



The Welcome Directory Safeguarding Guidance

Notes to Faith Community:

We recognise that every community is different and therefore has different needs and considerations based on context. The below has been developed, with specific reference to prison leavers, should faith communities wish to add this into their existing safeguarding policy. It is intended to complement existing practices and bring further clarity and confidence in welcoming prison leavers into your community.

Text:

Prison leavers can be considered under two broad categories, 'low and medium risk offenders' and 'high risk or violent offenders'. The definition and approach to each category is detailed below:

- **'Low and medium risk offenders'**- are prison leavers who by definition have committed offences and their sentence will be at a stage where they will require either no or low levels of external management or monitoring and are deemed to pose a low or medium risk of harm to the general public.
 - Given there is no guarantee of knowing the background of all visitors and members of the community and the fact there is no legal requirement to disclose this, these individuals should be treated like any other visitor or member of the faith community in line with the existing safeguarding policy.
 - However, if the individual discloses their offence to you, a risk assessment **could** be considered appropriate to assist you in making a decision if a written agreement is necessary for this individual.

- **'High risk or violent offenders'**- are prison leavers who by definition have committed violent or sexual offences and are on the Violent and Sexual Offenders' Register (ViSOR). These prison leavers are responsible for working transparently with their Probation Officer and not breaching their license conditions.
 - It is required by law, (The Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000, in conjunction with the Criminal Justice Act 2003), that arrangements are made to protect the general public. These arrangements are known as MAPPAs (Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements), requiring supervision and monitoring. Details of the three formal MAPPAs categories can be found on the [Unlock website](#).
 - These individuals should be managed under statutory MAPPAs guidelines by the MAPPAs team (usually made up of Police, Probation, Prison and Community services).
 - Faith communities would be approached in advance by the MAPPAs team should a high risk or serious offender, who has terms of license that require permission, wish to attend the community for events or services. Should the offender be allowed to attend by the licence agreement, a risk assessment **should** be completed followed by a written contract to manage attendance. This should be agreed by the MAPPAs team.
 - The MAPPAs team will help the faith community and work collaboratively with them to appropriately and safely welcome these individuals. Models of contracts and



guidance exists for prison leavers managed through MAPPA, such as these templates which can be referred to across faiths:

- [Safeguarding Contract - Collation of Relevant Information \(SGC/1\)](#) from The Methodist Church
- [Offenders and Church Attendance](#) from ThirtyOneEight
- [Contracts and Agreements](#) from ThirtyOneEight
- [Guidance for Volunteers Working With Sex Offenders](#) from Prison Fellowship
- Any safeguarding concerns relating to a high risk or violent offender should be dealt with in accordance with the reporting procedures of the existing policy and should also be reported to the appropriate statutory authority. For [name of faith community], this is [name and contact details of local statutory authority].
- Transparent working with Probation Officers and Offender Supervisors is advisable as they will have information of good local resources and are in touch with appropriate professionals relating to the seven resettlement pathways:
 - Accommodation
 - Education, employment and training
 - Health (physical and mental)
 - Drugs and alcohol
 - Finance, debt and benefit
 - Children and families
 - Attitudes, thinking and behaviour.
- Contact details for Probation in different areas can be accessed using this link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/probation-finder#london>