



Ministry
of Justice

Andy Slaughter MP
Chair
Justice Select Committee

The Right Honourable
Shabana Mahmood MP
Lord Chancellor & Secretary
of State for Justice

MoJ ref: 124516

10 June 2025

Dear Andy,

THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACT 2003 (SUITABILITY FOR FIXED TERM RECALL) ORDER 2025

On 14 May, I announced that the Government will mandate fixed-term recall for offenders serving standard determinate sentences of less than 4 years. Yesterday, we laid a statutory instrument in Parliament to make this change. Once this change comes into effect, eligible offenders will be recalled for a fixed period of 28 days before being automatically re-released. This change will be staggered for those recalled and in custody at the date of commencement and will subsequently apply to those recalled after commencement.

This reform will tackle the unsustainable growth in the recall population which has more than doubled since 2018 and ensure we do not run out of prison places before we introduce the sentencing reforms that – alongside our record prison building plans – will end the crisis in our prisons for good. Meanwhile, we will ensure that standard recall remains available for higher risk offenders, including those who are subject to Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) level 2 or 3 which apply to many violent, sexual and all terrorist offenders. This change will also not apply to anyone who has been recalled because they have been charged with a further offence, anyone convicted of a terrorist or national security crime, and those who pose a terrorist risk, anyone under 18 at the point of recall or anyone serving a sentence of four years or more.

These changes will not impact the vital protections that are in place for victims. Eligible victims who have opted into the Victim Contact Scheme or Victim Notification Scheme will be notified about an offender's release and will have the opportunity to make representations about victim-related licence conditions and supervision requirements. Those not eligible for these schemes can be assured that standard practices to keep the public safe upon an offender's release will continue. Current or potential risk to victims is considered as part of release planning, and Probation will set appropriate licence conditions such as tagging, curfews, protective orders and exclusion zones alongside effective risk management plans to manage this risk. Additionally, police disclosures to victims who falls outside of the schemes can be requested if there is imminent risk to an individual. Re-recall will remain an important tool, ensuring offenders whose risk becomes unmanageable or who breach a licence condition can be recalled. Anyone who commits a new offence, such as breach of a protective order, can be charged and may return to prison to serve a new sentence.

We understand the need for greater transparency and communication with victims regarding offender releases. That is why we introduced measures in the Victims and Courts Bill last month to give victims greater confidence about how they can receive information about an offender's release. This includes a new dedicated helpline so that all victims have a clear route to request information about their offender's release.

We recognise that probation is an indispensable part of the criminal justice system, but the service currently faces significant pressures. Our priority remains the safety of the public and the rehabilitation of offenders, and it is critical the service has the resource it needs to do this. That is why we have already taken measures to refocus the work of the probation service on higher-risk offenders, along with investments in more staff and technology to reduce administrative workloads. Probation will also receive up to £700 million by the final year of the spending review, around a 45% increase in funding. This will mean thousands more tags, more staff and more accommodation to ensure that offenders are tracked and monitored closely in the community. These plans, alongside the Independent Sentencing Review's recommendations, will mean staff are better able to focus their time and efforts on the most dangerous offenders – protecting the public and keeping our streets safer.

The Government will continue to carefully monitor the evolving situation with demand for prison places to maintain the capacity required for a safe and effective criminal justice system.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Mahmood', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

RT HON SHABANA MAHMOOD MP
LORD CHANCELLOR AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR JUSTICE