



**R/SE** CRIMINAL SANCTIONS AGENCY

# Information for prisoners



## Pelso prison

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# INFORMATION FOR PRISONERS

The aim of this information leaflet is to guide you how to function in Pelso Prison.

One of the goals of imprisonment is to decrease recidivism and increase life management. A successfully served sentence term is influenced by your own attitude and activity.

Pelso Prison operates under the administrative branch of the Ministry of Justice and is part of the Criminal Sanctions Region of Eastern and Northern Finland. It is a closed prison with 120 prisoner places and it is located in the municipality of Vaala. The prison has a ward for ten female prisoners.

## Check the following things on your arrival in prison at the latest:

- terminate your rental flat; take care of rent or maintenance charge;
- inform Kela, the social welfare authorities and the employment services;
- sort out possible issues concerning custody and livelihood;
- take possible treatment referrals and prescriptions with you.

## 1. Conduct in prison

You are starting to serve your prison sentence. Imprisonment is regulated by various norms. **You are obligated to go through the Imprisonment Act and the rules of Pelso Prison.** You should also read the notice board of your ward and the daily schedule of the prison. The Imprisonment Act can be borrowed from the ward office. You can ask for a copy of the prison order, which you can keep. The daily schedule is on the notice board of your ward.

You have to behave in an appropriate manner towards the staff, other prisoners and other people. You have to also comply with the instructions and orders of the staff.

A disciplinary punishment can be imposed on you if you breach the Imprisonment Act or the rules of Pelso Prison. If you are suspected of being guilty of an offence, the prison director can refer the matter to the police for investigation.

The contact information of the authorities supervising the operations of the prison is on the notice board of the ward.



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## 2. Accommodation in Pelso Prison

Pelso Prison has wards that are different with regard to their degree of supervision.

In closed wards, the cell doors are opened when it is time to leave for work as well as during mealtimes. Free-time activities at the wards are arranged as stated in the daily schedule of the prison.



Contract wards are open wards, where the cell doors are opened in the morning and closed in the evening according to the daily schedule.

When you are placed at the contract ward, you:

- do not use intoxicants or doping substances;
- commit yourself to the control of the abstinence from substances (substance tests);
- participate in activities (work, studies, courses);
- comply with the prison order.

Smoking is allowed only in the cells and outdoors. It is possible to be accommodated in a non-smoking cell. Smoking is forbidden in the workplaces of the prison. **In matters concerning accommodation, contact the senior criminal sanctions official or the prison officers of the ward.**

### 3. Staff

Administration	Director and assistant directors Work supervisor Office secretaries
Accommodation ward	Senior criminal sanctions official Prison officers of the ward
Workplaces	Work supervisors Prison officers
Education and rehabilitation	Study instructor Senior instructors Instructors Senior instructor responsible for social work Free-time instructor Deacon
Health care	Physician Nurses Dentist

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You can contact the officials by sending them an inquiry form where you state your matter. You can get an inquiry form from the ward office.



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## Health care

Pelso Prison has a polyclinic where you can get treatment for health problems. The polyclinic has a physician, a dentist and two nurses. You can make an appointment by filling in the inquiry form. The form has to include the reason for the appointment so that it is possible to assess the urgency of the treatment. If you want, you can post the inquiry form in a sealed envelope. The appointment time is granted based on the urgency of the matter. In acute health problems, contact the staff.

## Social work

Together with the senior instructor responsible for social work, you can handle matters related to:

- child welfare
- housing
- release
- social assistance.

You can discuss the realisation of your sentence plan with the senior instructor responsible for social work. You can also attend to matters concerning social assistance at your accommodation ward.

## Substance abuse work

You can discuss about your substance use and willingness to change with the instructors. The discussions with the instructors support a life without substances and crime.

## Spiritual work

Spiritual work helps you to cope during the prison term and gives an opportunity for religious practice. You can take part in religious events and have someone to discuss with.

**In Pelso Prison, the deacon is in charge of spiritual work.**



## Office secretary

The office secretary handles matters related to the enforcement. Such matters include, among others, the notifications of sentences, the affairs concerning fines and the calculations of sentence terms.

The office secretary also handles matters concerning prisoner account administration.



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## 4. Contact with the outside world

You can buy stamps and envelopes in the prison canteen. Leave letters to the letterbox of your accommodation ward. Leave also internal letters addressed to another prisoner to the letterbox.

**The address for sending letters to Pelso Prison is the following:**

Name of the recipient

PO Box 1

92811 PELSONSUO

It is recommended that money is transferred to the bank account of the prison. Sending money in a letter is at the sender's own risk.

**The account number for money transferred to a prisoner:**

OP-Pohjola FI93 5000 0121 5038 57

In the payee field, put Pelso Prison and in the note field, the prisoner's name.

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**In matters concerning the post, contact the library prison officer.**

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## Use of the telephone

You have a possibility to make telephone calls according to the daily schedule of the ward. You can buy phone credit from the canteen.



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## 5. Visits

You have a possibility to accept visitors on weekends and public holidays. The visit can be supervised, under special supervision or unsupervised (family visit and child-friendly visit). The visiting times are on the notice board of your ward.

### **How do I reserve a visit?**

Leave the form for reserving visits to the ward office by 16:00 on Thursdays. When the staff has handled the form, it will be returned to you. The granted visit type and the approved visitors as well as the granted visiting time are marked on the form. Inform your visitor of the granted visiting time.

### **Can the visitor bring money or goods in the prison?**

The visitor can leave money and magazines to be delivered to the prisoner. The money is transferred to the prisoner's account. During visits, it is not allowed to receive or deliver goods without permission. Agree with the staff on receiving possible goods beforehand.

A person under 18 years of age can come to a visit with his or her guardian or with a written consent of the guardian. A visitor can visit one prisoner a day. There can be at most two visitors or a family (four

persons). Physical touching between the visitor and the prisoner is forbidden.

### **How can I apply for an unsupervised visit (family visit and child-friendly visit)?**

You can apply for an unsupervised visit with a form available at the ward office. The prison director grants the unsupervised visits. The reservation situation of the visiting premises affects the date of the granted visit. When you apply for an unsupervised visit, you commit yourself to abstinence from substances and substance testing. Leave the application at the ward office.

**The staff of your accommodation ward guide you with matters concerning the visits.**



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## 6. Possession of property

You have the right to have a reasonable amount of utility articles and your own clothes in your own use. The possession of property is regulated in the Imprisonment Act and the prison order of Pelso Prison.

You can acquire property outside the prison with the permission of the staff. The permit has to be applied beforehand on a separate form, which you can get from the ward office.

You can have electronic devices in your possession by filling in a device form, which is available at the ward office. The devices can be inspected at the expense of the prisoner.

In prison, you cannot give your property to another prisoner without the permission of the staff and you cannot possess property received from another prisoner without the permission of the staff.

Your other property is placed in custody at the reception ward. If required, reserve a time for a visit to the locker.

**In matters concerning the acquisition and possession of property, contact the staff of the reception ward or the accommodation ward.**

## 7. Clothing maintenance

In prison, you can get a specific number of prison clothes for your own use. The exchange of clothing is stated in the daily schedule. In the exchange of clothing, you can get clean clothes for the clothes you have handed over.

If you are at the contract ward, you have a possibility to wash your own clothes. Other prisoners can leave their clothes for washing at their own risk. List the clothes you have left for washing in a laundry receipt and put it in your laundry bag.

You are responsible for taking care of the prison clothes given in your possession. Give back the clothes given to you to the clothing store when you leave the prison.

**A ward prison officer guides you with matters concerning clothing maintenance.**





## 8. Prison canteen and prisoners' money

In the prison canteen, you can buy food products, hygiene products and tobacco as well as phone cards, postcards and stamps.

You can use the money you have earned in prison in the prison canteen. In addition, you can use 140 euros of your own money per month. The opening hours of the prison canteen are on the notice board of the ward. When needed, ask the list of the products sold in the canteen from the ward office.

**In matters concerning the prison canteen, contact the work supervisor.**

**The office secretary handles other prisoners' financial matters in the prison.**



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## 9. Sentence plan

A sentence plan is drawn up for you in the assessment centre. It guides your sentence term, release and parole. The plan is specified in the prison where you are placed.

During the preparation of your sentence plan, attention is paid to:

- the length of your sentence and the number of prior sentences;
- your working and functioning capacity;
- other information concerning you, your offences and conditions.

**Those factors, which can help you to reduce recidivism if they are influenced, are examined when drawing up sentence plan.**

**Such factors include, among others, substance use, problem solving skills, lack of education or social networks.**

Based on the plan, you are placed in an activity in the prison. By participating in the activity, you can influence your problems related to life control, education history as well as working and functioning capacity.

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The progress of your sentence plan affects the permissions of leave and the placement in an open prison and supervised probationary freedom.

**The senior criminal sanctions official of your ward or other staff member guides you in matters concerning your sentence plan.**

## **Release plan**

As your release approaches, a release plan will be drawn up for you. Its aim is to ease your transfer to freedom. The release plan includes, among others, arranging accommodation, substance abuse treatment and livelihood.

You can borrow a handbook for released prisoners from the office of the accommodation ward.

**The senior instructor responsible for social work or other prison staff member guides you in matters concerning the release plan.**



## 10. Participation in activities

In prison, you are obliged to participate in activities arranged or approved by the prison. You will be paid an activity allowance for participating in activities. The state of health, functioning capacity or age can be a reason to relieve from the duty to participate.

### Studying

You have an opportunity to complete basic education and general upper secondary education.

As apprenticeship training, you can study for a vocational or further qualification in wood processing, vehicle technology and agriculture.

### The study instructor guides in matters concerning studying.

Pelso Prison has orientating and rehabilitating education (VaKu 1), which focuses on manual skills. The education is arranged by Piippola Vocational and Cultural College, which is part of the Federation of Education in Jokilaaksot.



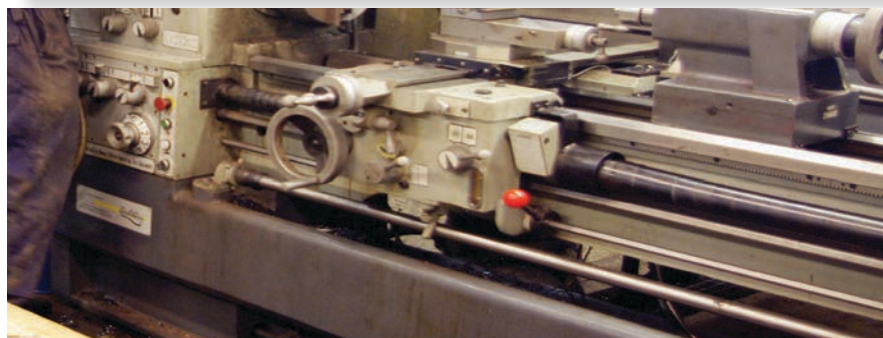
## Work

Wood industry	Wood industry includes various carpentry and wood construction work.
Repair shop	The machines of the prison are repaired and maintained at the repair shop.
Agriculture team	The agriculture team is responsible for the maintenance of the outdoor areas, forest work, farm work with tractors and snow ploughing in wintertime.
Cattle team	The duties of the cattle team include the tending of cattle as part of cattle farming.
Sheep team	The duties of the sheep team include the tending of sheep as part of sheep farming.
Clothing maintenance	Clothing maintenance work is located in the clothing store. The duties include clothing maintenance and cleaning.
Kitchen team	Prisoners working in the kitchen are responsible for the dishwasher and the peeling of potatoes and root vegetables. The work also includes cleaning.



Yard team	The yard team is responsible for cleaning up and mowing the lawn of the courtyard of the prison as well as the snow ploughing in wintertime.
Ward cleaner	The duties of the ward cleaner include the cleaning of the common areas of the ward and other tasks related to the cleanliness of the wards.

The placement in activities is handled in a placement meeting. The assistant director is responsible for the placement in activities.





## Activity programmes

With the help of activity programmes, you can influence your risk of committing new offences in the future. In Pelso Prison, you can participate in the following activity programmes approved by the Criminal Sanctions Agency.

Cognitive Skills (CS)	Problem solving, thinking skills
Anger Management	Violence
Unbeatables (UB)	Domestic violence
Substance abuse programme "Kalterit taakse"	Substance use
Move	Motivation
Behaviour-Interviewing-Change Programme BSF	Motivation
On a Journey to Change	Substance use
Mese	Sexual offences
New Direction	Sexual offences
Relapse management and prevention	

**The senior instructor and the instructors can guide you with matters concerning the activity programmes.**

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## 11. Permission of leave

A permission of leave can be granted for an important reason, for a particularly important reason or based on the length of the sentence term. Apply for a permission of leave in writing with the form available at the ward office. On the notice board of the ward, there is a permission of leave checklist to guide you in the preparation of a permission of leave.

You can apply for a permission of leave based on the length of the sentence term after the time limit for a permission of leave has passed. Leave the application at the ward office at least two weeks before the applied date of the permission of leave. The permission of leave is decided by the prison director or his or her deputy. In certain cases, the permission of leave is decided by the Criminal Sanctions Agency.

### **Preconditions for a permission of leave:**

- the granting of the permission promotes the implementation of your sentence plan;
- the compliance with the conditions of the permission is deemed likely enough;
- you commit yourself to the control of the abstinence from substances and other necessary supervision.

## **Permission of leave for an important reason**

A permission of leave can be granted for an important reason also right after the sentence term has begun. The important reason can be connected to the family, training, social or housing issues or other corresponding matter.

## **Permission of leave for a particularly important reason**

A permission of leave for a particularly important reason can be granted, for instance, due to a serious illness of a close relative or for a funeral. You have to give a sufficient account to support your application. Leave the application with its appendices to the ward office. The permission of leave can also be granted under escort.

**The permission of leave is provided in the Imprisonment Act. The senior criminal sanctions official of your ward or other staff member guides you in matters concerning the permission of leave.**



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## 12. Application for a transfer to another prison

Application forms for a transfer to another prison are available at the office of the accommodation ward. When you apply for a transfer to another prison, fill in the form and return it to the ward office. In the application, state your reasons why you apply for a transfer and in which activity you want to participate there.

If you apply for a transfer to an open prison, ask a staff member to print the form for commitment to abstinence from substances and sign it.

The placement in another prison is decided by the assessment centre. The decision is based on your sentence plan and possible changes in your situation or circumstances.

**The senior criminal sanctions official of your ward and other staff members guide you in matters concerning the placement in a prison.**

### **You can be placed in an open prison if:**

- the placement promotes your sentence plan;
- you are suited for the activities arranged in the open prison;
- the compliance with the order of the open prison is deemed likely enough;
- it is deemed likely enough that you will not commit an offence or leave the open prison without authorisation;

- you commit yourself to abstain from intoxicants and doping substances
- you commit yourself to the control of the abstinence from substances (substance tests).

### **13. Supervised probationary freedom**

In supervised probationary freedom, you have an opportunity to practise a life without crime and substances. You have a possibility to be placed under supervised probationary freedom at most six months before your release on parole.

**The senior criminal sanctions official guides in matters concerning probationary freedom.**

#### **Preconditions for probationary freedom:**

- abstinence from substances
- control of the abstinence from substances
- accommodation
- activity (work, education, rehabilitation)
- progress of the sentence plan
- financial situation
- support network
- no unfinished criminal cases
- supervision of a community sanctions office is recommended.

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## 14. Free-time activities in prison

In Pelso Prison, you can use the gym, play ball games, jog, billiards, do handicrafts and play in a band. A weekly schedule with additional information on current free-time activities is placed on the notice board of your ward.

**In matters concerning the free-time activities, contact the free-time instructor.**





## 15. Library

Pelso Prison has a library where you can borrow books and CDs. The library is open as stated in the daily schedule of the prison.

**In matters concerning the library, contact the library prison officer.**



## 16. Tips

- Bravely ask the staff for instructions. The staff members are obligated to guide you in matters related to imprisonment.
- Remember that one of the aims of imprisonment is the preparation for freedom. In prison, you can develop abilities that you can use in freedom.
- Get a pen and a calendar. Write down important dates.
- Be active in regard to handling your own affairs.
- Participate in the activity assigned to you. With your own attitude, you can influence your prison term and situation at the time of release.
- Take care of your condition and well-being.
- Handle also your civilian affairs during the imprisonment.
- Keep contact with people important to you.



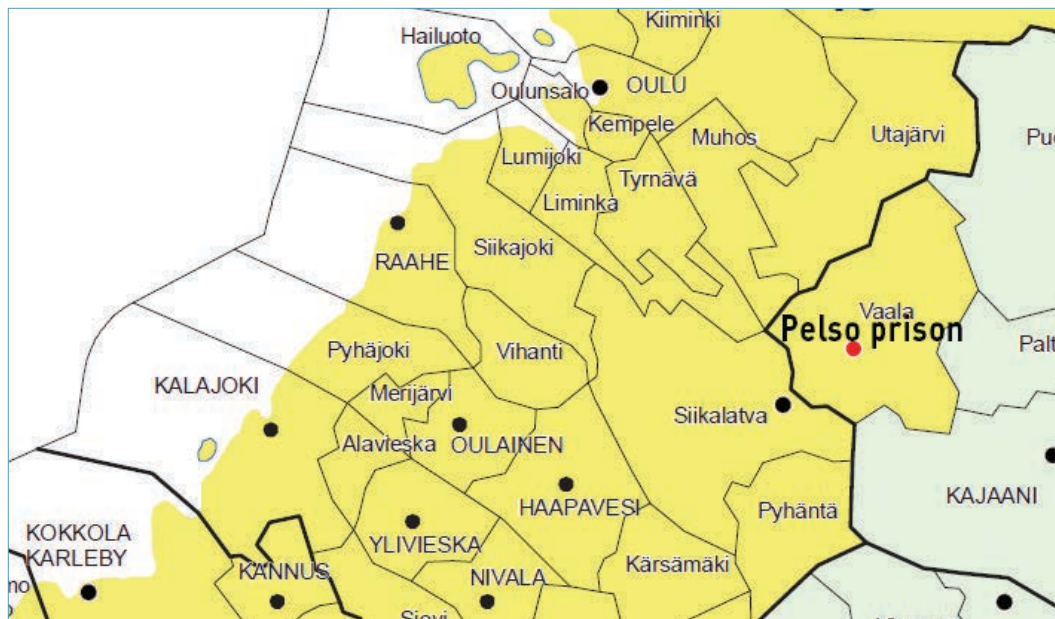
## 17. Map, means of transport and distances

The nearest railway station is in Vaala.

There is a bus connection from Oulu and Vaala.

Distances:

■ Oulu	83 km
■ Kajaani	96 km
■ Kokkola	213 km
■ Rovaniemi	302 km
■ Jyväskylä	300 km
■ Helsinki	569 km



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## 18. Notes





**RISE** CRIMINAL SANCTIONS AGENCY

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