

Unique partnership will help better prepare prisoners for release

The agreement aims to get the best possible outcome for offenders on leaving custody.

The agreement, the first of its kind, is a contract between the department and prisons, setting out a steadfast commitment to working together and outlining shared objectives.

It is hoped this joined-up approach will effectively support offenders in preparation for release, and ultimately reduce reoffending which costs the taxpayer £18 billion each year.

Local Partnership Agreements form part of National Partnership Agreements, which aim to support businesses by increasing opportunities and moving unemployed people into sustainable jobs.

Minister for Welfare Delivery, Will Quince, said:

We are proud to be joining forces with HMPPS through this unique partnership and together we remain committed to ensuring prison leavers stay out of jail for good.

Our dedicated teams of Prison Work Coaches are passionate about finding work for prison leavers. Preparing them for employment and life back in the community before release we know can make a life-changing difference and help free them from crime.

Minister for Prisons, Lucy Frazer, added:

Helping prisoners find work is a crucial part of turning their lives around and cutting crime.

This new partnership will mean prisoners are able to prepare for employment while they're getting ready for release – benefitting them, the economy and society as a whole.

Under the agreement, each partner sets out their defined roles and statutory responsibilities, but each must work together to ensure the most effective join-up between services to provide support to those in custody, and on leaving.

Each local agreement is tailored to the individual prison. Quarterly meetings will be held between both partners and the agreement regularly reviewed.

This collaborative approach between the DWP and HMPPS to support prisoners brings together many services from providing work experience and education in prison and beyond, through to support, training and employment opportunities for ex-offenders.

And now, thanks to the national rollout of a phone line, prison leavers will also be supported to claim Universal Credit online, and can apply for an advance meaning they can access money on the day of release.

East Anglia District Manager Julia Nix said:

Everybody deserves a second chance. Many prison leavers want to make a change on release and return to a life of work, and that has to be beneficial for the economy.

Together with support from HMPPS we encourage, support and prepare prisoners for employment because we know that a job can help turn their lives around, lift them from poverty, and that motivates us every day.

Additional information

The following prisons have signed Local Partnership Agreements and more are expected to follow shortly:

- HMP Wayland
- HMP YOI Hollesley Bay
- HMP YOI Norwich
- HMP Rochester

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