

Latvian Prison Administration – Response to COVID-19
(20 March 2020)

Referring to EuroPris letter dated 17 March 2020 on addressing Coronavirus in European prisons, the Latvian Prison Administration (hereinafter - LPA) informs that the order has been issued within the framework of the administration with the following safety and other measures to be observed as from 17 March 2020:

The LPA Heads of departments shall:

1. Limit the visits of third persons to the relevant LPA imprisonment place, except for ensuring the LPA basic functions:
 - 1.1. Before attending the LPA imprisonment place to request from third persons (including representatives of companies (also the ones who employ prisoners) to submit a written confirmation that they have not visited Covid-19 states and territories, had no contact with Covid-19 sufferers or contact persons;
 - 1.2. Allow to representatives of companies deliver goods and provide services only to ensure the basic functions;
 - 1.3. Allow to continue to do repair work only to the representatives of companies with whom agreements have been signed.
2. Ensure the availability of disinfectants at the entrance of the LPA imprisonment place.
3. Stop the transfer of prisoners to the medical treatment institution outside the LPA imprisonment place with an aim to receive the health care services (planned consultations of doctors, diagnostic examinations and inpatient treatment) (also for the finances of prisoners).
4. Allow to call the medical emergency which further decides about the transfer of a prisoner outside the LPA imprisonment place, only in the case of acute illness that threaten the prisoner's life and whom the LPA imprisonment place medical staff cannot provide the relevant medical help.
5. Cancel and do not plan the earlier arranged leisure and mental care activities for prisoners in which third persons are involved.
6. Organize individually the mental care and leisure activities where third persons are not involved.
7. Forbid prisoners to use the allocated incentive to temporary leave the territory of the deprivation of liberty institution.
8. Stop the marriage registration of prisoners, as well as short and long-term meetings with relatives and other persons.
9. Determine that, with a permission of the Head of LPA imprisonment place, the additional telephone calls and video calls may be allocated to prisoners.
10. Stop processing ID documents of prisoners.
11. Within the competence, organize the implementation of the general and professional programmes distantly.
12. Stop the implementation of all resocialisation, interest and non-formal educational programmes in the LPA imprisonment places.

13. Forbid inmates who serve their sentence in the open prison:
 - 13.1. Leave the territory of the LPA imprisonment place, except inmates who are employed outside the imprisonment place for the merchant (society with limited responsibility) "Aleks un V";
 - 13.2. Welcome guests.
14. Ensure prisoners that serve their sentence in the open prison, with a possibility to buy goods in the merchant shop in the territory of the LPA imprisonment place.
15. Inform performers of procedures about the prisoners who are under quarantine.
16. When releasing a prisoner under a quarantine, from imprisonment or after serving a custodial sentence, inform about this the Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (CDPC) of Latvia.
17. Send to the court documents mentioned in Part 5 Section 79³ of the Execution Code of Latvia only after the evaluation statement is received from the State Probation Service or an announcement is received that such an evaluation statement will not be developed due to measures related to the limitation of COVID-19 spread.
18. Have the rights to stop implementing psychological consulting, solving social problems and providing mental care individually to prisoners, if this implementation causes or may cause direct threat to the health or safety of the LPA imprisonment place official or employee.
19. On a regular basis:
 - 19.1. Inform prisoners about the decisions taken in relation to the declaration of emergency and limitation of the prisoners' rights;
 - 19.2. Inform staff about the decisions taken in relation to the declaration of emergency and changes related to the service of work organization.

Within the framework of LPA:

- Stop physical fitness tests for candidates planned to admit into service.
- Cancel the organization of family days.
- Stop the face-to-face meetings of citizens in the LPA central office and imprisonment places.
- Organize interinstitutional meetings distantly.

Also, referring to the Cabinet Regulation Order No.103 "On the Declaration of Emergency Situation" of the Republic of Latvia dated 12 March 2020, Clause 4.9. state that during the emergency situation *health institutions, social care institutions and places of deprivation of liberty shall restrict visits of third persons, except with a permit of the head of institution with a view to provide the core functions.*

According with the Clause 4.10 and sub-clauses of the aforementioned Regulation, *the rights of prisoners provided by law may be restricted in accordance with the decision of the Head of the Prison Administration, including by envisaging a possibility of establishing a procedure for conditional release of convicted persons prior to the completion of the sentence, conducted by prisons and the State Probation Service, as well as prolongation the term of its execution.*

4.10.1 postpone the commencement of temporary custodial sentences in deprivation of liberty institutions and suspend the detention and transfer to custody of persons who have been sentenced to temporary custody

or to whom, a fine or forced labor, as imposed by a court decision, is replaced by a temporary custodial sentence.

4.10.2 determine that the Head of the Prison Administration or his/her authorized person manages all types of crisis situations in imprisonment place;

4.10.3 refuse from the convoy of prisoners as requested by performers of procedures, including hearings, as far as possible setting up the hearings in a video conference mode. Stop the transfer of prisoners between the imprisonment places, except transferring prisoners to Latvian Prison Hospital in Olaine Prison and for commencement of the sentence execution of inmates.

4.10.4 postpone the enforcement of the administrative penalty – administrative arrest - irrespective of the limitation period for serving the sentence. An administrative arrest which will not be executed for this reason and the limitation period of which has entered, cannot be enforced after the end of the emergency situation.

4.10.5 postpone the transfer and takeover of persons convicted and detained abroad for the further execution of imprisonment or detention in the territory of the Republic of Latvia.

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