

INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES

EMERGENCY RELEASE

The number of people living in Scottish prisons has grown very quickly in the last few weeks.

This has put a lot of extra pressure on our prisons, and the people who live and work there.

A vote was held on whether some prisoners should be released early and was passed.

The prisoners who will now be released are those serving short-term sentences of less than four years.

The prisoner would also need to already be close to their release date.

I know you will have a lot of questions about how this would work and how it will affect your loved ones.

I have tried to answer these below.

We will provide you with more information when we can.

Teresa Medhurst

Chief Executive of the Scottish Prison Service

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Why is this happening?



To help to lower the number of people living in our prisons, so we can keep everybody safe and secure.

Will some people be released?



Yes, this has now been agreed by a vote in the Scottish Parliament.

Who could be released early?

The Scottish Government has set out who they think could be released:

- Convicted prisoners.
- People serving under four years and are 180 days away from release.



Who would not be released early?

- Remand prisoners.
- People serving extended sentences, or who have supervised release orders.
- Lifers, or Order of Lifelong Restriction prisoners.
- Terrorists.
- Sex offenders
- People facing extradition.
- People convicted under the Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm (Scotland) Act, or the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Acts.





Will everyone who could be released, be released?

No. Governors have the final say. Anyone who they believe might be a risk to people in the community will not be released early.

The Governor's veto will be final with no appeals.



When will people be released?

The releases would happen over four weeks.

The first releases would happen on 26 and 27 June.



Is there support for people who will be released?

Yes, people being released can get help from Social Work or organisations that help those leaving prison such as:

The Wise Group

Shine Mentoring

Prisons will work together with services like housing and benefits to plan for your loved ones' release.



I am worried about someone being released?

There are organisations that can support and help you here: **Support for you**