

Information for prisoners in Vaala Prison

Vaala Prison

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1 General

1.1 Information on the prison

You have arrived at Vaala Prison. Vaala Prison is a closed prison with 100 places for men. It is located in a municipality called Vaala in North Ostrobothnia. The prison has separate wards for long-term prisoners, short-term prisoners, fine default prisoners, prisoners needing special support, foreign prisoners, remand prisoners, prisoners transferred from open prison, and newly arrived prisoners. All new prisoners are first placed in the arrival ward. Vaala Prison is part of the Prison and Probation Centre for Northern Finland.

This is the information leaflet of the prison. Here you can find information on the operation of this prison and the practices regarding remand imprisonment and serving a prison sentence. You should also read the prison rules, which contain provisions that you must follow.

Each ward has a daily schedule, which is the timetable of the ward. The daily schedule includes, among others, the opening and closing of the cell doors, outdoor exercise times, mealtimes, and activity hours. In addition, each ward has a folder, which contains the daily schedule and the prison rules as well as provisions on imprisonment, such as, the acts, decrees, regulations and instructions and a list of procedural instructions. The folder is kept in the common areas of each ward together with other instructions and forms needed by prisoners.

You can find information on the authorities overseeing the operation of prisons in the folder in your ward.

If you are not a Finnish citizen, you may contact the diplomatic mission of your home country and, if possible, use an interpreter. If you are a remand prisoner, your communications with the diplomatic mission may, however, be restricted for a particularly important reason related to the clarification of the offence.

You can ask the staff if you have any questions or something is unclear to you.

Contact details for Vaala Prison:

- Järvikyläntie 104, 91700 Vaala
- Tel. +358 29 568 6200
- vaala.vankila@om.fi
- Email to prisoners: vankiposti.vaala@om.fi

**1.2 Personal official and induction**

You are appointed a personal official for the duration of your prison sentence / remand imprisonment. The personal official takes care of the smooth progress of your prison term / remand imprisonment and is actively present in your daily life. You can discuss issues concerning you with your personal official, such as the preparation of permission (for example, prison leave or visits), the use of online services and other everyday matters.

Your personal official will talk with you about your sentence plan and its goals and how to advance and achieve them.

An official working in your accommodation ward will conduct your arrival interview, introduce you to the accommodation ward and advise you on everyday matters.

1.3 Sentence plan

If you are serving a prison sentence, an individual sentence plan has been drawn up for you before you arrive at the prison. The plan will be specified in prison.

The sentence plan guides the serving of the sentence term, release and conditional release. It includes goals you should try to achieve during your sentence term. The sentence plan and the offered options determine in which activities you will be placed in prison.

You can influence the progress of your sentence plan by working together with the staff towards the goals set for you. The progress of the sentence plan affects, among other things, the granting of prison leaves and possible placement in an open prison or probationary liberty under supervision. The realisation of the plan is monitored regularly and reviewed at least three times a year.

If you are a remand prisoner, you will not be drawn up a sentence plan before you arrive at the prison. However, with your consent, the preparation of your sentence plan may be initiated during your remand imprisonment.

If you have any questions about your sentence plan or its updating, please contact your personal official or the instructors.

2 Remand imprisonment

Remand imprisonment is not a punishment, but a coercive measure implemented during a criminal investigation and trial. The purpose of remand imprisonment is to secure a criminal investigation, court proceedings and enforcement of a sentence and to prevent the remanded person from continuing criminal activities. The court decides on remanding a person suspected of an offence.

Remand imprisonment ends when a court, a prosecutor, the police or other official with the power of arrest releases the remand prisoner. Remand imprisonment ends at the latest when the judgment of the District Court becomes final or the Court of Appeal issues its judgment.

You may also consent to the enforcement of the sentence and abide by the judgment of the District Court or the Court of Appeal as a court of first instance as regards the sentenced imprisonment even before the judgment has become final. In that case, you start serving the imposed prison sentence and your status changes from a remand prisoner to a prisoner.

The rights and obligations of remand prisoners are partly different from those of sentenced prisoners. For example, remand prisoners' communications may be restricted under the prerequisites laid down in the Coercive Measures Act. The restriction of communications may contain restrictions on correspondence, telephone use, meetings or other contacts outside the prison, or association with a person. The restriction of communications connected with remand imprisonment and the extension of the restriction is decided by the court. As a remand prisoner, you may not participate in activities arranged outside prison, such as civilian work or studies. In addition, remand prisoners cannot be placed in an outside institution or given permission for supervised activities outside prison.

If you are sentenced to unconditional imprisonment for an offence for which you have been remanded, the period of remand imprisonment will be deducted from your actual prison sentence. If you have been unduly remanded, you are entitled to compensation for the loss of liberty from the State. Compensation is applied for from the State Treasury.

Remand imprisonment can start unexpectedly and so that you have not been able to prepare for it. You can turn to the staff in all unclear matters.

3 Prison sentence and the objective of enforcement

The objective of the enforcement of imprisonment is to increase your readiness to lead a life without crime by promoting your reintegration into society. The members of the prison staff will work with you in various ways based on their job descriptions towards this objective. The aim is to promote your physical, mental, and social well-being and help you to achieve the goals set for the term of your sentence. If you have any questions, you can always turn to your personal official or other member of the prison staff.

3.1 Decision on the term of sentence

The Enforcement Unit makes a decision on your term of sentence at the beginning of your imprisonment. The decision includes:

- grounds for the calculation of the sentence term;
- date when the prison sentence or conversion sentence for unpaid fines will be served;
- date when conditional release or other release begins;
- date when probationary period ends.

If you serve a sentence of life imprisonment, the decision includes the earliest date when you may be conditionally released. If you serve a combination sentence, the decision includes the supervision term and its start date.

3.2 Probationary liberty under supervision

You may be placed in probationary liberty under supervision at the end of your sentence term if the conditions for probationary liberty under supervision are met. You cannot be placed in probationary liberty under supervision if you are serving a combination sentence.

You may be placed in probationary liberty under electronic supervision a maximum of six months before your conditional release. Preparations for probationary liberty under supervision are made carefully together with the prison staff. You can influence the possibility of probationary liberty under supervision by working together with the staff towards the goals set out in your sentence plan and by behaving properly during your sentence term. In matters related to probationary liberty, you should turn to the senior instructor working in your ward. You can also apply for probationary liberty yourself.

In matters related to probationary liberty, you should contact the instructors.

4 Basic care and accommodation

4.1 Clothing, linen, clothing maintenance and cleanliness

You may wear your own clothes in prison. The use of your own clothes may, however, be restricted based on, among other things, the prison order. If you are not allowed to have a piece of clothing, you have the right to get a decision on the matter with instructions on submitting a request for an administrative review. The prison may supply you with clothes to use in prison if you do not have appropriate clothing.

You have to be dressed properly within the prison area. If you are not sure whether your clothing is appropriate, you can always ask the staff.

When you work, you have to wear clothing in accordance with the regulations of the workplace. If the work requires you to wear work clothes due to, for example, occupational safety, you get appropriate work clothes and protective clothing from the prison.

You get bedlinen, such as sheets and pillowcases, from the prison. In addition, the prison provides you with washing liquids to maintain normal daily hygiene. You can ask the prison staff if you need them.

All textiles, i.e., bedlinen and prison clothes provided by the Prison and Probation Service are washed in a laundry outside the prison. The prison staff tells you the exact days when the textiles are changed. You are responsible for washing your own clothes in facilities meant for that purpose.

In prison, you have to take care of the cleanliness of your own cell. Every prisoner must tidy up after themselves in the common areas, for instance, after cooking. All rubbish has to be sorted in the bins according to the instructions. The prison staff gives you more detailed guidance on the cleaning equipment, the practices and the division of tasks regarding the cleaning of the common areas.

4.2 Catering and prison canteen

On weekdays, the prison serves you four meals: **breakfast, lunch, dinner, and an evening snack**. On days that are not actual working days, the prison serves you breakfast, a combined **lunch/dinner and an evening snack**.

When you arrive at the prison, the prison staff asks you if you have a special diet and give you a form to fill in. You should also tell us as soon as you arrive at the prison if you need a special diet due to health reasons or a religious or other well-founded conviction.

You can purchase foodstuffs and some other everyday products from the prison canteen. Canteen purchases are paid with the payment card provided by the Prison and Probation Service (more information under the headline Use of money). If something you need is not available in the prison canteen, you can ask whether it is possible to acquire it by ordering from outside the prison.

4.3 Smoking

Smoking is prohibited inside the prison. You can smoke during outdoor exercise arranged once a day, unless you have been denied outdoor exercise for a specific reason. If possible, smoking is arranged more frequently during the day.

Each prisoner has a personal locker in the ward where they store their tobacco products.

You can get nicotine replacement products to relieve possible withdrawal symptoms. In addition, the Health Care Services for Prisoners and the Prison and Probation Service support you if you want to quit smoking.

Smoking is prohibited in the prisoner transport vehicles and train carriages. Due to the prohibition, prisoners travelling in the prisoner train carriages are offered a necessary amount of nicotine replacement products.

5 Possession of property

5.1 Goods in possession

You may possess a reasonable amount of personal property taking into account, among others, the prison storage facilities, fire safety and inspections. If you are denied the possession of an object or substance, you have the right to get a decision on the matter with instructions on submitting a request for an administrative review.

You have to read the prison rules carefully. They contain the rules concerning the possession of property and the objects you are not allowed to have in your possession.

If you want to acquire goods from outside the prison, make sure that you are allowed to possess or store them in prison before acquiring them.

The prison staff draws up an inventory of the property you brought with you. Goods that you cannot take in your cell are put in storage and you will get them back when you leave. You will not get back goods or substances that are dangerous or illegal.

You can exchange/pick up your own personal belongings from your locker in the reception ward at the time indicated in the daily schedule of your own accommodation ward.

5.2 Delivery of goods to prison

During visits, your visitors may bring you a small amount of goods that you are allowed to possess during your imprisonment. Those goods include magazines, clothes and personal utility articles. If a visitor brings you foodstuffs or tobacco products, you will not get them into your possession, but the foodstuffs will be disposed of and the tobacco products will be stored in your personal locker.

The visitor has to leave the goods to the prison staff at the prison gate. When a visitor leaves goods to the prison staff, a note will be attached to them. The note includes:

- the name of the prisoner
- the name of the person delivering them;
- what goods are brought to the prisoner.

A person may bring you a small amount of goods to the prison gate on a weekday between 8.00 and 16.00. The same note attached to goods brought during a visit will be attached to goods brought to the prison gate. A small amount of goods can also be sent to the prison by post.

All goods delivered to the prison will be inspected.

The storage facilities in the prison are limited, which means that all your property cannot be stored in the prison. Property that cannot be stored in the prison is sent, at your expense, to a place indicated by you.

5.3 Handing over goods to be taken outside the prison

You can hand over your extra belongings to your visitor to take outside the prison or send them at your own expense.

6 Contacts with the outside world

6.1 Use of telephone

You may communicate with those outside prison by telephone if your communications have not been restricted (more information about the restrictions of communications is under the heading 2 Remand imprisonment). Phone credit is sold in the prison canteen. You cannot receive telephone calls in prison and information about prisoners is not given over the telephone to people outside the prison.

In general, you use the telephone at your own expense. You may be allowed to make a telephone call at the expense of the prison to, among others:

- your lawyer;
- an authority overseeing the operations of the prison;
- your close relative or other close person to inform them of your admission to prison;
- your close relative or other close person to inform them of your transfer.

You must carefully read the prison rules, which include the times when the telephones are available for use in each ward and the regulations concerning the use of telephone.

6.2 Letters and postal items

You may send letters by post if your communications have not been restricted (more information about the restrictions of communications is under the heading 2 Remand imprisonment).

You can buy stamps and envelopes from the prison canteen and leave the letters in the letterbox in the ward. If you send post from prison, you have to write the name of the sender on the envelope. If you do not want to write your name on the postal item, you have to give it personally to the prison staff. You do not have to write your name on letters or postal items sent to a supervisory authority. The letterbox will be emptied every day during the morning check.

You can be sent post in prison to the following address: Järvikyläntie 104, 91700 Vaala.

The postal item has to include the following information:

- name and address of the prison
- the name of the prisoner
- details of the sender.

Please note that the recipient information required in the address field of the parcel sent to you has to be in the following order:

1. Vaala Prison
2. your name
3. address: Järvikyläntie 104, 91700 Vaala

This ensures that your parcels come to the right place. The prison staff will not pick up parcels sent to you from the post office, but the parcels are delivered directly to the prison.

The prison will inspect letters and other postal items. Letters between you and the authorities overseeing the operations of the prison cannot be inspected. Letters between

you and your lawyer can only be inspected in exceptional circumstances and you may be asked to open such a letter in the presence of the staff.

As far as possible, letters and other post will always be distributed on the day they arrive.

If an incoming letter or postal item contains money or other objects or substances, which you are not allowed to have in your possession in prison, you have to give them to the prison staff immediately.

6.3 Receiving email

You can receive email in a closed prison. The email has to be sent to the address meant for sending email to prisoners: vankiposti.vaala@om.fi

Your first and last name have to be written in the subject line of the email. The sender's first and last name have to be written in the message field so that you will know who sent the message.

The system deletes all attachments and pictures from the messages due to information security. You will only receive the email message.

You may be given permission to send and receive email messages if your communications have not been restricted and it does not endanger, for example, prison order. Permission to use email may be granted for, among other things, handling official matters, studying and maintaining contacts.

6.4 Use of internet and online workstations

The online workstations for prisoners offer limited access to the internet, Skype and the electronic learning environment Moodle. You may apply permission to use the internet by filling in a separate form.

The reason for the use of the internet may be:

- subsistence;
- work;
- studies;
- judicial matters;

- social matters;
- housing;
- other corresponding important reason.

When you apply for permission, you have to specify the reason for the use of the internet (for example, paying bills by using an online bank). The use of the internet may be monitored.

The prison staff can give you further information on the matter and guide you in the use of services that require strong e-identification. Those include many online services of the public authorities, such as the Social Insurance Institution of Finland (Kela) and the Tax Administration. Some online services can also be used to reach the goals set in the sentence plan, such as, rehabilitation and education. The start page of the online workstations called Portti (<https://www.rikosseuraamus.fi/fi/index/portti.html>) has links to online services, which are grouped by themes.

You can read more about the possibilities of using online services under the heading Online services. Information on arranging communication via video connection is available under the heading Visits.

7 Income and use of money

7.1 Income

You will be paid a tax-free activity allowance if you participate in work, education or rehabilitation. The activity allowance is EUR 3.01 or EUR 4.26 per day on the days you participate in an activity. At the beginning, the prison usually pays the lowest category of the activity allowance.

During the prison sentence, the paid category of the activity allowance is based on the achievement of goals set in the sentence plan and the duration and regularity of the participation in the activity. If you are a remand prisoner, the paid category is determined primarily by the duration and regularity of the participation.

The activity allowance may be left unpaid in full or in part if you receive financial support for the activity from other authority (for example study grant) or if payment is not necessary for some other comparable reason.

In addition to the activity allowance, you will be paid an expense allowance, which is 1.60 euro per each prison day, including weekends.

When you arrive at the prison, you may be paid the expense allowance of the first 14 days in advance so that you can make necessary purchases. The paid advance will be deducted from the expense allowance paid you later.

7.2 Use of money

You will be issued with a Visa payment card by the prison. The prison staff stores the payment card. You can use the card by entering a personal PIN code.

You can use the payment card to pay your purchases in the prison canteen. In addition, you can use the payment card outside the prison to pay in shops and cafeterias and on trains, which accept a chip card. You can also withdraw a maximum of EUR 200 per month at cash machines in Finland. The payment card does not have the contactless payment feature and it cannot be used for online shopping. You can ask the staff about matters related to the use of the payment card.

Do not bring cash to prison. When you arrive at the prison, you can make your purchases with your own bank card if you do not yet have a prison payment card. The Prison and Probation Service pays all benefits you will receive to your payment card.

Your family members cannot transfer money straight to the issued payment card. They can transfer money to the joint prisoner account of the Prison and Probation Service where the money will be transferred to your payment card. You have to make sure that people who transfer money to you know the details of the joint prisoner account of the Prison and Probation Service. More detailed information on transferring money is available on the website www.rikosseuraamus.fi.

Please contact the prison staff if you want to send money or pay bills.

8 Visits

You can receive visitors, such as your family and friends, if your communications have not been restricted.

Different types of visits and meetings:

- supervised visit
- unsupervised visit
- visit by a child
- visit by a legal counsel
- supervised meeting between prisoners.

In addition, it is possible to communicate via video connection.

You have to read the prison rules carefully. The prison rules contain more detailed information about the times, duration, conditions and application processes of visits.

You have to remember to apply for a visit in good time beforehand so that we have time to make arrangements for the visit.

The prison has six rooms for supervised visits, two rooms for unsupervised visits and one room for visits by a child.

If you wish, the instructors can help you apply for family camps. Remand prisoners cannot attend family camps.



Visits by under 18-year-olds

A minor person may only visit someone other than the minor's own parent with the consent of the person who has custody of the minor. A visitor who has attained the age of 15 may visit a close relative without the consent of the person having custody of the minor, if the person having custody of the minor has not expressly stated that they oppose the visit. If a minor visitor has been taken into care, the child welfare authority decides on the consent.

A visitor under 15 years of age is not usually allowed to enter prison without an escort.

A visit by a child under 15 years of age may be attended by other visitors than the child and the escort. However, you may only touch the child during the visit.

9 Prison leaves

You may be granted permission to leave the prison for a short period. This is called prison leave.

If you are serving a prison sentence, prison leave may be granted based on the length of the term of sentence or for an important or a particularly important reason. Remand prisoners may be granted prison leave only for a particularly important reason. In addition, remand prisoners may be granted short prison leave under escort in order to attend to an urgent and necessary matter.

You can apply for prison leave by filling in an application form. The application forms are available in the common areas or office of your ward. You have to give the application for prison leave and its appendices to the staff of the ward.

The head of prison or the assistant director decides on prison leave. In some cases, the decision on prison leave is made by the director of the Core Operations Department of the Prison and Probation Service. Prison leave may also be granted under escort.

You have to fill in your application for prison leave in good time beforehand so that we have time to process it.

9.1 Prison leave based on the length of the term of sentence

You may be granted prison leave based on the length of the term of sentence if:

- the granting of prison leave promotes the implementation of your sentence plan;
- your compliance with the conditions of prison leave may be deemed likely; and
- you undertake to submit to the substance control and other necessary supervision.

You may be granted prison leave based on the length of the term of sentence when the earliest date for prison leave has been passed. It may be granted before the set date if you have carefully complied with your sentence plan if it is necessary for the implementation of the plan or, in an individual case, for the maintenance of your outside contacts or functional capacity or for another corresponding reason.

The maximum amount of prison leave based on the length of the term of sentence is three days within a two-month period.

9.2 Prison leave for an important reason

Prison leave may be granted for an important reason. A reason considered important may be related to, among other things, family, work, education, social welfare, housing, subsistence or health care.

Prison leave is granted only for a period that is necessary to attend to the matter in question.

9.3 Prison leave for a particularly important reason

A reason considered particularly important may be related to a serious illness or funeral of a close relative or other close person or other corresponding reason.

Prison leave is granted only for a period that is necessary to attend to the matter in question.

10 Participation in activities

If you serve a prison sentence, you have to participate in activities organised or approved by the prison during the working and activity hours. As far as possible, you will be placed in an activity based on, among others, your sentence plan. The activity may be work, education and training, or rehabilitation, such as programmes or individual work. You may be exempted from the obligation to participate in activities if your state of health, functional capacity or age so requires.

If you are a remand prisoner, participation in work or other activities is voluntary. If you want to participate in activities, the prison aims to arrange it if possible. You may not, however, be given permission to carry out civilian work, studies, or other activities outside the prison or be placed in an outside institution.

Remand prisoners work mainly as cleaners in the ward.

The staff can help you with the use of all prison services.

10.1 Work activities

You may be given permission to carry out, on your own account, such work that is suitable for being carried out in prison. This is called own work. This kind of own work can be, for example, translations or handicrafts. Depending on the nature of the work, you may also carry it out in your own cell. In addition, you may be allowed to use the tools of the prison for your own work free of charge.

The staff of your ward can give more information on the activities in the ward.

10.2 Studying

You may study during your prison sentence in prison. Alternatively, you may be granted study permission to study outside the prison.

You can complete, among others, general upper secondary education studies and preparatory studies for an upper secondary qualification. The prison uses the electronic learning environment Moodle, which allows prisoners to study independently or under the supervision of the staff. The staff can help you with the online services when needed.

You can ask more information about studying from the study instructor.

10.3 Rehabilitation activities

Rehabilitation activities are based on the personal goals set out in the prisoner's sentence plan. Rehabilitation activities include, among others, individual and group discussions.

Instructors and senior instructors carry out programmes, which aim to support prisoners to abstain from intoxicating substance, crime and violence. The rehabilitation activities provided by outside cooperation partners are determined by the supply.

You can apply for rehabilitation programmes by filling in the general inquiry form and addressing it to the official responsible for that activity.

10.4 Online services

The implementation of the sentence plan can be advanced by using online services. The use of online workstations is described under the heading Use of internet and online workstations.

You can use online services to contact the Social Insurance Institution of Finland Kela, the Employment and Economic Development Office or other cooperation partners.

The prison uses the electronic learning environment Moodle, which allows prisoners to study independently or under the supervision of the staff. The staff can help you with the online services when needed.

10.5 Exemption from the obligation to participate in activities for a fixed period

Taking into consideration the implementation of your sentence plan, you may be exempted from the obligation to participate in activities for two weekdays per each calendar month if you participate in activities regularly.

If you are charged with an offence, you will be granted a necessary exemption from the obligation to participate in activities so that you can prepare your defence. You may be

exempted from the obligation to participate in activities also for some other important reason or due to a fixed-term incapacity for work.

11 Free time

11.1 Free time activities

In your free time, you may participate in free time activities arranged in the prison in accordance with the daily schedule and range of activities of the prison. If you want to participate in the planning and arrangement of free time activities, you can discuss it with the prison official responsible for them.

Free time activities include, among others, music, physical exercise, outdoor activities and, if possible, other meaningful activities.

You can find current information on free time activities on the notice board and in the daily schedule of your ward.



11.2 Library

You may use the prison library and the public library services. Library visits are possible according to the daily schedule of your ward. Visits to the library are arranged once a week one ward at a time.

If you cannot find the book you want in the library, ask the study instructor about the possibility of interlibrary loans.



11.3 Religious activities

You may take part in religious events and get an opportunity to discuss religious issues. Religious events are held in the prison every week. You can attend the events according to the daily schedule of your ward. If you wish, you can also attend a religious event from your own cell via video connection.

You can make an appointment to see the deacon by using the general inquiry form available in your ward.

12 Health care

The Health Care Services for Prisoners operates under the auspices of the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare and is responsible for organising healthcare services for prisoners.

The Health Care Services for Prisoners has a polyclinic in the prison where you can discuss matters related to your health. At the polyclinic, you can book an appointment

with a physician or a dentist. The nurse is present on weekdays. You can contact the polyclinic also in mental health issues.

The confidentiality of documents and information given to the Health Care Services for Prisoners is ensured by envelopes provided by the prison and available in your ward.

You may be temporarily transferred to treatment or examination outside the prison if the Health Care Services for Prisoners cannot treat your illness or injury. When you are outside the prison, the prison staff will supervise you.

If you want to contact the health care services, fill in the general inquiry form, address it to the polyclinic and leave it in the letterbox in your ward.

You have to take medication given to you as instructed by the physician. The medicines are kept in a pill dispenser. If you have any unused medication, you have to return them with the pill dispenser.

If you have sudden health issues, tell the prison staff.

13 Behaviour in prison

Imprisonment and remand imprisonment are controlled by various rules and regulations. Therefore, you should familiarise yourself with the Imprisonment Act and the Remand Imprisonment Act. The prison rules contain more detailed provisions and regulations, which you must also follow.

You have to behave in an appropriate manner towards the prison staff, other prisoners and other people. Moreover, you have to follow the instructions and orders of the staff.

A disciplinary punishment may be imposed on you for violating:

- the Imprisonment Act;
- the Remand Imprisonment Act;
- the regulations of the Prison and Probation Service.

In addition, a disciplinary punishment may be imposed if you violate the prison rules, which state that the violation may be punishable by a disciplinary punishment, or you do

not comply with a request or order issued by the prison staff in order to maintain prison order or prison safety and security.

A disciplinary punishment may also be imposed on you if you commit an offence in prison or otherwise under the supervision of a public official of the Prison and Probation Service for which the maximum expected punishment is a fine. Such offences are, among others:

- illegal use of a narcotic drug
- obstructing a public official
- resistance to a public official
- escape or attempted escape
- petty assault
- assault or attempted assault
- petty criminal damage
- criminal damage
- illegal threat
- procurement of a weapon by a prisoner.

If you intentionally or through negligence cause damage to the prison (for instance, lost or broken devices), you are liable to compensate it. As a last resort, the matter will be decided by court.

14 Right to file a complaint or request an administrative review

14.1 Filing a complaint

You may file a complaint to an authority that oversees legality if you think that you have been treated inappropriately or suspect that an authority or a public official has not complied with the law or fulfilled the obligations. You can also bring any issues you have experienced to the attention of, for example, the head of prison. If you have a confidential letter to the head of prison, put the letter in a sealed envelope, address it to the head of prison and put it the letterbox in your ward.

The primary solution should be to discuss the issue or conflict with the staff. Discussing with the staff is usually the quickest way to solve issues.

A complaint has to be filed in writing. Filing a complaint is cost-free. You may formulate the complaint freely in your native language.

A complaint concerning a matter dating back more than two years will not be admitted for consideration. An exception may be made for a special reason.

14.2 Contents of a complaint

When you file a complaint, you have to specify which act or omission of the Prison and Probation Service or its official you criticise.

The complaint has to include the grounds for why you consider the conduct of the Prison and Probation Service or its official to be wrong.

You should state when the action or omission in question had occurred if possible.

You should mention if a complaint on the same matter has been filed elsewhere. In addition, include your name and contact information in the complaint.

14.3 Sending a complaint to an authority overseeing legality

The legality of the operation of the Prison and Probation Service and its units and officials is monitored by the internal control of the Prison and Probation Service, which is assigned to the Judicial Unit of the Prison and Probation Service.

In addition, the operation of the Prison and Probation Service is overseen by, among others, the Parliamentary Deputy Ombudsman. You may file a complaint on the same matter with more than one authority overseeing legality, but the complaint is generally admitted for consideration only by that authority where the matter was filed first.

A list of the authorities overseeing the operation of prisons is, for example, on the notice board of your ward. You can post your complaint directly to the authority overseeing legality yourself or ask the prison staff to send your complaint on your behalf. In your ward or elsewhere, you will have access to, for example, writing paper for drafting your complaint and envelopes in which you can close your confidential letter meant for a

supervisory authority. You can leave it to the prison staff to be forwarded at the expense of the prison or post it yourself if you wish.

You can put your complaint addressed to an authority overseeing legality in a sealed envelope in the letterbox in your ward. The prison staff will put your letter in the outgoing post.

The complaint procedure is not generally meant for those decisions that are eligible for a request for an administrative review. However, the complaint process can be used to examine the procedures, such as whether your right to request a review has been respected.

The Prison and Probation Service cannot admit for consideration complaints regarding the health care or medical treatment of prisoners. The legality of the health care and medical treatment of prisoners organised and provided by the Health Care Services for Prisoners is overseen by the Regional State Administrative Agency of Northern Finland.

14.4 Request for an administrative review and appeal to Administrative Court

A request for an administrative review is the primary means of a legal remedy and appeal. The decisions of the Prison and Probation Service that are eligible for a request for an administrative review are listed in the Acts on the specific sanctions. The relevant provisions are:

- Imprisonment Act, chapter 20, section 1;
- Remand Imprisonment Act, chapter 15, section 1;
- Act on Probationary Liberty Under Supervision, section 40;
- Act on the Enforcement of Community Sanctions, chapter 14, section 86.

Such decisions include instructions on submitting a request for an administrative review. The request for an administrative review has to be submitted in writing within seven days from the date you were informed of the decision.

You can send your request for an administrative review yourself to the decision-maker referred to in the instructions by post or email or give it to the head of prison within the time limit who then forwards it to the decision-maker.

If you send your request for an administrative review yourself by post, please note that the delivery is at your own risk. In general, letters should be delivered within 4–5 working days from the date of posting it. It is possible that, due to the postal delivery and its possible delays, the request for an administrative review you have sent yourself may not reach the decision-maker within the seven-day time limit, in which case your request for an administrative review cannot be admitted for consideration.

If you are not satisfied with the decision on your request for an administrative review, you may appeal against it to the Helsinki Administrative Court. The appeal instructions are attached to the decision you received. You can submit your appeal to the Administrative Court, for example, by post or through your legal counsel. You can also give it to the head of prison within the appeal period, who will forward your appeal to the court without delay.

15 Staff and managing affairs

The prison staff will help you with any issues. For example, in matters related to finances, housing, the Social Insurance Institution of Finland Kela, programmes, permit applications or enforcement, you can contact the instructors or senior instructors. In matters related to the sentence plan or placement in activities, you can contact the prison officials.

Many outside cooperation partners visit and work in the prison. You can talk with them and participate in the different rehabilitative activities organised by them. You can get more information about the outside cooperation partners from the staff of your ward.

If you have any questions, please contact the staff.