



## Important notice regarding the introduction of family video visits in Irish Prisons.

As you know family visits to prisons have been suspended as a direct result of the COVID 19 restrictions in the community. This was a regrettable but necessary action in our attempts to prevent the spread of Covid-19 into our prisons.

Over the past 2 weeks our technicians and prison staff have been working to introduce a new system to allow visits by video phone and we very much appreciate your patience as we have been working to complete this.

We are happy to confirm that video phones have been installed in all locations and are now operational. Some visits have taken place to test the system and the feedback is positive.

Over the coming days we will be commencing the roll out of these visits to family members who have been selected by prisoners.

The system is as follows:

- Prisoners will be asked to identify a family member from their approved visitor's list to host a video call.
- The Irish Prison Service will contact the identified family member by phone to confirm a time for the video call and confirm an email address to forward the video call link and arrangements to when finalised.
- Please note that if you are an identified family member you will be contacted by our staff, there is no need for you to contact us. However, as we begin the roll out of the system it may take a few days to contact you so please be patient with us.
- Unfortunately due to the limited capacity of the new system it will not be possible to facilitate visits to multiple visitors at this time. If you are not the nominated primary visitor it will not be possible to contact the prison to book a visit. We will keep this under review.

- Prior to the time of the video call, the identified family member will receive an email with the confirmed date and time and a web link to establish the video call.
- 5 minutes before the time of the scheduled video call, the identified family member will be required to click the web link using a smart phone, laptop or desktop (with internet access) in order to commence the video call.
- **If you have an iPhone or iPad you can just click the link. For other devices you must use Google Chrome and click the link provided to join the call. The call will not work unless you use Google Chrome. This is not “Google” but is a website browser.**

It is identifiable by the following icon.



- If you encounter technical difficulties on the day or the link does not respond, you can join the call without the video facility by dialling a phone extension provided in the confirmation email and participate in the call without the video turned on.
- We will make every effort to facilitate you with another video call later in the day or in the coming days if you have technical difficulties or the call is dropped.
- Please note that the recording and the posting of video calls on any form of social media is strictly prohibited and a breach of GDPR. Any abuse of the video call facility may result in the opportunity to participate in a video call being revoked.

The new video call system will allow you to keep in contact with your loved ones in prison. There is limited daily capacity and these new visits will not replace the capacity that was available with normal face to face visits.

We will resume normal physical visits to prisons as soon as the restrictions are lifted and the Public Health team advises that it is safe to do so.

Our staff are working tirelessly to ensure that all those who live or work in our prisons are safe from Covid-19. We very much appreciate your support in this regard.

Thank you.