



Royal College
of Nursing



Safe Inside Prisons Charter Updated

2021

This Charter, developed by the Joint Unions in Prisons Alliance (JUPA), aims to promote the development of positive safety cultures and safe working practices, which protect the long-term physical and mental wellbeing of all those working within our prisons, regardless of their employer.

The 12 key principles

1. All workers will be encouraged to raise any and all health and safety concerns, being assured they can do so without fear of suffering any detriment for doing so, irrespective of employer.
2. All workers, partner agencies / third party providers, will be given access to a single reporting system, which has the ability to record all health and safety concerns including incidents, near misses, ill-health directly related to or effecting prison activities, any instances of violence including threats, abuse and anti-social behaviour directed towards them.
3. Reporting systems will be accessible both internally and externally, so that individuals may report incidents outside of working hours or away from their workplace.
4. When responding to the type of report mentioned in Principle 2. A single point of contact will be identified, so that the worker(s) may be assured that their concerns are being addressed, with the contact ensuring regular updates are provided on the progress of addressing the reported issue.
5. A zero-tolerance approach towards violence or abuse of workers. In the event of a worker been subject to a violent or distressing incident, once an employer is informed, they will ensure their employee is fully supported and offered timely access to specialist support.

6. All incidents of violence or abuse will be investigated and dealt with either by the judicial process or internal procedures. In addition to building any case against the perpetrator, any report will also seek to identify areas for improvement to prevent such an event occurring in the future.
7. Adopt a proactive approach to preventing and controlling the risk and spread of infectious diseases by complying with H&S, COSHH and Public Health legislation; Utilising good infection prevention and control strategies, positively support their employees to adhere to any recommended periods of self-isolation, without financial detriment. This will enable their employees to protect both the prison and wider community.
8. Adopt a proactive approach to the issue of work-related stress, utilising the HSE Stress Management Standards through a combination of organisational, team and individual stress risk assessments, giving due consideration to the potential physical and psychological hazard and stressors within their employees' working environment or activities. Introducing measures to prevent and/or adequately control the risk at source.
9. Initiate effective mechanisms to facilitate good co-operation and co-ordination between employers, to ensure that any employees from partner agencies / third party providers are provided with comprehensible information regarding any risk to their Health, Safety and Wellbeing. All workers will receive regular updates from the employer on all Health and Safety related matters, including the minutes of regular or additional Health and Safety meetings.
10. In furtherance of Principle 9. All trade union safety representatives within a prison and those of partner agencies / third party providers who regularly attend site, or whose work is affected or directed by the activities of that prison, will be invited to attend and make representations to all regular or any additional Health and Safety meetings. The representatives' employer will make every effort to enable their attendance, afford them paid time away from their normal duties and a corresponding adjustment to workloads to facilitate their attendance at the meeting.
(In the event of representatives being unable to attend, they will forward their apologies to the administrator of a meeting, and a written report will be accepted in their absence and referenced with in the minutes of that meeting.)
11. Ensure working environments are of a suitable size and appropriate for the intended activity, well maintained with particular attention to the adequate, cleaning regimes, ventilation, and other control measures, so as to ensure that contact surfaces, equipment and the air workers breathe, is as far as practicable free from pathogens and other substances hazardous to health.

12. Ensure (for buildings within their control or occupied by their employees) good asbestos management systems are in place, which include a plan to secure investment to improve the wider estate and fabric of buildings through the removal of all asbestos.

In becoming a Signatory and enacting the principles within this Charter, Employers are not only recognising their legal duties under The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, and other associated secondary legislation. It demonstrates their positive commitment to working in partnership with their trades unions as well as sending a clear message of their genuine commitment to protecting the physically and mental health, safety and wellbeing of their staff, whilst also assisting prisons to support prisoners to work and live "Safe Inside".