



## Covid-19 Response in Prisons

### Description

#### Update from 6 April 2020

**As of today (6 April 2020)**, due to the need to protect the health of all prisoners, prison officers and staff, the Prison Service is introducing a further tightening of security rules in penitentiary units. Officers who come into contact with prisoners shall wear protective masks. There is also a total ban on prisoners going outside to work.

Visits to all detention centres and prisons have been suspended since March 19. Since March 12, the temperature has been measured for all those entering prisons - people who have a fever are not allowed in. At the same time, the possibilities of telephone, correspondence and instant messaging have been increased in order to ensure contact with detainees' relatives. The prisoners also have greater access to television, radio and the press. Additional therapeutic, educational and cultural-educational activities have been introduced, individually and in small groups. The Penitentiary Service has kept prisoner transports and movements within the units to a minimum.

The procedures adopted and developed a few weeks ago, together with the Chief Sanitary Inspector, are in force. Every suspected case is reported to the Sanitary Service.

There is currently only one inmate in prisons and detention centres (as of 6 April) who has been admitted to the unit with already diagnosed coronavirus infection. This is one of the two detainees who have been arrested by the court because they did not comply with the



quarantine recommendations. In accordance with the sanitary procedures in force during an epidemic, he is staying in a specially prepared for the time of the epidemic, in a separate building, in complete isolation, where he has contact only with medical personnel. His state of health is good and is constantly monitored. The latter has been placed outside the penitentiary unit in an infectious hospital because he has also been diagnosed with other diseases. A positive coronavirus test was recorded in two officers and one employee. All, in good condition, are in their own homes.

According to the GIS recommendations, 60 prisoners are under preventive medical surveillance in isolation, because before being placed in prison they were in countries where the coronavirus is present or could have had contact with the infected person.

All prisons and detention centres have been provided with an adequate supply of virucidal disinfectants, hygiene and medical supplies, including protective masks, overalls and gloves. Disinfection is done several times a day in rooms, for example entrances, handles, doors, telephones.

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### **Update from 19 March 2020**

From 19 March 2020 the visits are suspended in all prisons in Poland.

External employment of the inmates is significantly reduced, excluding the production of face masks and protective suits, as well as food production. The order of the Prison Service was issued in agreement with the State Sanitary Inspectorate.

The alternatives for suspended visits are: more frequent phone conversations and watching TV.



At the moment the prison population in Poland is above 75.000 in 172 prisons.

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No cases of coronavirus infection have been reported so far in Polish prisons. According to the GIS recommendations, 41 inmates who were in the countries where the coronavirus is present, prior to their imprisonment, were subjected to preventive observation under isolation conditions. All have no symptoms of disease. Seventeen Prison Service officers are in quarantine. They are at home in their homes and are under constant supervision of the sanitary service. They have no symptoms of disease.

From 12 March this year, preventive body temperature measurements will be carried out in all pre-trial detention centres and prisons (including HQ) for all persons entering their territory, including visitors to prisoners. If the body temperature is found to exceed 38 degrees C, a decision will be taken not to allow entry.

With a view to ensuring epidemiological security for all those in the penitentiary units, the Prison Service has put in place preventive procedures and is continuously adapting them to the recommendations of the Chief Sanitary Inspector.

The situation is constantly monitored. The Prison Service appeals to people who want to visit their relatives in prisons and detention centres, if they have symptoms of upper respiratory tract infections (such as fever, coughing, rhinitis or shortness of breath), to stay at home.

The Prison Service constantly cooperates with the sanitary inspectorates and monitors the epidemiological threat, so that at any time and without notice, restrictions or a complete ban on seeing may be imposed in every penitentiary unit in the country. In the event of a threat, it is



possible to withhold passes and permits to leave the prison, external employment and collective activities.

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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>