



# Arrival at prison

Rules, rights and duties of prisoners



FANGELSISMÁLASTOFNUN RÍKISINS

## Hólmsheiði

All prisoners begin serving their sentences at the Hólmsheiði Prison. The prison is divided into wards, including a special ward for female prisoners. Abiding by the rules of the prison is important, including having good interaction and being active, for example through study, work or rehabilitation. This generates the best results in rehabilitation and prisoners are more likely to receive the available rights, for example, serving their sentences outside of the prison. You will receive forms for all applications in your ward. You may also receive them from the prison guards who are able to assist you.

### Wards and rooms

- The prisoners of every ward clean and cook at their own ward.
- Entering another ward and rooms of other prisoners is prohibited.
- The rooms are generally open from 8 am to 10 pm.
- You may have your own clothes and cleaning products (must be purchased at the prison) in your room.
- You are obligated to exercise cleanliness in your room. Having too many items in your room is not permitted.
- Every ward has its own laundry room, open 8 am to 9 pm.
- Smoking is only allowed outdoors.



### Telephone

- Every ward has telephones that may be used from 8:30 am to 9:30 pm.
- An answering machine receives incoming calls to the prisoners. The messages are conveyed to the prisoner at 8 am, 12 noon, and 5 and 8 pm.

### Visits

- The visiting hours are on Wednesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays from 9:30 -11:30 am, and from 1:30 am to 3:30 pm.
- Your family may visit you weekly and friends twice per month.
- The prison has a special apartment for visits by children.
- You must apply for visits not less than 2 days before the visit.

## Support

Taking care of your physical and mental health is important when in prison. Various support is available. Frequently, special programs are prepared to address which kind of support you need.

- A medical doctor, a nurse, psychologist and social worker come weekly to the prison.
- You may have opportunity to talk to a mental-health team.
- You may have a conversation with a social worker from your municipality.
- You may have a conversation with your attorney.
- You should be able to worship in your own faith and an effort is made to honor the customs regarding your food and hours of pray.
- The AA organization has regular meetings at the prisons.
- A spokesman for Afstađa (Organization of Prisoners) is prepared to discuss matters with all prisoners.
- The Red Cross offers assistance upon the end of the service of sentence. A social worker may assist in the submission of applications.

## Outdoor activities and physical activity

- The prison has a training hall for prisoners. The program is posted at the wards.
- The outdoor areas are open between 10 am and 12 noon, and 3-5 pm.
- The smoking balcony is open 8 pm to 9:30 pm.



## Computers

- You may have a games computer that is not linked to the Internet in your room.
- If you are studying or carrying out work that requires a computer, you may have access to an Internet-connected computer in the schoolroom.

## Work and study

You have the right to engage in work, study and vocational training at the prison (when the circumstances allow it). You will be paid into a debit card if you study or work.

If there is no work available or you cannot work cf. a medical certificate, you will receive a daily allowance for the days you are able to work.

Long-term prisoners (more than 5 consecutive years in prison) may be allowed to engage in study, work or vocational training outside of the prison during their last 12 months in prison.

You will always be able to talk to an educational or work advisor. The advice is intended to be helpful in determining your strength, competence and interest. This makes it easier for you to decide your direction of work or study.

## Leave

### Short-term absence

You may be allowed a short-term leave of absence as follows:

- To visit a seriously ill close relative.
- To attend the funeral or wake of a close relative.
- To be present at the birth, baptism or confirmation of your child.
- To carry out other important personal interests.

### Day leave

In order to be granted a day leave the following must apply:

- You have served consecutively  $\frac{1}{3}$  of your sentence, however, not less than 1 year.
- You must be free of any disciplinary conduct during 6 months before the leave.

After 4 years of consecutive service prison a day leave may be granted although  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the time has not been served.

## Family leave

If you have received day leave for 2 years you may be granted a 48-hour family leave.



### Applying for day or family leave:

You must apply for day and family leave 4 weeks prior to such leave. If you do not make use of the available rehabilitation opportunities, this may prevent you from being allowed leave.

## Foreign prisoners

A foreign prisoner has rights as follows:

- An interpreter when his/her rights and duties are explained.
- Contact an attorney with the assistance of an interpreter.
- Contact the embassy or consulate of his/her country.
- Apply to serve his/her sentence in the home country.
- Talking through Skype to his/her family who reside abroad.

A prisoner who has no citizenship or is a refugee may be assisted in communicating with institutions that safeguard the interests of people in such circumstances.

In the instance of pending deportation by Immigration, a prisoner who is serving a sentence for a particularly serious offence may receive parole after having served  $\frac{1}{2}$  of his/her sentence (instead of  $\frac{1}{3}$ ).

## Risk and need assessment

Prisoners serving long sentences (5 years or more) for serious offences, for example, sexual offence against children or manslaughter, will undergo risk and need assessment upon arrival in prison. Prisoners exercising undesirable behavior may also have to undergo a risk and need assessment.

- A need assessment is intended to determine kind of service and treatment a prisoner needs.
- Risk assessment is used, among other things, before a decision on parole is made.

## Disciplinary offence

If you violate the rules of the prisons this may be deemed as being a breach of discipline. The consequences of disciplinary offences may include:

- Limitations of visits and outdoor activities.
- Limitation of day leave for some time.
- Not being eligible of transfer to a halfway house.
- Return from an open prison to a closed one.

## Observations

- You may complain about prison guards or employees of the prisons, using forms that are available at all wards together with unmarked envelopes. There are also boxes for putting complaints into without the employees being aware of this. You may also make verbal complaints in which instance an employee will write the complaint and then read it to you before you sign it. The head warden will then consider the matter.
- You may submit complaints to the Ombudsman of Althingi: **postur@umb.althingi.is** or by regular mail addressed to Þórshamar, Templarasund 5, 101 Reykjavík.
- You may file complaints to the Ministry of Justice about decisions of the head warden of prisons and also the Prison and Probation Administration. email: **dmr@dmr.is** or by regular mail to Borgartún 26, 105 Reykjavík.

The prison wardens can assist in forwarding the observations to the relevant office.

This information is based among other things on Act no. 15/2016 on the Serving of Sentences and the rules set by the Prison and Probation Administration. These rules are available at all wards.

The Prison and Probation Administration |  
520 5000 | fms@fangelsi.is | www.fangelsi.is