



Information Book

for Disabled Prisoners

LLOYD'S

PRISON
REFORM
TRUST

The work of the Prison Reform Trust is aimed at creating a just, humane and effective penal system. We do this by inquiring into the workings of the system; informing prisoners, staff and the wider public; and by influencing Parliament, Government and officials towards reform.

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www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk

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Further information and advice

Terrence Higgins Trust



020 7831 0330



www.tht.org.uk

THT is the leading HIV & AIDS charity in the UK and the largest in Europe. The request service, which is run by trained volunteers, covers a wide range of topics relating to HIV. It can provide THT publications and briefing sheets, answer queries and help to direct people to other sources of information.

52-54 Grays Inn Road
London
WC1X 8JU

Helpline: 0845 1221200
Fax: 020 7242 0121
E-mail: info@tht.org.uk

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Further information and advice

The Sickle Cell Society

 **020 8961 7795/4006**

 **www.sicklecellsociety.org**

The Sickle Cell Society is a national charity with around 2,000 members. It offers support by contact with other sufferers where possible. It publishes a quarterly newsletter and provides printed information.

54 Station Road,
London NW10 4UA

Fax 020 8961 8346
E-mail: info@sicklecellsociety.org

Spinal Injuries Association

 **020 8444 2121**

 **www.spinal.co.uk**

SIA provides a resource centre, freephone information and advice on a wide range of issues. It publishes 'Moving Further Forward' – a manual on living with spinal injury, and a bi-monthly newsletter 'Forward'.

SIA, 76 St James's Lane,
London N10 3DF

Freephone 0800 980 0501
Voice/Fax: 0800 980 0501
E-mail: info@sisonline.org

The Stroke Association

 **020 7566 0300**

 **www.stroke.org.uk**

The Stroke Association provides advice and information on stroke illness. It has a free quarterly magazine 'Stroke News', and a number of leaflets and publications covering many aspects of strokes.

Stroke House,
240 City Road,
London EC1V 2PR

Helpline: 0845 3033100
Fax: 020 7490 2686
E-mail: stroke@stroke.org.uk

This booklet will provide you with:

- > general help and advice
- > information on your rights and benefits
- > details of how you can keep in touch with family and friends
- > information on helpful organisations and support

The Disability Liaison Officer (DLO) at this establishment is:

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Further information and advice

RNID (Royal National Institute for Deaf People)



Freephone 0808 808 0123



www.rnid.org.uk

The RNID is the largest charity representing the 8.7 million deaf and hard of hearing people in the UK. Services include information, awareness training, campaigning, residential care, communication services, employment services, telephone relay service (Typetalk), and a Tinnitus Helpline. It has a casework service for people who feel they may have been discriminated against under the DDA.

19-23 Featherstone St, London EC1Y 8SL
 Freephone Textphone: 0808 808 9000
 Freephone helpline: 0808 808 0123
 Fax: 020 7296 8199
 Tinnitus helpline: 0808 808 6666
 Tinnitus textphone: 0808 808 0007
 E-mail: helpline@rnid.org.uk

Scope - Cerebral Palsy Helpline



Freephone 0808 800 3333



www.scope.org.uk

Scope is a national disability charity which focuses on cerebral palsy. Its aim is for all disabled people to achieve equality. The Helpline is open from 9am–9pm weekdays and 2pm–6pm weekends and Bank Holidays. In-depth information and advice is provided on all aspects of cerebral palsy and disability issues. A team of trained counsellors provides clients with emotional support and initial counselling.

P.O. Box 833, Milton Keynes MK12 5NY
 Fax: 01908 321051
 E-Mail: cphelpline@scope.org.uk

Ricability**020 7427 2460****www.ricability.org.uk**

Ricability is an independent charity also known as RICA (Research Institute for Consumer Affairs). It carries out research and publishes unbiased consumer information on products and services to enable older and disabled people to live more independently. It has produced consumer guides which advise on products for people who have limited mobility, poor grip, poor sight or are hard of hearing.

30 Angel Gate,
City Road,
London
EC1V 2PT

Fax: 020 7427 2468
Textphone: 020 7427 2469
E-mail: mail@ricability.org.uk

RNIB (Royal National Institute of the Blind)**020 7388 1266****www.rnib.org.uk**

RNIB Helpline for information, support and advice about sight problems (open 9-5 Monday to Friday) Tel: 0845 766 9999

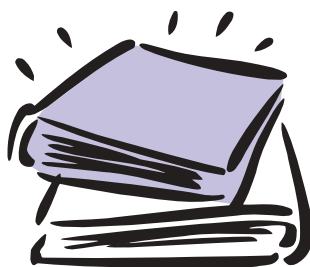
105 Judd Street,
London
WC1H 9NE

E-mail: helpline@rnib.org.uk

Introduction

Why a booklet?

There are many people in prisons throughout the UK who have a form of disability. Some of these disabilities are instantly recognisable, some are not as obvious, yet are equally important. There has been little information aimed at prisoners with disabilities up until now, so we hope you will find that this booklet gives you the information you need or points you in the right direction.



Before printing the booklet we discussed it with groups of prisoners and prison staff at several prisons, and with disability groups within the community, to make sure the contents were useful and correct. We decided that a booklet, which would be given to you as soon as possible when you first came into prison, was the best way to give you the information you might need.

If you do find any gaps or mistakes please contact us at the address on the back cover and we will do our best to make changes in any future editions.

Audio Tape

If reading is difficult for whatever reason an audio tape is also available. Ask at your Wing Office for a copy or speak to the Disability Liaison Officer about how to get one.



2 Arrival

When you first arrive in prison

When you first arrive in prison you will go through reception. This is a good time for you to tell a member of staff about a disability. Any information about you is confidential and should not go any further. If you have been transferred from another prison please inform staff about your disability even if you think they should already know.

Everybody who comes into prison will be seen by a doctor and this will give you the opportunity to discuss any health issues or disabilities. This is an ideal time for you to tell them any worries you may have about specific conditions, and about any medication you may be taking. Remember, they will only know what you tell them.



During reception or induction (see below) prisoners are usually given an 'Induction Pack'.

According to Prison Service Order (PSO) 0550 all prisoners must receive information about the prison they are in, the prison rules, and what to do in emergency situations. If you did not receive this when you first came into prison, ask at your wing office for one.



Further information and advice

Multiple Sclerosis Society



Freephone 0808 800 8000



www.mssociety.org.uk

The MS Helpline offers information and support for people with MS, their friends, families and carers, Mon-Fri, 9am - 9pm.

MS National Centre,
372 Edgware Road,
London
NW2 6ND

E-mail: Info@mssociety.org.uk

National Asthma Campaign



020 7226 2260



www.asthma.org.uk

The Asthma Helpline can give you independent, up-to-date advice on living with asthma.

National Asthma Campaign,
Providence House,
Providence Place,
London
N1 0NT

Helpline: 0845 701 0203
Fax: 020 7704 0740

Further information and advice

Limbless Association



020 8788 1777



www.limbless-association.org

The Limbless Association provides information, advice and support for people of all ages who are without one or more limbs.

Rehabilitation Centre,
Roehampton Lane,
London
SW15 5PR

Fax: 020 8788 3444
E-mail:
enquiries@limbless-association.org

Mind



020 8519 2122



www.mind.org.uk

Mind is the main mental health charity in England and Wales. It works to create a better life for everyone with experience of mental distress. The Mind info Line offers callers confidential help on a range of mental health issues. Call 0845 766 0163 from anywhere in the UK for the price of a local call. It also provides a legal service to the public, lawyers and mental health workers.

15-19 Broadway,
London
E15 4BQ

Mind Info Line: 0845 766 0163
Fax: 020 8522 1725
E-mail: contact@mind.org.uk

Induction

Induction - your introduction to the prison

'Induction' is the process that takes place after reception, and before most people move into the main prison, and is where you are told all about the prison. This may not take place straight away and you may stay in the Health Care Centre during your induction. Depending on the nature of your disability, you may stay in the Health Care Centre for your whole period at a prison if there are no adapted cells.

Don't forget though, that wherever you are in the prison you should have the same opportunity to take part in education, work, programmes, religion, exercise and so on, as any other prisoner. If the prison design and layout makes access to these parts of prison life difficult or impossible for you, you need to see if prison staff can help you gain access in another way.

If you have **sight impairment** or are **deaf** or have **hearing problems**, the prison has to provide help so you can communicate. For example, it should be able to provide a

personal reader, or information in Braille,

large print or on tape for giving you important information. If you have

dyslexia, you may be able to get information on tape rather than in printed format. Prisoners who feel

they could benefit from any of the above, or other methods of receiving information, should ask a member of staff as soon as possible. If you don't

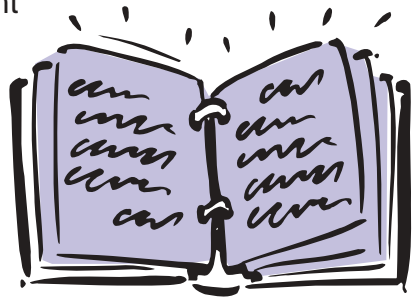


4

Induction

do this during reception or induction, you can still ask for these facilities once you are allocated your cell and wing. Advice on how to make a request or complaint is on page 11.

All prisons should have their own 'Disability Statement', and HM Prison Service issued its 'Disability Strategy' in June 2003. Copies of these should be available in the library.



Given the comparatively small number (less than 0.5 per cent) of mobility impaired prisoners, not all establishments can be wheelchair accessible. All prisons do however, need to be able to deal with all other disabilities. Therefore all prison governors should have in place procedures to ensure that all prisoners with disabilities are able to access a range of facilities such as work, education and programmes, and also ensure that these prisoners have direct access, or reasonable alternative procedures, for visits, association, canteen, healthcare, library, religious facilities and food provision.

Further information and advice

Headway - The brain injury association



0115 924 0800



www.headway.org.uk

Headway promotes understanding of all aspects of brain injury and provides information, services and support to people with a brain injury, their families and carers.

4 King Edward Court,
King Edward St,
Nottingham,
NG1 1EW

Freephone Helpline:
0808 800 2244
Fax: 0115 958 4446
E-mail: enquiries@headway.org

John Grooms Housing Association



020 7452 2000



www.johngrooms.org.uk

John Grooms is a charitable housing association. It is a leading provider of services for people with disabilities. It works with disabled people to improve quality of life, choice and freedom but also to ensure that people are able to live as independently as possible.

50 Scrutton St,
London
EC2A 4XQ

Fax: 020 7452 2001
E-mail:
charity@johngrooms.org.uk

Further information and advice

Disabled Living Foundation

 **0845 130 9177**

 **www.dlf.org.uk**

The Disabled Living Foundation provides advice and information about equipment and assistive technologies for independent living.

Disability Rights Commission

 **08457 622 633**

 **www.drc-gb.org**

The Disability Rights Commission (DRC) is an independent body, established by an Act of Parliament, to eliminate discrimination against disabled people and promote equality of opportunity. The work of the DRC includes providing an advice and information service for disabled people, employers and service providers, supporting disabled people in securing their rights under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), and helping to solve problems, often without going to court.

Freepost MID 02164,
Stratford-upon-Avon
CV37 9BR

Helpline 8.00 am to 8.00 pm
Monday to Friday
Fax: 08457 778 878
Textphone: 08457 622 644

Epilepsy Action

 **0113 210 8800**

 **www.epilepsy.org.uk**

Epilepsy Action is the working name for the British Epilepsy Association. As well as campaigning to improve epilepsy services and raise awareness of the condition, they offer assistance to people with epilepsy, as well as their friends, families, carers, health professionals and the many other people on whose lives the condition has an impact.

New Anstey House,
Gate Way Drive,
Yeadon, Leeds LS19 7XY

Freephone Helpline: 0808 800 5050
Fax: 0113 391 0300
E-mail: epilepsy@epilepsy.org.uk

Welfare Benefits

Tax Credits

An award of working families' tax credit or disabled person's tax credit is not affected for the period of the award, if you, or a member of your family, become a prisoner.

Non-means-tested benefits

Most non-means-tested benefits are not payable or are suspended while you are a prisoner.

If you are in prison for a civil offence, this is not the case, and you remain entitled to all benefits, provided you satisfy the normal rules of entitlement. You are not considered a prisoner if you are released on parole, licence, Home Detention Curfew (tagging) or on temporary release from a young offenders' institution.



If you are serving a sentence of imprisonment or detention (including remand) you cannot receive the following disability benefits:

- Incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance
- attendance allowance, disability living allowance and invalid care allowance

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Welfare Benefits

If you are a remand prisoner and do not subsequently receive a sentence of imprisonment or detention, full arrears of benefit are payable when you are released.

Benefits payable

You remain entitled to disablement benefit (but not to any increases) while you are a prisoner, but payment is suspended until you are released and you can only be paid a maximum of 12 months arrears. Again, if you are on remand and do not subsequently receive a sentence, you are entitled to full arrears for any period you were on remand.



Further information and advice

Disability

 www.disability.gov.uk

The Disability website can help you find out about your rights as a disabled person, and to learn more about the legislation that exists to help establish fully comprehensive and enforceable civil rights for disabled people in the UK. The site is managed by the Disability Unit in the Department for Work and Pensions.

Disability Unit,
Department for Work and Pensions,
Level 6,
Adelphi Building,
John Adams Street,
London
WC2N 6HT
E-mail: enquiry-disability@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

DLS (Disability Law Service)

 **020 7791 9800**

 www.abilityonline.org.uk

Offers confidential, free legal advice to disabled people and their families, carers and enablers on understanding their legal rights. The advice is given by solicitors or specialist advisors.

39-45 Cavell Street,
London
E1 2BP

Minicom: 020 7791 9801
E-mail: advice@dls.org.uk

Further information and advice

The British Dyslexia Association



0118 966 2677



www.bda-dyslexia.org.uk

The British Dyslexia Association describes itself as ‘the voice of dyslexic people’. The BDA vision is that of a dyslexia-friendly society that enables dyslexic people to reach their potential. The BDA produce useful information sheets on many aspects of dyslexia, and can supply contact details of local dyslexia groups.

98 London Road,
Reading
RG1 5AU

Helpline: 0118 966 8271

Fax: 0118 935 1927

E-mail:

info@dyslexiahelp-bda.demon.co.uk

Diabetes UK



020 7424 1000



www.diabetes.org.uk

Diabetes UK is the largest organisation in the UK working for people with diabetes. It does this by funding research, campaigning, and helping people to live with the condition. If you need further information and support on any aspect of managing diabetes then please contact one of their Careline Counsellors. 020 7424 1030 (voice) 020 7424 1888 (text)
Note: Careline are unable to provide one-to-one medical advice.

10 Parkway,
London
NW1 7AA

Fax: 020 7424 1001

E-mail: info@diabetes.org.uk

Disability and Prison life

How will disability affect you whilst in prison?

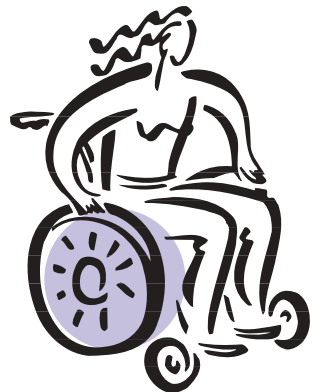
The Prison Service makes this commitment to disabled prisoners:

‘In accordance with the Statement of Purpose and the commitment to equality of opportunity, the Prison Service will ensure that prisoners with physical, sensory and mental disabilities are able, as far as is practicable, to participate equally in prison life.’ (PS02855 1999:1)

This means treating everyone as individuals as everyone is different, but making sure that all people are treated fairly. The key phrase of the Prison Service statement is ‘as far as is practicable’. In some prison establishments it will be easier to help and support you than in others depending on:

- the design of the building
- the level of security needed
- how overcrowded it is
- how many staff there are available to help you.

A physical impairment might affect where you will stay in the prison. If you are a wheelchair user, you will probably be located within the Health Care Centre at first. If there are cells for wheelchair users you may be moved there after you’ve been assessed on reception.



Who can help?

Disability Liaison Officer

All prisons have a Disability Liaison Officer (DLO) whose role it is to co-ordinate and give out information about disability to other staff and to prisoners. According to Prison Service Order 2855: "The Governor should nominate an appropriate member of staff to act as a contact point to receive information on policy issues and good practice". In some prisons Disability Liaison Officers have extended their role to include contact with prisoners, and therefore may be able to offer some form of help or advice. This is not the case in every prison, so you will need to make enquiries to find out how the Disability Liaison Officer at your prison will be able to help you. Your Personal Officer, or Wing Officer should be able to tell you more about the DLO in your prison, and you can put in a request to meet the DLO.



Listeners or Buddies

Remember that if you feel isolated or don't know how to cope, all prisons have a scheme where certain prisoners are trained by Samaritans, to give support to anybody who feels upset or vulnerable. These people are usually known as 'Listeners' but occasionally they are called 'Buddies', Befrienders, or 'Pals'. There is also a list of useful organisations at the end of this booklet – many of which work with disabled people – and may be able to offer advice or assistance if you have a problem. Prison chaplains and the Independent Monitoring Board (formerly Board of Visitors) may also be able to help you.

Further information and advice

Arthritis Care

 **020 7380 6555** (10am-4pm)  **www.arthritiscare.org.uk**

Arthritis Care is a national voluntary organisation putting people in control of their arthritis, their lives and their organisation. It offers a telephone information and counselling service and an information pack.

18 Stephenson Way,
London
NW1 2HD

Freephone helpline:
0808 800 4050 (12-4pm)

ASBAH (Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus)

 **01733 555988**  **www.asbah.org**

ASBAH provides advice and practical support to people with Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus, their families and carers.

42 Park Road,
Peterborough
PE1 2UQ
England

Fax: 01733 555985
E-mail: info@asbah.org

Further information and advice

Other groups that may be useful to people affected by disability are:

Action for ME

 **01749 670799**

 **www.afme.org.uk**

Action for ME provides information and support to people affected by ME.

Age Concern

 **020 8765 7200**

 **www.ageconcern.org.uk**

Age Concern is a national service which helps older people, and supports its 1400 branches nationwide. It produces factsheets on issues affecting older people.

Astral House,
1268 London Road,
London SW16 4ER

Age Concern Infoline 0800 009966
Fax: 020 8765 7211
E-mail: ace@ace.org.uk

The Alzheimer's Society

 **020 7306 0606**

 **www.alzheimers.org.uk**

The Alzheimer's Society is the leading care and research charity for people with dementia and for their carers. It provides information and education, support for carers, and quality day and home care. It funds medical and scientific research and campaigns for improved health and social services and greater public understanding of dementia.

Gordon House,
10 Greencoat Place,
London SW1P 1PH

Helpline: 0845 3000336
Fax: 020 7306 0808
E-mail: enquiries@alzheimers.org.uk

Who can help?

Just because you are in prison, don't be afraid to ask any relevant groups in the community for help or advice. Your call will usually be confidential, and the person who answers the telephone will not ask for your address unless this is needed for a specific reason such as to send you information.

Below are some examples of individuals who were helped by outside organisations.



Sean was going blind due to a progressive illness. After contacting the RNIB he was provided with a radio cassette player so he could listen to audio books and the radio.



Karen, also blind, was helped with mobility around the prison environment, lent a 'talking clock' and Braille books after contacting the RNIB.



Ali was given advice on how to manage a progressive condition, and provided with specially adapted cutlery and large pens from the MS Society.



Wayne was helped by the Stroke Association to come to terms with a sudden physical impairment, and was soon able to manage most activities around the prison without too much difficulty.

(All names have been changed).

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Who can help?

Various groups and charities have really helped a lot of prisoners:

These are just some examples of ways in which outside agencies have helped disabled people in prison. Don't be afraid to ask for help – nobody will know you have needs or requirements unless you make them known to the right people and organisations.

Information about organisations which could help you, and their contact details, is included at the end of this booklet.

The Disability Liaison Officer may also be able to contact organisations on your behalf, should you find it difficult to access a telephone or write. Your family or friends could also contact outside organisations or groups for you.



Further information and advice

For information on local disability organisations near you whether you are in prison or not, try **DIAL UK**, or **DISS**:

DIAL UK



01302 310123



www.dialuk.org.uk

Dial UK is the national co-ordinating group for a network of advice centres for people with disabilities. The centres are run by independent local groups of disabled people or people with direct experience of disability.

Park Lodge,
St. Catherine's Hospital,
Tickhill Road,
Doncaster
DN4 8QN

E-mail: enquiries@dialuk.org.uk

DISS (Disability Information Service)



01306 875156



www.diss.org.uk

DISS provides a comprehensive national database of disability information for the UK. If you would like to contact them please either send an e-mail to: info@diss.org.uk or telephone one of their staff who will be glad to answer any questions.

Harrowlands Centre,
Harrowlands Park,
Dorking,
Surrey
RH4 2RA

Minicom: 01306 742128

Fax: 01306 741740

E-mail to: info@diss.org.uk

Where to get advice, information and help

There are a number of organisations that can help you if you are disabled, or if you are concerned about somebody who is. The website addresses are given where known because prison staff increasingly have access to the internet and so may be able to look things up for you. A few prisons have internet access for prisoners.

If any group you are looking for is not listed, the Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation (RADAR) should be able to help you (see below). RADAR publishes advice, and gives information about other associations and groups that may be of help to disabled prisoners. RADAR also gives advice on services available in the community after release.

RADAR - Royal Association for Disability & Rehabilitation



020 7250 3222



www.radar.org.uk

RADAR is a national disability organisation campaigning for disabled peoples' rights and full integration into society. They provide a signposting service about other disability organisations. RADAR works with an affiliated network of around 700 local and national organisations.

12 City Forum,
250 City Road,
London EC1V 8AF

Minicom: 020 7250 4119
Fax: 020 7250 0212
E-mail: radar@radar.org.uk

Making a Request or Complaint

How can you ask for something in prison, or complain about your treatment?

If you wish to ask for something, or are unhappy with your treatment, you can make a request or complaint through the prison's complaints system, details of which should have been given to you during induction. You can get more information about making a request or complaint from the Wing Office, from where you can also get the forms you need to use. Information leaflets about the process are also available in the establishment, and the system is covered in full in PSO 2510, 'Prisoners' Request and Complaints Procedures' a copy of which is in the library.



Confidential Access

If you want to complain about something which is particularly serious or sensitive you can use 'confidential access' to do so. You will need to explain on the form why you wish to use confidential access. It is up to the person whose name is on the envelope how to deal with the problem you raise.

Making a Request or Complaint

Prisons and Probation Ombudsman

If you have completed the internal complaints procedures and you are not satisfied with the outcome, you can write to the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman - an independent official responsible for considering complaints from prisoners about almost any aspect of their treatment in prison. You should do this within one month of receiving the final internal response to your complaint.

The address is:
Prisons and Probation Ombudsman
Ashley House
2 Monck Street
London, SW1P 2BQ

Complaints or problems can also be taken directly to the Independent Monitoring Board in the establishment. IMBs perform a 'watchdog' role on behalf of the public in providing an independent oversight of prisons. Each Board is independent of the prison it monitors. The Board will normally expect you to have tried to sort your problem out with prison staff first.



Your Release

identification to get your claims started. You can apply for some benefits up to twelve weeks in advance once you have your release date, but if this date changes, you will need to make another application. (There is more information on claiming benefits including Disability Living Allowance and Mobility Allowance in the Prisons Handbook).

If you have a health condition or disability and are on a qualifying health related benefit, New Deal for Disabled People can offer you access to a network of job brokers who offer support and advice to help you find work and stay in work. Job brokers will work with you to find the most appropriate route into work for you and they will work closely with training providers and other service providers if you need extra help. New Deal for Disabled People is voluntary. You can find out if you are eligible to take part, and get more information about the scheme and details of job brokers operating in your area by:

- Phoning the NDDP helpline on 0800 137 177 (textphone 0800 435 550);
- Looking on the New Deal website: www.newdeal.gov.uk/nddp; or
- Contacting your local job centre or social security office.

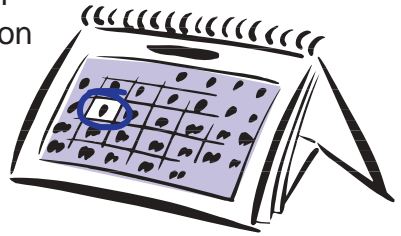


The job centre can also give you information about other schemes such as Access to Work.

20 Your Release

Resettlement and Release

When you know your release date, a prison probation officer and personal officer should be able to help you to arrange suitable accommodation, training, education or employment after release. They can also put you in contact with the probation officer who may supervise you after release. Further information about parole conditions and probation are available in the Prisoners' Information Book and in the Prisons Handbook, (published by MLA Press), which are available in the library if you do not have your own copy.



You should try to make sure that any benefits you are eligible for on your return to the community will be payable to you immediately following your release. Your probation officer may be able to help with this. If you can't work you need to claim Incapacity Benefit. This benefit depends on your past National Insurance contributions. If you have never worked you will only be entitled to Income Support. The best advice is to claim both Income Support and Incapacity Benefit. If you have been incapable of work throughout your sentence and were incapable of work prior to entering prison, you need to get a backdated sick note from the prison doctor to get the disability premium as part of your Income Support from the first day of your release.

Your prison probation officer should be able to help you with claiming benefits, but don't forget, you will need some form of

Your Rights

What rights do you have as a disabled prisoner?

The Disability Discrimination Act (1995)

According to Prison Service Order 2855, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) makes it unlawful to discriminate against disabled people by:

- i. Refusing to provide (or deliberately not providing) any goods, facility or service
- ii. Providing service of a lower standard or in a worse manner
- iii. Failing to comply with a duty to make reasonable adjustments (under section 21 of the Act) if that failure has the effect of making it impossible or unreasonably difficult for the disabled person to make use of any such goods, facility or service (PS02855 Dec 99).

The DDA describes:

- **‘Physical or mental impairment’**

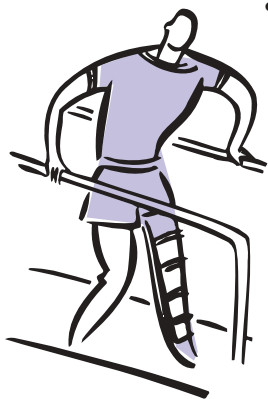
as: ‘someone who uses a wheelchair or has difficulty in walking, someone who is deaf, someone who has significantly impaired speech, someone who is blind or partially sighted, someone who has continuing treatment for diabetes, someone with epilepsy, someone who has a learning disability or someone who has a mental illness. Also protected by



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the Act are people who have a very bad disfigurement. And someone who has recovered from a mental illness goes on being protected by the Act. The Act also covers someone whose condition might initially have only a slight effect on their abilities, but is likely to get worse, such as people with cancer, HIV infection or multiple sclerosis' (HMSO DL150 Oct 96).

- **An individual will be considered disabled** if the cumulative effects of their impairments have a substantial, adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. 'Substantial' in this case means that the effect is so bad that it "goes beyond the normal differences in ability that may exist between people". That is, the effect is more than minor or trivial. For a disability to be considered 'long term' it must have lasted, or be expected to last, for 12 months or more, or be likely to last for the rest of a person's life (RADAR 2000).



- **The DDA states that an impairment will be considered to be impacting on someone's ability to carry out 'normal day to day activities'** if it affects one or more of the following: mobility; manual dexterity; physical co-ordination; continence; ability to lift, carry or otherwise move every day objects; speech; hearing or eyesight; memory or ability to concentrate,



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available a similar service may be provided. If it isn't and you cannot use the telephone any other way, you may need to ask for an interpreter to help with any essential telephone calls you need to make.

Visits

If you have disabled friends or family who want to visit you while you are in prison, it is important that they find out about access before they arrive. Most Visitors' Centres can cater for disabled people, but the visits area inside the prison may not be able to. If a visitor has different abilities or needs it is important these are identified and planned for beforehand. If you or your visitor is deaf or hard of hearing, there should be an 'induction loop' available in the visits area to make it easier for you and your visitor to communicate. If you use sign language to communicate (such as British Sign Language or Makaton) it is fine for you to use this with your visitor. If a visits area is particularly noisy or has an echo, you can ask to use a different room if the noise affects your or your visitor's ability to hear conversation, but it would be a good idea to arrange this beforehand.

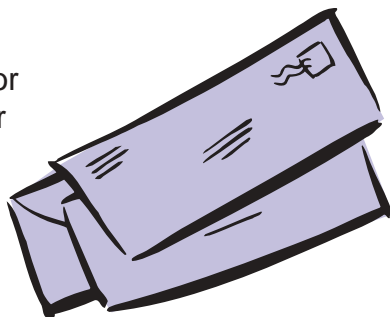


Keeping in Touch

Most prisoners want to keep in touch with family and friends outside prison during their sentence. Disabled prisoners can be helped to do this in the following ways:

Letters

If writing or reading letters is difficult for any reason, you should ask a member of staff (such as your personal officer), the chaplain, or possibly another prisoner to help you (a 'Listener' for example if the correspondence is confidential).



Some blind prisoners have kept in touch with their family by using audio tapes (either recorded or played back using a tape recorder), sent using special envelopes. This is all provided by the Royal National Institute for Blind People (RNIB). You will need to get permission from the governor to do this because of security restrictions. If you would like this kind of help from the RNIB their details are given on page 32.

Telephone calls

If you are deaf or hard of hearing you should be able to have access to a 'text-phone' or 'minicom'. Some prisons have provided this equipment, and consider it to be a 'reasonable adjustment'. If neither of these is



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learn or understand and perception of the risk of physical danger (RADAR 2000).

- **Excluded from the DDA** are addiction or dependency on alcohol, nicotine or any other substance, except where the substance is medically prescribed, seasonal allergic rhinitis or hay fever, a tendency to set fires, a tendency to steal, and tattoos and non-medical body piercing.

If these definitions of disability apply to you then the DDA will apply to you, and to those who provide goods, facilities and services to you.

You can get more information about the DDA (1995) from RADAR – contact details on page 22.



Prison Service Order 2855: Management of Prisoners with Physical, Sensory or Mental Disabilities

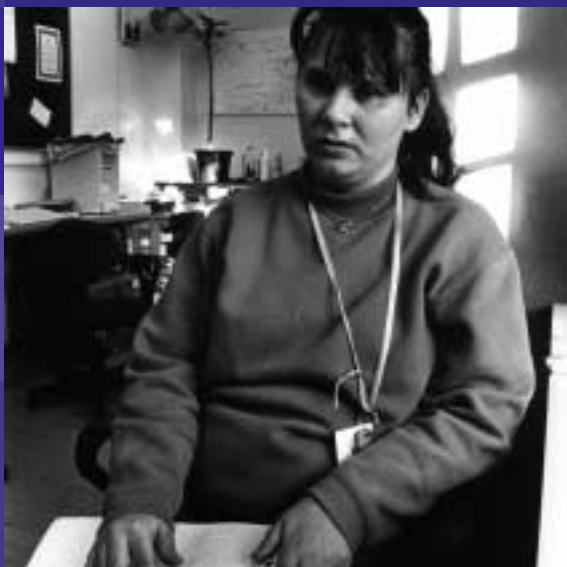
This Prison Service Order was issued to inform and advise governors and directors of prisons about what is expected of them and their staff in terms of disability provision and compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act (1995). This document is available for prisoners to read in the prison library, and in brief maintains that:

- Establishments must take reasonable steps to provide auxiliary aids or services if this would make it easier for disabled prisoners or visitors to make use of facilities.
- All establishments must be prepared, as far as possible, to provide appropriate interpretation services to aid communication for prisoners who have a hearing impairment.
- Arrangements must be made for an assessment of prisoners' needs during reception and induction. A record must be kept about the communication and mobility needs of all disabled prisoners; this will need to be reviewed during longer sentences.
- Prisoners who have difficulty in understanding the Prisoners' Information Books produced by the Prison Reform Trust and the Prison Service must have their rights and obligations explained to them. Prison Rules in particular must be explained to them.
- The level of an individual's mobility, daily living skills and confidence in getting around the environment of the prison must be taken into account when accommodation is allocated.
- Establishments must take positive steps to ensure that disabled prisoners have access to education facilities and

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- programmes and that their communication needs are met.
- Establishments must take reasonable steps to ensure that disabled prisoners have access to the full range of employment opportunities.
 - Establishments must take reasonable steps to ensure that disabled prisoners have access to physical education facilities.
 - The library service should be available to all prisoners. If the library is physically inaccessible, the establishment must arrange to provide the service in another way. The library must arrange access to large print or talking books for prisoners who have a visual disability and sub-titled, or sign language interpreted videos for deaf prisoners.
 - Where attendance at particular courses is necessary for the successful completion of a prisoner's sentence, reasonable adjustments must be made to allow prisoners with disabilities to participate.
 - Establishments must make arrangements for disabled prisoners serving a long sentence to progress through the categories in the usual manner and to transfer to an establishment of the appropriate category within a reasonable time scale.
 - The Governor must ensure that the information needed to discharge a prisoner is made available to the Probation Service.
 - Governors must ensure that the process of adjudications does not discriminate against disabled prisoners.
 - Governors must make sure that disabled prisoners are able to receive their legal entitlement of visits.

Copies of Prison Service Orders that are not security restricted are available in the prison library.



For further copies of this booklet,

or the accompanying poster or audio tape please contact
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