

Prison and Probation Centre for Central Finland

Prison rules for Vaasa Prison

Entry into force on 6 January 2025

Prison rules for Vaasa Prison

Contents

1 § General	3
2 § Moving within the prison area	3
3 § Clothing in the prison area	3
4 § Locking of the premises and checking the number of prisoners	3
5 § Work and free time activities	4
6 § Visiting the prison canteen	5
7 § Visits	5
7.1 § Supervised visits	5
7.2 § Visits by a child	6
7.3 § Unsupervised visits	6
7.4 § Communication via video connection	6
7.5 § Receiving goods during visits	7
8 § Use of telephone	7
9 § Sending post	8
10 § Smoking and cleanliness	8
11 § Possession of property	9
11.1 § Objects and substances the possession of which may be denied	9
11.2 § Other factors influencing the possession of objects or substances	11
12 § Prison wards	11
13 § Substance use and medication	13
14 § Entry into force	14

1 § General

These prison rules contain more specific regulations than the Imprisonment Act and the Remand Imprisonment Act and the provisions and regulations issued under the Acts on the movement within the prison area and locking of the premises, wards, arrangements related to visits, telephone use and free time activities, possession of property, and other corresponding individual issues related to the maintenance of prison order and arrangement of activities in the prison.

Prisoners must comply with the prison rules. A prisoner may be imposed a disciplinary punishment for violating the prison rules provided that the prison rules expressly state that the violation of the rule may be punishable by a disciplinary punishment.

A prisoner may also be imposed a disciplinary punishment if the prisoner fails to obey a request or order issued by an official of the Prison and Probation Service within the official's authority to maintain prison order and security.

2 § Moving within the prison area

Prisoners may move and spend time in their appointed activity and workplace, in their own accommodation ward, and in areas appointed for outdoor exercise, meals, and free time activities at times stated in the daily schedule of the ward.

Moving elsewhere in the prison or its area without a permission is forbidden. A disciplinary punishment may be imposed for violating this rule.

3 § Clothing in the prison area

Prisoners must be properly dressed within the prison area. A disciplinary punishment may be imposed for violating this rule.

4 § Locking of the premises and checking the number of prisoners

The cell doors are locked during the times determined in the daily schedule.

When the ward is locked, prisoners must be in their own cells or in other location marked in the checklist of prisoners. The checking of the number of prisoners has to be carried out by opening the cell door so that the condition and state of health of each prisoner living in the cell can be visually observed. If necessary, the staff will discuss with the prisoners separately. During the checking of the number of prisoners, the staff may ask the prisoner to stand up facing the staff. The times, when the number of prisoners is checked, are specified in the daily schedule.

If the accommodation ward is open, when the number of prisoners is checked, the prisoners have to go to the corridor of the accommodation ward in a place specified by the staff.

Prisoners are obligated to close and lock the cell doors when they leave their cells. Opening or closing the safety latches on the cell doors is forbidden.

If a prisoner is not in his or her cell or other specified place, where the number of prisoners is checked, without an acceptable reason when the ward is locked, a disciplinary punishment may be imposed on the prisoner.

5 § Work and free time activities

The prison arranges work in packing, the paint shop, or elsewhere in the building for activities. In addition, prisoners can work in the kitchen, reception ward or cleaning.

While in prison, prisoners can complete basic education and general upper secondary education studies and vocational upper secondary qualification in metalwork.

The prison offers substance rehabilitation and various activities preparing for freedom.

Free time activities, such as physical exercise, meetings with the Finnish Red Cross, and religious events, are arranged in accordance with a weekly programme.

Prisoners are arranged an opportunity to use the library services of the prison every week. More precise times for using the library are in the daily schedule of the ward and possible changes will be informed separately.

6 § Visiting the prison canteen

Prisoners make their purchases by using the order lists. The ordered goods have to be picked up from the lobby of the dining room. Prisoners must pay with their prepaid cards via a payment terminal. More precise times are in the daily schedule.

Prisoners, who are in isolation under observation for safety purposes or for the purposes of detecting prohibited substances, are not allowed to go to the prison canteen to make purchases themselves.

7 § Visits

7.1 § Supervised visits

Male prisoners' visits are arranged on Saturdays at 12.00–12.45, 13.00–13.45 and 14.00–14.45. Female prisoners' visits are arranged on Saturdays at 11.00–11.45. Visits are not arranged on Christmas Eve, Midsummer Eve or public holidays. Prisoners must reserve a visiting time from a senior prison official of the accommodation ward in advance by 18.00 on the Thursday preceding the weekend. The visiting time is determined by the order of application. Prisoners must inform their visitors of the visiting time.

Prisoners can be visited by their spouse and children belonging to the same household or at most two (2) other visitors. Visitors have to arrive on time; visitors who are late will not be allowed in.

Conditions of visits:

The visitor and the prisoner are not allowed to have any means to take notes or transmit written messages without the permission of the staff.

The prisoner and the visitor may not touch each other during the visit.

If a prisoner violates the terms of a meeting laid down in the prison rules, a disciplinary punishment may be imposed on the prisoner.

7.2 § Visits by a child

A prisoner may be granted permission to receive a visit from a child under 15 years of age in premises suitable for this, if the visit is necessary to maintain contact between the prisoner and the child and the visit is not against the best interests of the child. The visit is supervised.

An application form can be obtained from a senior instructor to whom it is also returned.

Supervised visits by a child are arranged on Sundays at 12.00–12.45 and 13.00–13.45. Other visiting times may be considered in individual situations if it is in the best interests of the child.

7.3 § Unsupervised visits

An application form for an unsupervised visit can be obtained from a senior instructor to whom it is also returned.

The visiting times are at 16.15–18.30 on Tuesdays, 12.30–15.30 on Thursdays, and 10.30–16.00 on Saturdays and Sundays.

7.4 § Communication via video connection

Prisoners may be given permission to communicate with their relatives or other close people by using a computer meant for prisoners (so-called Skype meetings). Permission has to be applied for in writing by filling in a specific form for each time separately. Communication via video connection is arranged at a time agreed with an instructor.

Permission may be granted once a week for 15, 30 or 45 minutes at a time according to the wish of the prisoner. A prisoner, whose family members live abroad or for some other corresponding reason cannot visit the prisoner in prison, may be granted a longer (one hour) communication once a week.

During communication via video connection, the prisoner is not allowed to have any means to take notes or transmit written messages in their possession without the permission of the staff. Prisoners are not allowed to touch the devices; the staff opens and closes the connection.

A disciplinary punishment may be imposed on a prisoner for violating this rule and for communicating or attempting to communicate with a person not included in the decision on permission.

7.5 § Receiving goods during visits

Prisoners may receive a small amount of personal property in connection with a visit but not during a visit. A small amount is about one normal plastic shopping bag (30 litres) of goods, but there can only be two (2) magazines or books in total. When assessing the quality and quantity of the property to be received, the rules on the possession of property referred to in these prison rules (§ 10), the limitations of the storage facilities and the amount of property already in the possession of the prisoner or in storage are taken into consideration.

The staff inspects the goods to be given to the prisoners. The quantity and quality of the goods must be such that the staff can inspect them without breaking them.

Prisoners are allowed to give goods to their visitors. The goods to be given must be specified in advance at the reception ward and signed by the visitor as received.

8 § Use of telephone

The telephones at the wards are available daily during the times specified in section 12 § Prison wards of these prison rules. The number of calls is limited by the number of available telephone devices and the time available according to the daily schedule. Based on individual consideration, prisoners may also be allowed to make telephone calls at other times than those specified in these prison rules.

All prisoners receive telephone codes that are for personal use only. The codes may not be given to the use of another person.

A prerequisite for the use of the telephone is that the prisoner tells the staff the numbers and the names of the people in advance by using the form reserved for this purpose. There can be no more than 20 numbers, which are then stored in the telephone system.

A disciplinary punishment may be imposed on a prisoner if the prisoner gives incorrect information about the telephone numbers or the receivers of the calls, gives the personal codes to the use of another person, or uses the personal codes of another person.

9 § Sending post

If a prisoner tries to carry or gives another prisoner for the purpose of carrying a letter or other postal item or a message pass the inspection of the prison post, the prisoner may be imposed to disciplinary punishment.

10 § Smoking and cleanliness

Smoking inside the prison is prohibited. The possession of tobacco product and lighting devices is prohibited at other times except during outdoor exercise. The smoking products of each prisoner are kept separately in a locked storage meant for that. Smoking is possible once a day during outdoor exercise. At other times, including during participation in activities, smoking is prohibited. A disciplinary punishment may be imposed on a prisoner for acting against this rule.

The order of the furniture in the cell cannot be changed without the permission of an official of the Prison and Probation Service. All goods must be stored in the cabinets and other storage places. Damaging the cell or the furniture is prohibited. A disciplinary punishment may be imposed on a prisoner for damaging the cell or furniture.

Pictures, posters, and other objects may only be attached to the notice board hung on the wall in the accommodation room. A disciplinary punishment may be imposed on a prisoner for attaching objects elsewhere in the accommodation room.

Electrical devices must be switched off when leaving the cell. Prisoners' personal and the prison's electrical devices and plugs have to be intact. A disciplinary punishment may be imposed for breaking the electrical devices or plugs.

11 § Possession of property

11.1 § Objects and substances the possession of which may be denied

According to chapter 9, section 1, subsection 1, paragraph 1 of the Imprisonment Act (chapter 5, section 1, subsection 1, paragraph 1 of the Remand Imprisonment Act), the possession of an object or substance may be denied if it poses a threat to the safety of a person. Besides firearms, edged weapons, blunt instruments, explosives and gas sprays, such objects and substances include also, among others, poisons and aerosol products with propellant gas. In addition, substances posing a threat include chemical compounds that can be used to make explosives, such as hair dyes containing hydrogen peroxide.

According to chapter 9, section 1, subsection 1, paragraph 2 of the Imprisonment Act (chapter 5, section 1, subsection 1, paragraph 2 of the Remand Imprisonment Act), the possession of an object or substance may be denied if it is especially suited for damaging property. These include, among others, tools suitable for damaging property.

According to chapter 9, section 1, subsection 1, paragraph 3 of the Imprisonment Act (chapter 5, section 1, subsection 1, paragraph 3 of the Remand Imprisonment Act), the possession of an object or substance may be denied if the possession of it is, when taking into account the conditions and the level of supervision in the prison or a prison ward, detrimental to general prison order. These include, among others, the following:

1. Devices that are suitable for recording information. These include, among others, computers, cameras, video cameras, MP3 players, and some game consoles. Separate memory devices and devices containing hard drives are prohibited.
2. Devices that enable communication via electronic communication. These include, among others, computers, mobile phones, and some game consoles. Objects used for establishing electronic connection and objects the use of which is closely connected to the devices used for electronic communication are also prohibited.
3. Devices that are suitable for intercepting and monitoring the radio traffic of authorities or otherwise observing the activities of authorities. These include, among others, radiotelephones and radio traffic detectors. Binoculars and other optical devices suitable for observation are also forbidden.

4. Objects that can cause a cleanliness, health, or fire hazard. These include, among others, tattoo equipment, animals, plants and candles.
- 5) Objects that are otherwise detrimental to the public order of the prison. These include, among others, objects used for fighting and escaping, replica weapons, and objects bearing the symbols of criminal organisations and groups.

According to chapter 9, section 1, subsection 1, paragraph 4 of the Imprisonment Act (chapter 5, section 1, subsection 1, paragraph 4 of the Remand Imprisonment Act), the possession of an object or substance may be denied if it cannot be inspected without unreasonable difficulty or without damaging it. These include, among others, hygiene and cosmetics products, foodstuffs, and tobacco products that are brought from outside the prison. If prisoners take these products with them outside the prison, the products will not be given back into their possession when they return to the prison. The structure of the objects that are given into the possession of prisoners must be such that they are not suitable for concealing prohibited objects or substances.

According to chapter 9, section 1, subsection 1, paragraph 5 of the Imprisonment Act (chapter 5, section 1, subsection 1, paragraph 5 of the Remand Imprisonment Act), the possession of an object or substance may be denied if it is used as a means of commission of an offence or there are reasonable grounds to suspect that it will be used as such. This may refer to, for instance, a situation where a prisoner uses a typewriter, which is in the prisoner's possession, to falsify documents or commit frauds.

According to chapter 9, section 1, subsection 1, paragraph 6 of the Imprisonment Act (chapter 5, section 1, subsection 1, paragraph 6 of the Remand Imprisonment Act), the possession of an object or substance may be denied if the prison has acquired a corresponding object for the use of the prisoner. These include, among others, objects already belonging to the furnishing of the accommodation room and other objects acquired by the prison for the use of prisoners if the prisoner has a real opportunity to use the object.

A disciplinary punishment may be imposed on a prisoner if the aforementioned objects or substances are found in the prisoner's possession.

11.2 § Other factors influencing the possession of objects or substances

Prisoners are only allowed to have a reasonable amount of private property in their possession. The amount of utility articles given into their possession must be such that they can be stored in the storage spaces of the cell in places reserved for them.

The prerequisites for the possession of an electrical device are that the device is type approved (CE marking), it is intact, and has an identification number.

The seals attached to the device during an inspection may not be removed or damaged. A disciplinary punishment may be imposed on a prisoner for removing or damaging the seals.

Modifying authorised objects so that they are more suitable for being used for acts of violence is prohibited. This refers to, for example, making an article suitable as a blunt weapon or sharpening a toothbrush. A disciplinary punishment may be imposed on a prisoner if such objects are found in the prisoner's possession.

A disciplinary punishment may be imposed on a prisoner if the prisoner tries to bring unauthorised goods to a prison and avoid an inspection.

A maximum of 100 copies of all recordings (including CD, DVD, Blu-ray and game console games), 10 copies of books, and 20 copies of magazines are given into possession at a time.

The rules on the possession of property do not apply to objects and substances that have been given in the possession of a prisoner before the prison rules entered into force. If a prisoner is transferred to another prison, the prison rules in force there at the time of the transfer are applied.

12 § Prison wards

Travel cell ward, 1st floor:

Prisoners are given only necessary personal goods into their possession. The telephone can be used daily at 7.00–16.00. The time has to be arranged with a prison officer. The travel cell for female prisoners is at the women's ward.

Closed ward, 2nd floor:

It is located at the south end of the 2nd floor. The ward has one cell where a prisoner who is imposed a disciplinary punishment can be placed. The other cells are meant for remand prisoners who are accommodated separately under the Coercive Measures Act. The telephone can be used on weekdays at 7.00–16.15 and on Saturdays and Sundays at 8.00–15.00 when the cells are open. However, the time must be agreed separately with a prison officer.

Isolation ward:

It is located at the north end of the 2nd floor next to the closed ward. The cells of the ward may temporarily be used as travel cells if the actual travel cells are fully populated or prisoners in a travel cell must be kept separate. Giving property into prisoners' possession may be restricted depending on the grounds of the isolation. The use of the telephone must be agreed separately with a prison officer.

Accommodation ward, 3rd floor (north end):

The ward is meant for remand prisoners. The telephone can be used on weekdays at 7.00–18.00 and on Saturdays and Sundays at 8.00–15.00 when the cells are open.

Accommodation ward, 3rd floor (south end):

The ward is meant for prisoners accommodated separately at their own request. The telephone can be used when the ward is open or at times agreed separately with a prison officer.

Closed ward, 3rd floor (west end):

The ward is meant for prisoners accommodated separately at their own request. The telephone can be used when the ward is open or at times agreed separately with a prison officer.

If there is no need for a second ward for prisoners accommodated separately at their own request, the ward may be used for other accommodation purposes, such as a ward for prisoners, who have to be accommodated separately under the Coercive Measures Act.

Accommodation ward, 4th floor (north end):

The ward is a contract ward. The telephone can be used on weekdays at 7.00–19.00 and on Saturdays and Sundays at 8.00–15.00 when the cells are open.

Accommodation ward, 4th floor (south end):

The ward is meant for sentenced prisoners. The telephone can be used on weekdays at 7.00–19.00 and on Saturdays and Sundays at 8.00–15.00 when the cells are open.

The call times at lunch time at 11.00–12.15 are reserved for prisoners, who work or take part in other activities.

Accommodation ward, 4th floor (west end):

The telephone can be used on weekdays at 7.00–19.00 and on Saturdays and Sundays at 8.00–15.00.

The call times at lunch time at 11.00–12.15 are reserved for prisoners, who work or take part in other activities.

The Swedish-speaking ward can function in connection with any ward when needed.

Women's ward (closed ward):

The ward is meant for prisoners who are accommodated separately under the Coercive Measures Act. The use of the telephone has to be arranged with a prison officer.

Women's ward (remand prisoners):

The ward is meant for remand prisoners. The telephone can be used on weekdays at 7.00–18.00 and on Saturdays and Sundays at 8.00–15.00 when the cells are open.

Women's ward (sentenced prisoners):

This ward is meant for sentenced prisoners. The telephone can be used on weekdays at 7.00–19.00 and on Saturdays and Sundays at 8.00–15.00 when the cells are open.

13 § Substance use and medication

A disciplinary punishment may be imposed for manipulating or attempting to manipulate a substance use test.

Prisoners are not allowed to use or possess medication without the authorisation of a physician of the Health Care Services for Prisoners. Medication has to be kept in pill dispensers and bags meant for them or other original packaging and unused medication must be returned. Prisoners are not allowed to give medication prescribed to them to other prisoners. A disciplinary punishment may be imposed for violating these rules.

14 § Entry into force

These prison rules enter into force on 6 January 2025 and repeal the prison rules that entered into force on 1 October 2024.

Helsinki, 27 December 2024

Riitta Kari, Director of Core Operations Department

Jani Kotoaro, Lawyer