outcome intentions → Irish Prison Rules → relevant human rights standards → recognised international good practice
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are operational policies and SOPs readily accessible by all relevant staff?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are operational policies and SOPs reviewed and updated in a controlled manner on a regular basis (and there is evidence of such reviews)?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does each SOP provide a comprehensive and robust set of step-by-step processes that allow staff to efficiently and effectively complete the necessary tasks?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do SOPs reflect a good practice approach which will drive efficiency, effectiveness and uniformity of performance, while reducing miscommunication and failure to comply with statutory and policy obligations? 	

Adherence	
<i>IPS operational delivery guidance and procedures are aligned to legal requirements and recognised good practice. IPS operational guidance and procedures are comprehensive across all areas of activity within the prison. IPS operational guidance and procedures are regularly formally reviewed.</i>	
Adherence	Indicative Measure
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are IPS Governors, managers and staff familiar with and trained in the relevant mandatory minimum legal obligations and standards (in particular Irish Prison Rules)?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are IPS Governors, managers and staff familiar with and trained in the operational policies, SOPs and relevant associated standards?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are any changes in mandatory legal obligations/standards, IPS operational policies and SOPs effectively communicated to Governors, managers and staff?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are relevant job descriptions clear in terms of qualification and training requirements?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do managers and staff have the necessary skills to perform their role as defined in the mandatory legal obligations/standards, IPS operational policies and SOPs?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do Governors, managers and staff comply (and record their compliance) with the mandatory legal obligations/standards, IPS operational policies and SOPs in the execution of their duties?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do managers review operational compliance in order to drive better performance? Is there evidence of Governors and managers reviewing compliance?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there systems in place to allow for Governors, managers and staff to feed back issues relating to execution and compliance challenges and difficulties? 	

- 2.2.8** With respect to each of the Focus Areas, and related indicative measures, the Inspectorate tracks progress made in individual prison establishments over time. Monitoring of progress is done internally and informs inspection activities as well as efforts made by prisons to improve outcomes. This internal monitoring is done alongside public recommendations-monitoring carried out by the Inspectorate (section 3.4.1 - 3.4.3).
- 2.2.9** Inspection assessment criteria is tailored for each prison establishment and is determined as part of the preparatory stage of the inspection process.
- 2.2.10** Issues may arise within prisons at any time. The IPS is requested to continually self-assess against the Inspection Framework and bring to the attention of the Chief Inspector any matters within their remit, including but not limited to Serious Adverse Incidents (SAIs), and the indicative measures provided within this Framework (section 2.2.4) which could reasonably be considered as being of sufficient concern to notify.

2.3 Immediate Action Notification (IAN)

- 2.3.1** In the event that an Inspection Team identifies concerns, around either current performance or the risk of adverse impact on future performance, of such significance and consequence that an immediate intervention to mitigate is required, then the Chief Inspector may raise an Immediate Action Notification (IAN). This is done in accordance with Section 31(c) of the Prison Act 2007: *“in the course of an inspection or arising out of an inspection bring any issues of concern to him or her to the notice of the governor of the prison concerned, the Director-General of the Irish Prison Service, or the Minister or of each one of them, as the Inspector considers appropriate”*.
- 2.3.2** The Inspection Team may decide to use the below risk assessment matrix to inform their recommendation on whether to raise an IAN.

Impact assessment

The likely impact of a concern should be considered as being one of four levels:

- This concern would have a **critical** adverse impact on people in prison, staff or others
- This concern would have a **significant** adverse impact on people in prison, staff or others
- This concern would have a **material** adverse impact on people in prison, staff or others
- This concern would have a **negligible** adverse impact on people in prison, staff or others

Probability assessment

The probability of this impact occurring should be considered as being one of five levels:

- This adverse impact is **almost certain** to occur **or has** occurred
- This adverse impact is **likely** to occur
- It is **possible** that this adverse impact will occur
- This adverse impact is **unlikely** to occur
- This adverse impact is **very unlikely** to occur

2.3.3 These impact and probability ratings can then be plotted into the matrix below.

	Impact			
Probability	Negligible	Material	Significant	Critical
Almost Certain	High	High	Very High	Very High
Likely	Medium	High	High	Very High
Possible	Low	Medium	High	Very High
Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	High
Very Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	High

2.3.4 The specific concern in question does not necessarily have to relate to a whole Focus Area or any individual indicative measure; it could for example relate to the welfare of an individual prisoner.

2.3.5 Those concerns which are rated as “Very High” risk could be considered by the Inspection Team as potentially requiring an IAN to be raised. The decision to raise an IAN is a significant step by the Inspectorate. Such a decision will be judged on a case-by-case basis by the Inspection Team and the Chief Inspector (and would not preclude, for example, a concern indicated as High risk from being raised in an IAN).

3 INSPECTION PROCESS

3.1 Types of Inspection

3.1.1 The Inspectorate carries out three types of inspection:

General Inspection	<p>Inspection of <u>all</u> aspects of the management and operation of a specific prison¹⁴</p> <p>General Inspections are unannounced.</p>
Thematic / Functional Inspection	<p>Inspection of a specific operational or functional area across the whole prison estate, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Solitary confinement• Prisoner safety• Prisoner restraint• Staff wellbeing• Human resources• Finance• Governance <p>Thematic / Functional inspections may be announced or unannounced.</p>
Follow-up Inspection	<p>Follow-up Inspections occur after a General or Thematic / Functional Inspection to assess developments made in the period following an inspection, or to assess progress made against implementation of an IPS Action Plan, which the IPS produces to respond to recommendations made by the Inspectorate.</p> <p>A Follow-up Inspection may focus on one or more areas of specific concern.</p> <p>Follow-up Inspections may be announced or unannounced.</p> <p>Follow-up inspections are optional and the Inspectorate may decide to rely on an Irish Prison Service self-assessment if the Action Plan is particularly low-risk.</p>

¹⁴ The Department of Education Inspectorate supports the Inspectorate to assess quality of education provision in prisons. The Inspectorate agreed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Education Inspectorate in March 2022. This was reviewed and agreed again in early 2024. The Department of Education Inspectorate carries out its inspection activities in line with both Inspectorates' models, and drafts the "Education" section of General Inspection reports, under the Purposeful Activity & Resettlement Focus Area (previously "Rehabilitation & Development").

3.1.2 Provided that the necessary human and financial resources are made available to the Inspectorate, it aspires to carry out full General Inspections of every prison in Ireland at least once every three years, and to complete its draft reports on those inspections within a maximum of six months from the end of the inspections concerned. Thematic/ Functional and Follow-up inspections will also be carried out as required. The nature and frequency of these inspections will be determined by the Chief Inspector of Prisons.

3.1.3 Inspection Format

3.1.4 General and Thematic / Functional Inspections follow a common four-stage format:



3.2 Access to Information

3.2.1 Access to information is central to facilitate the Inspectorate’s inspection activities. The Inspectorate requests information and data from the IPS in accordance with the Prisons Act 2007, Section 31(7):

“Governors and other prison officers, other persons employed in prisons and prisoners shall, as far as reasonably practicable, comply with any request for information that the Inspector may make in the performance of his or her functions”.

3.2.2 The Irish Prison Service will share information with the Inspectorate in line with data protection legislation and the Data Sharing and Governance Act 2019. The Irish Prison Service has committed to sharing relevant analytical and trend data on a recurring basis.

3.3 Recommendations

3.3.1 The Inspectorate assesses implementation of recommendations made to the IPS, and accompanying IPS Recommendation Action Plans, through the performance of its statutory functions. In 2022, the Inspectorate published the Inspections Recommendations Monitoring Database.¹⁵ In 2023, the Inspectorate also developed the Death in Custody Investigation Recommendations Database.¹⁶ These Databases are publically accessible on the Inspectorate’s website and provide an interface to review recommendations made by the Inspectorate, and the actions taken by the IPS, over time, to address the Inspectorate’s recommendations.

¹⁵ OIP (2022 - ongoing) [Inspections Recommendations Monitoring Database](#).

¹⁶ OIP (2023 – ongoing) [Death in Custody Investigations Recommendations Online Database](#).

3.3.2 On a bi-annual basis the IPS provides the Inspectorate with a Self-Assessment of progress made to implement 'ongoing' recommendation Action Plans.

3.3.3 The Inspectorate continues to improve on the functionality of the Inspections Recommendations Monitoring Databases. This will include for instance, clear illustrations of the number of recommendations completed / ongoing, the length of time taken to implement recommendations and the prevalence of certain thematic areas across prisons.

3.4 Publication of Inspection Reports

3.4.1 In accordance with current legislative provisions, Section 31 of the Prisons Act 2007, the final inspection report is submitted to and published by the Minister for Justice. Upon publication, the report and the accompanying IPS Action Plan, are placed on the Department of Justice website and the Office of the Inspectorate of Prisons' website.

The Draft General Scheme of the Inspection of Places of Detention Bill June 2022¹⁷ sets out that the Chief Inspector of the Office of the Inspectorate of Places of Detention will "have the power to lay his or her annual reports and other reports directly before the Oireachtas rather than the Minister laying the report as is the case in the 2007 Act".

3.4.2 Once published, the Inspectorate develops summary materials of inspection reports, including infographics and summary booklets developed in collaboration with NALA.

¹⁷ Department of Justice (June 2022) [Draft General Scheme: Inspection of Places of Detention Bill](#).

Contact

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