

By email

1 April 2020

Dear Sir Bob,

TEMPORARY RELEASE FROM CUSTODY OF PREGNANT PRISONERS

I am pleased that we had the opportunity to discuss the issues around prisons and COVID-19 recently.

I am sure you will have seen the announcement that the Lord Chancellor made yesterday in relation to the temporary release of pregnant women in custody who do not pose a high risk of harm to the public, in order to protect them and their unborn children from coronavirus. Prisoners in Mother and Baby Units meeting the same risk assessment will also be released with their children.

Prison governors will be able to grant their release on temporary licence once they pass a risk assessment and suitable accommodation for the women has been identified. Our action will enable this vulnerable group to stay at home and reduce social contact like all other expectant mothers have been advised to do.

Those who will be released will be assessed before they leave prison to ensure they are a low risk to the public. They will also be subject to licence conditions, including a requirement to stay at home, and wear an electronic tag, where appropriate. They can be immediately recalled to prison for breaching these conditions or committing further offences.

Our actions have been informed by the advice of experts from Public Health England, and form part of the national effort to protect the NHS and save lives.

I would like to thank you for your engagement on this and look forward to our continued working together.

Yours sincerely



LUCY FRAZER QC MP