

# [News story: Prisons and Courts Bill: what it means for you](#)

The Prisons and Courts Bill will transform the lives of offenders and put victims at the heart of the justice system, helping to create a safer and better society.

The bill covers:

- prison safety and reform
- court reform
- the judiciary
- whiplash compensation

## **Latest news on the Prisons and Courts Bill**

The bill was introduced on 23 February 2017. Follow its progress on the Parliament website.

## **Join the conversation**

Follow [@MoJGovUK](#) for the latest updates on the bill. Use #PrisonReform and #CourtReform to join the conversation on Twitter.

## **What the Prisons and Courts Bill covers**

The Prisons and Courts Bill paves the way for the biggest overhaul of prisons in a generation and the delivery of a world-class court system. Victims and vulnerable witnesses are central to the Prisons and Courts Bill, with a range of measures that will bolster their protection in court.

### **Prison safety and reform**

The Prisons and Courts Bill sets out a new framework and clear system of accountability for prisons. It will enshrine into law that a key purpose of prison is to reform and rehabilitate offenders, as well as punish them for the crimes they have committed.

Governors will take control of budgets for education, employment and health and they will be held to account for getting people off drugs, into jobs and learning English and maths. League tables will measure prisons on key areas such as safety and progress on education and work.

Across the country, more than 2,000 new senior positions are being created for experienced prison officers to be promoted into. These posts, which cover specialist mental health training, will have a salary of up to £30,000.

Could you see yourself as a prison officer? Find out more and [apply here](#).

## **Court reform**

Measures relating to courts underline a commitment to victims and the most vulnerable, as well as improving the system for those who use it every day.

The use of virtual hearings will be extended, allowing victims to take part without running the risk of coming face-to-face with their assailant.

Many hearings, such as bail applications, will be resolved via video or telephone conferencing, allowing justice to be delivered more swiftly.

Offenders charged with some less serious criminal offences, such as failure to produce a ticket for travel on a train, will be able to

- plead guilty online
- accept a conviction
- be issued a penalty and
- pay that penalty there and then.

## **The judiciary**

This bill will provide a better working environment for judges, with modern court facilities and better IT that will help manage cases more efficiently.

It will be easier for the judiciary to deploy judges more flexibly, allowing judges to gain experience of different types of cases. It also gives the judiciary more flexibility when it comes to handling case backlogs.

## **Whiplash compensation**

Car insurance premiums will be cut by around £40 a year, with new fixed tariffs capping whiplash compensation pay-outs and a ban on claims without medical evidence.

We held a wide-ranging [consultation](#) on our plans for reform.