

Technical Notes

1. The statistics in the monthly update report relate to the numbers of offenders worked with in the community or in custody.
2. The number of orders active at a point in time is greater than the number of offenders as an offender can be subject to more than one order at a point in time.
3. The number of people on the caseload in the community is the total number of individuals being dealt with by the Service excluding those that are currently in prisons.

Glossary of Terms - Supervision of Offenders

PROBATION ORDERS

Probation orders are one of a range of options open to courts when sentencing individuals found guilty of criminal behaviour. Offenders give an undertaking to the court that they will be of good behaviour; avoid further crime; adhere to the conditions of the order and to follow the directions of a supervising Probation Officer, who will monitor and help them to stay out of further trouble.

COMMUNITY SERVICE ORDERS

Instead of a prison sentence, convicted offenders over 16 years of age may, instead, be given the opportunity by the Court to perform unpaid work for the community. The legislation for Community Service Orders allows a Judge to sentence an offender to between 40 and 240 hours work. Any Order made must be completed within a year. Community Service is a direct alternative to a prison sentence and an Order will only be made by the Judge where a custodial sentence has first been considered.

COMMUNITY RETURN

Community Return is an incentivised scheme in which suitably assessed prisoners are granted renewable temporary release and undertake community work. It is applicable only to prisoners that are serving more than one and less than eight years and have served at least 50% of their sentence

SUPERVISION DURING DEFERMENT OF PENALTY

Supervision during deferment of penalty is a judicial practice whereby the Court does not proceed to determine the appropriate penalty but instead postpones the decision to a further date, on condition that the offender responds to the supervision of a Probation Officer and avoids reoffending.

POST RELEASE SUPERVISION

Under the Sex Offenders Act, 2001, Judges can sentence sex offenders to a period of probation supervision following their release from prison. Such offenders are monitored closely. During supervision, the Probation Officer focuses on the offence committed and its implications for public safety, helping the offender to see the past offending behaviour as a problem, identify risk factors and develop strategies and supports to ensure there is no repeat offending.

CONDITIONAL SUSPENDED OR PART-SUSPENDED SENTENCES

Judges can deal with a case by way of a suspended or part-suspended sentence with conditions of probation supervision. This means the Judge may:

- issue a prison sentence of a number of months or years; and
- suspend all or part of the sentence for a period of time, conditional on the offender remaining under the supervision of a Probation Officer for the specified time for which the custodial sentence is suspended.

SUPERVISED TEMPORARY RELEASE

The Probation Service supervises some prisoners on temporary release from custody (as provided for in the Criminal Justice Act, 1960 and the Temporary Release Act, 2003) in the community with specific conditions aimed at helping with their reintegration in the community and to avoid further offending. Life sentence prisoners on release in the community are obliged to co-operate and comply with Probation Service supervision on temporary release. Such prisoners, in the normal course, remain subject to supervision for the remainder of their lives.