



Independent Prison Monitoring

Recruitment Information Pack

INFORMATION PACK

INDEPENDENT PRISON MONITORING



Message from Wendy Sinclair

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons for Scotland

Could you provide invaluable support by ensuring prisoners' human rights are upheld and that life in prison contributes to their rehabilitation?

You may be the person who can make a unique contribution to improving Scotland's Prisons, listening to and supporting prisoners and positively impacting on their lives and your wider local community.

Becoming an Independent Prison Monitor can be challenging and rewarding. As well as the opportunity to participate in one of the most unusual and valuable types of voluntary work, you will have the opportunity to meet and work with many people from diverse backgrounds and walks of life.

I would be delighted if you would consider joining our Independent Monitoring Team and in doing so be part of bringing the communities in Scotland into Scotland's prisons.

What is an Independent Prison Monitor?

An Independent Prison Monitor is a volunteering role for Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons for Scotland. The role holds statutory authority under the Public Services Reform (Inspection and Monitoring of Prisons) (Scotland) Order 2015. It is an essential role within the Scottish justice system as it helps ensure prisoners' human rights are upheld and that life in prison contributes to their rehabilitation.

The role is challenging yet rewarding; you will be providing an independent viewpoint on the humane treatment and conditions for prisoners at your local prison; conduct investigations either as a result of a prisoner raising an issue or from your own observations and report back on your findings.

We are looking for people with a range of different backgrounds and experiences. As you can imagine it is a complex role and requires you to have: excellent listening and observation skills; the ability to gain the respect of prisoners, prison staff and the prison Governor; the confidence in dealing with challenging situations; and a commitment to social justice.

The role is a flexible one as visits are conducted at various times and can fit in with your personal circumstances. This includes day, evening, weekends and occasional night visits. You will also be fully supported in your role with training provided to all new Independent Prison Monitors, one to one support from your Regional Prison Monitoring Coordinator (PMC), group support from the rest of the Monitoring team as well as opportunities for further training and options for professional development.

There are currently 15 prisons in Scotland. The Regional Prison Monitoring Coordinators are each responsible for five prisons and the country has been divided into three regions. This is shown in Table 1:

Table 1

Regional Area	Prison Location	Design Capacity per Prison	Total Design Capacity per area
Prison Monitoring Coordinator PMC1 - Area 1	HMP Inverness	103	2197
	HMP & YOI Grampian	506	
	HMP Castle Huntly	285	
	HMP Perth	633	
	HMP Glenochil	670	
Prison Monitoring Coordinator PMC2 - Area 2	HMP & YOI Cornton Vale	309	3205
	HMP Edinburgh	870	
	HM YOI Polmont	760	
	HMP Addiewell	700	
	HMP Shotts	566	
Prison Monitoring Coordinator PMC3 - Area 3	HMP Barlinnie	1021	2655
	HMP Low Moss	700	
	HMP Kilmarnock	500	
	HMP Greenock	255	
	HMP Dumfries	179	

What would I be doing?

You will be completing a variety of tasks, including:

- Monitoring the humane treatment of prisoners and conditions in prisons which includes:
 - Planning prison visits with the rest of the Monitoring Team.
 - Conducting visits to observe and monitor all aspects of prison life.
 - Talking to prisoners about their treatment and conditions in prison.
 - Talking to visitors, prison officers and other people working at the prison about the treatment of prisoners.
 - Monitoring the conditions in which prisoners are detained.
 - Ensuring the provision of appropriate support for prisoners.
 - Monitoring the arrangements for the temporary release of prisoners.

- Developing effective working relationships with prisoners, staff and the Governor.
- Conducting investigations either as a result of a prisoner raising an issue or from your own observations:
 - Responding to requests from prisoners for confidential conversations.
 - Assisting prisoner's with the prison complaints process, where requested.
 - Sourcing and assessing relevant information, as required.
 - Taking appropriate action to issues raised or to observations made with support from the Monitoring Team and the Prison Monitoring Coordinator.
 - Examining relevant prison records relating to the treatments of prisoners in response to issues or concerns raised or observed.
 - Appropriately escalating issues to prison management, if required.
 - Exercising discretion and authority when intervention is necessary.
- Reporting on your monitoring and/or investigations:
 - Reporting back on observations made.
 - Maintaining records of observations and investigations
 - Highlighting good practice and provide constructive feedback.
 - Raising issues with the Governor and the Prison Monitoring Coordinator, as required.
 - Contributing to the Prison Monitoring Annual Report as requested/required.

What skills and qualities do I need to have?

You do not need any special qualifications or experience because we will provide all necessary training and support. You do need to be open-minded, a natural communicator and be able to exercise sound, objective judgement.

We are looking for volunteers with the following skills and qualities:

- Commitment to diversity, equality and an understanding of human rights.
- Integrity.
- Good observational and listening skills.
- Ability to exercise initiative.
- Confidence in dealing with challenging situations.
- Clear and confident communication skills, both verbal and written.
- Competent IT skills.
- Ability to exercise objective and sound judgement.
- Good analytical skills and good interpretation skills.
- Good interpersonal skills.
- Ability to work as part of a team.
- Ability to work independently if required.
- Ability to maintain confidentiality.
- A willingness to learn and be open-minded.
- Fair, respectful and non-judgemental.

Above all we are looking for people with the time, energy and enthusiasm to make a difference. We welcome applications from people over 18 and are particularly keen to hear from young people, those of working age and individuals from minority communities.

What's in it for me?

As an Independent Prison Monitor you will have the opportunity to develop a wide range of personal skills such as decision-making, inter-personal skills and team-working which can benefit your career prospects, existing career and your employer.

Volunteering with Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons for Scotland is a fantastic opportunity for personal and professional growth. By giving your time and skills you will make a positive contribution to people who are detained, and ensuring that they are treated fairly and with respect. All of this whilst making a valuable contribution to your community and wider society in Scotland.

As an IPM you also have a unique opportunity of working in a prison otherwise closed to the general public. We offer comprehensive training to ensure that those appointed gain the knowledge and understanding needed to carry out the role effectively. Examples of that training are as follows:

- The role of the Independent Prison Monitor
- Human Rights and other relevant legislation
- Personal Protection Training
- Prisons Policies and Practice
- Standards for Inspecting and Monitoring Prisons
- Monitoring Guidance
- Local Prison Induction Training
- Prisoner Complaints

This is also a chance for you to meet new people, a chance to widen your social network and to provide unique and invaluable support. Whilst IPMs can work on their own, there is the opportunity to work in pairs or in small groups. You will be given one to one support and be included in local and regional meetings of IPMs. We will of course reimburse all travel and subsistence as appropriate.

How much time will I be expected to give?

The time commitment for each IPM can vary and ranges between 14 to 22 days per year, including attendance at training and relevant meetings.

Initial training may take up to 3 days. While we do our best to offer training at a range of dates and times, in an area close to you, some of the initial training is provided by the Scottish Prison Service and may only be available Monday to Friday, from 9 to 5. In addition you may be offered training opportunities involving travel in your region.

A prison visit usually lasts between 3-5 hours. The day/time at which you visit the prison is flexible to fit in with your personal circumstances and you will be part of a rota system coordinated by the Prison Monitoring Coordinator. You may also respond with follow up actions as required by your visit and attend the prison at other times that are not part of the regular rota which can increase the number of days you will be committing to.

We understand that life can be complicated and we desire to be flexible with all of our volunteer IPMs. The volunteering commitment as an IPM is a period of three years and ongoing one to one support and performance evaluation will be given by the Regional Prison Monitoring Coordinators. We would work closely with you in a 'settling in' period to ensure that we are mutually satisfied that the role of IPM is one that you are suited to and feel comfortable in. We understand that it is not for everyone.

If you stay for 3 years, you can be re-appointed, however the maximum length of time an IPM can serve for is 9 years in total.

How do I apply to become an Independent Prison Monitor ?

If you are interested in becoming an IPM please complete an application form which will be followed by a subsequent awareness session, interview and selection process.

Stage 1 – Complete Application Form

The application form requires personal information from you. As this post includes working with vulnerable people we require you to disclose any convictions and cautions even if they are considered spent. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, failure to disclose such information will lead to a recommendation against your appointment as an Independent Prison Monitor. Please be aware that cautions and convictions are not an automatic bar to appointment but each application is judged on its own merits by taking into consideration the nature of the conviction / caution, the length of time that has elapsed since it has occurred and also any patterns of convictions / cautions.

Another extremely important requirement for Independent Prison Monitors is that they perform their duties impartially and objectively. It is therefore important that any potential conflict of interest is declared. Examples of conflict of interest are listed below:

- If you, or a member of your family work for the Scottish Prison Service (SPS) who are responsible for the management of Scotland's Prisons.
- If you, or a member of your family work for the private prison HMP Kilmarnock (Serco Justice Services) or private prison HMP Addiewell (Sodexo Justice Services).
- If a member of your family is currently serving a custodial sentence.
- If you supply a service or have a business or other interest within any or all of Scotland's prisons.
- If you are currently employed in Criminal Justice Social Work anywhere in Scotland.
- If you are currently employed by Police Scotland.

If you are in any doubt whether or not any relationship could cause a future conflict, please provide details to help us consider your application. Don't worry if you think you may have an actual or perceived conflict of interest – it doesn't necessarily mean that you can't become an IPM. Each case will be considered individually and this will be explored with you at the interview stage as to whether this might affect your ability to contribute effectively and impartially and how it might be handled if you are appointed. Completed Applications can be submitted by either email or post. These should be sent to :

By e-mail to : prisonmonitoring@gov.scot or

By post to : Independent Prison Monitoring
Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons for Scotland
Saughton House Y - Spur
Broomhouse Drive
Edinburgh
Midlothian
EH11 3XD

Completed Applications will be sifted for suitability to the role.

Stage 2 – Awareness Session and Interview

Once you have returned your application form and it has been accepted you will be contacted by a representative from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons for Scotland, who will invite you to attend an awareness session and interview. Once selected you will move to stage 3.

Stage 3 – Checks and Security Clearance

IPMs have full access to their local prison at any time, day or night. For this reason all our members must be security cleared by an Enhanced Disclosure (Scotland) check which, amongst other things, provides information on any previous convictions or cautions and will provide Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prison with notification of any new criminal convictions in the future.

Stage 4 – Core Training

IPMs will be trained in Personal Protection Training and provided with an overview of Prison Monitoring.

Still not sure ?

Enquire:

By e-mail to : prisonmonitoring@gov.scot or

By post to : Independent Prison Monitoring
Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons for Scotland

Saughton House Y - Spur
Broomhouse Drive
Edinburgh EH11 3XD

By telephone: 0131 244 1844

Website : <https://www.prisonscotland.gov.uk/>