

Irish Prison Service

Action Plan Update Report – August 2023

This template is designed to assist sectors in reporting on progress made in delivery of reforms outlined in sectoral action plans developed in line with Building Momentum. This standardised template will help to assess the extent to which reforms have been delivered across the public service sectors in as consistent a manner as possible given the unique features of work conducted in each sector. Completed templates must be returned to david.ogorman@per.gov.ie and Caitiona.Fields@per.gov.ie

OVERVIEW (add additional rows as required)

PRIORITY 1

A review of the prison meal times of prisoners. The details of the changes will be evaluated through a joint examination of the changes through a pilot scheme at 2 prison locations

Action	Outcome	Timeframe	Measure	Owner (Dept./Body /Section)	
Agree terms of reference for review and commence pilot	Implementation of any proposed changes to meal times following joint examination.	Complete	Review of pilot arrangement	IPS C&R	Progress report update and achievements end July 23
Carry out a review of main meal times.	The Irish Prison Service has reviewed the meal schedule and offering and has proposed an enhanced evening meal to be served at evening time. Rotational communal Dining will be	Complete	Review meal arrangements in 4 Prisons	IPS C&R	Terms of reference agreed for review. 4 Prisons selected for review; Castlereagh, Cork, Wheatfield and Progression Unit. Completed
					Review completed and recommended actions agreed by Steering Committee. Completed

	introduced in Arbour Hill Prison					The new menu was piloted on 26 June 2023 and commenced in 4 prisons Cloverhill, Castlereagh, Loughan House and Cork. The menu has been welcomed in these pilot sites, feedback has been provided.
Implement Actions from review	Enhanced evening meal agreed to be implemented by Q2 2023. A new 28 day menu to be devised alongside this to commence Q2 2023	Q3 2023	New 28 day menu and enhanced meals	IPS C&R		An evaluation was carried out on 10 July 2023 and the new menu will be implemented on 21 August 2023.
PRIORITY 2 Cooperation with the implementation of the new functional structures of the IPS. The changes will be subject to bilateral engagement between the parties of the affected grades. Any changes arising including potential rostering amendments will be agreed through the appropriate joint process between the parties through the Joint Task Review process.						
Action	Outcome	Timeframe	Measure	Owner (Dept./Body /Section)	Progress report update and achievements end July 23	
1. Agree new structures	Implementation of new structures in pilot sites.	Q4 2022	Implementation of new structure in two pilot sites.	IPS HR	Complete, implemented	Provisional plan for full roll out in 2024 pending estimates
2. Amend rosters as necessary for Chief Officers/Asst. Governors.	Ongoing engagement with Staff Association in order to progress this provision.	Ongoing			Roster amendment for posts identified as part of the pilot implementation is complete.	Funding has been sought through the 2024 estimates process to complete the

					full roll out of the functional structure in 2024.
3. Agree new reporting arrangements.		Q3 2023			Advanced discussions between the parties.

PRIORITY 3

The IPS will commence and develop a graduate stream of recruitment over the lifetime of the agreement and will commence direct recruitment of graduates. Such personnel recruited will be in receipt of certain exemptions to modules of the Higher Certificate in Custodial Care (HCCC) and will be trained as, and equivalent to Recruit Prison Officers. This will result in those recruits reaching prison officer grade after year 1.

It is noted that this will be subject to sanction of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

Action	Outcome	Timeframe	Measure	Owner (Dept./Body /Section)	Progress report update and achievements end July 23
IPS to engage with DPER regarding T&Cs.	Elimination of certain barriers to recruitment. IPS HR reviewing roles/grades across organisation in order to identify and expand suitability of this type of direct recruitment.	Ongoing	Recruitment competition for direct entry posts held.	IPS HR	An action plan was agreed between the IPS Directors and the staff associations.

PRIORITY 4

The IPS will move to direct recruitment of certain grades represented by the Prison Officers Association including Trades Officers, and Work Training Officers in certain work streams to be identified through the Joint Task Review of the Work Training area of the prison estate. Any such direct recruits will be trained as and be equivalent to recruit prison officers.

Any matters arising including terms and conditions of employment, career progression and eligibility for promotional opportunities will be subject to bilateral engagement and agreement between the parties.

It is noted that any change to terms and conditions will be subject to the sanction of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

Action	Outcome	Timeframe	Measure	Owner (Dept./Body /Section)	Progress report update and achievements end July 23
1. IPS to engage with DPER regarding T&Cs.	Elimination of certain barriers to recruitment.	Ongoing	Recruitment competition for direct entry posts held	IPS HR	Sanction has been granted to proceed to employ Recruit Prison Officer Trades directly. The terms and conditions of eligibility and employment have been agreed between all parties and the competition went live in July 2023. The next cohort of direct recruitment is expected to be Recruit Work Training Officer, which will be considered by DPER on review of the completion of the RPO Trades competition.
2. Bilateral engagement with parties on any issues arising from proposed changes to terms and conditions.		Ongoing			Initial grades identified and agreed between the parties. Terms and conditions for RPO Trades agreed by all parties.
PRIORITY 5					
Action	Outcome	Timeframe	Measure	Owner (Dept./Body /Section)	Progress report update and achievements end July 23
No item 5 on published doc					
PRIORITY 6					
Cooperation with enhanced staff searching procedures of all individuals entering prisons. Such changes will be subject to bilateral engagement between the parties with IPS management to bring forward detailed proposals through the Joint Task Review process.					

Agreement on new policy/SOP for staff searching.	New procedures implemented. Safer prison environment.	Ongoing	New search procedures implemented.	IPS Ops	Draft policy finalised and engagements are ongoing with POA working towards roll-out by end of Q3 2023. The IPS have implemented two measures: 1. Installation and usage of new improved Walk through Metal Detectors in search areas – rolled out in all prison locations. 2. Body Worn Cameras fully rolled-out to all Security Screening Units and operating well.
PRIORITY 7 The implementation of an illicit substance abuse policy which will be underpinned by a testing policy. The Illicit Substance Policy and support literature (FAQ's) are finalised; roll out and a period of information sharing and awareness are pending.					
1. Staff Association on Illicit Substance Policy.	Agreement with Staff Association on new	Q3 2023	Agreement with Staff Association re Illicit	IPS HR	Dialogue ongoing. Amended draft to be discussed and agreed.

	procedures to enable a safer prison environment.		Substance Policy.		
2. Testing Provider tendering process completion	Tendering process complete and identified testing provider engaged. i.e. Ability to test in line with any agreed policy	Complete	Agreed method and contract for testing	IPS HR	Tender Process complete.
3. Execution and implementation of policy.	New procedures implemented. Safer prison environment	Q4 2023	New procedures implemented and operating effectively.	IPS HR	Policy, once agreed, will be rolled out
No 8 on published doc					

PRIORITY 9

Continued use and cooperation of technological solutions in the delivery of services in the following areas; virtual family visits; courts videolink, HR services.

Continuing cooperation with this technological development post Covid19.	Services will continue to be conducted through digital technology. Less prison escorts conducted.	Ongoing	Services will continue to be conducted through digital technology	IPS	System operational. Prison Education Taskforce established May 2023 and to report to Government by end 2023. Particular focus is on pre-apprenticeship and traineeship approaches in catering, retrofit etc.

PRIORITY 10

The parties agree to explore opportunities for technological solutions in the delivery of services, including education and chaplaincy.

Any such consideration will take place under the Joint Task Review process.

Ongoing engagement with regard to the implementation of e-solution based technologies	Greater use of technological solution is the delivery of services in the prison estate.	Ongoing	Greater use of technological solution is the delivery of services in the prison estate.	IPS HR, C & R	<p>Tele Chaplaincy is in place in all prisons. The chaplaincy review is being progressed, a tender evaluation took place in Q2 2023 and contract negotiations are ongoing.</p> <p>In cell TV channel CDETB education content in place in Dublin Prisons, with class plan in place up to January 2024. Blended learning strategy and education under consideration</p>
	Improving and strengthening education and training, upskilling and upskilling across the criminal justice system securing greater alignment with the tertiary education system, starting with prison education, to support rehabilitation, securing employment post-release and help reduce re-offending.				
PRIORITY 11					
Embedding Regime Management Planning to include a new and dedicated Regime Management Policy to be implemented.					
Cooperation with embedding regime management planning as a safe system of work.	RMPS will be implemented in each prison location.	Q2 2021	RMPS will be implemented in each prison location.	IPS Ops	<p>RMP in place. Policy published and is currently under review.</p>
PRIORITY 12					

Maintaining utilisation of the extended prison day in the delivery and management of regimes and services over the period 8am to 8pm

Continued utilisation of prison day for the delivery of prisoner regimes	Enhanced delivery of prisoner regimes	Complete	Delivery of prison regimes over extended prison day	IPS Ops	Additional services to be delivered during reserve. The Standard Prison Day has been clarified and reissued to all prisons in Q4 2022.
PRIORITY 13					
Introduction of a Health Care Assistant grade to the IPS as direct employees.					
1. IPS to engage with DPER regarding T&Cs.	Addressing the emerging need for Health Care Assistants in the context of an aging prisoner profile.	Q4 2023	Recruitment competition for new grade held.	IPS HR/C&R	Proposed T&Cs finalised and engagement is ongoing with DPER.
2. Transition arrangements to be agreed.	Job description and clinical scope of this post has been forwarded to HR for engagement with POA and DPER	Q4 2023	Awaiting permission for recruitment	IPS HR	IPS are currently engaged with NMBI for clarification on Part 3 Section 7 of the Misuse of Drugs Regulations 2017 (S.I. No. 173/2017) to allow for a complete job description in the role.

Update Report accepted by Ms Conagh McPhillips, Secretary General, Department of Justice

Signature: 

Date: 04.09.2023