Covid-19 Response in Prisons

Description
The Criminal Sanctions Agency of Finland has given general guidelines to prisons and community sanctions offices concerning the coronavirus epidemic. All prisons and community sanctions offices have their own updated contingency plans and the directors make the decisions based on the situation in their unit and in individual cases.

Guidelines to prisons:
Consider whether it is reasonable to organize already granted prison visits, allow new visits, and grant permissions to leave (for example to study or to go to civilian work).

Meetings with police officers and attorneys must be permitted.

Transferring a prisoner from a prison to another should be done only when necessary.

In open prisons the movement of the groups working outside the prison should be considered case-by-case.

Guidelines to community sanctions offices:
In cases of sickness of community sanctions clients also other explanations than medical certificate may be accepted, for example explanation given over the phone.

Community sanctions offices must negotiate with the service places where there are vulnerable groups (like elderly or sick people) and evaluate whether the community sanctions clients performing community
service should be placed to some other activity. Standards of hygiene must be reviewed with the
community sanctions clients performing their community service.

The Criminal Sanctions Agency has requested the Ministry of Justice to consider whether to adopt an act
that during a certain period of time the prisons would not receive convicted persons whose sentence is a
maximum of six month or a conversion sentence for unpaid fines.

The Central Administration of the Criminal Sanctions Agency has also requested the Assessment
Centres to consider whether there would be reasonable grounds to postpone the sentences of those
convicted persons who come to serve their sentence from freedom. If the day to turn in has already been
ordered the sentence can be postponed if the consent of the convicted person is obtained. Also a
nationwide redistribution of prisoners in different prisons may be considered if needed.

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Additional Covid-19 resources are available at: http://bit.ly/2U0oKLG
If you would like to send us information about Covid-19, please fill in this form: http://bit.ly/2WnqiRH