Assaults on prison staff and prisoners 2023 - 2024

Any act of violence against prison staff is unacceptable. Any criminal act carried out within our prisons, including an assault on a staff member, will be reported to An Gardaí Síochána for investigation and prosecution. It is also vitally important that staff who are subject to act of violence or who witness incidents in our prisons are given the necessary support afterwards.

Section 19 of the Criminal Justice (Public Order) Act 1994 specifically provides for assaults or threats to peace officers including prison officers acting in the execution of their duty. Any person who assaults or threatens to assault a peace officer in the execution of their duty is guilty of an offence. The Criminal Justices (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2023 increased the maximum sentence for assaulting or threatening to assault a peace office from 7 to 12 years.

Staff Supports

All staff have access to the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), with 3 full-time national Employee Assistance Officers. The EAP is supported at local prison level, by a network of almost fifty voluntary Staff Support Officers. This support network provides a confidential service offering information, advice and onward referrals on a wide range of personal and work-related issues. The Employee Assistance Programme plays a key role in supporting staff, particularly those who have been injured on duty.

The provision of an Independent Counselling Service for staff, which is provided by Inspire Workplaces, has been an important addition to the supports available to staff. This free Counselling Service is completely confidential and is designed to assist employees in resolving personal or work-related concerns. It is a Freephone helpline available 24 hour hours per day, with access to up to 6 counselling sessions for support covering a wide range of issues. The feedback from staff regarding this service is very positive.

NB: 2024 data generated from NIMS as of 10/02/2025 and is subject to change

	Staff Assault Figures						Prisoner Assault Figures	
	Prisoner on Staff Direct Physical Assaults[1]		Additional Aggressive and Threatening Incidents[2]		Physical Interventions[3]		Prisoner on Prisoner Direct Physical Assaults	
Place of Detention	**2023**	**2024**	**2023**	**2024**	**2023**	**2024**	**2023**	**2024**
Arbour Hill Prison	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	3	**0**
Castlerea Prison	6	**7**	*0*	***1***	21	**3**	20	**72**
Cloverhill Prison	25	**17**	*3*	***1***	15	**9**	182	**262**
Cork Prison	11	**15**	*2*	***3***	21	**10**	112	**135**
Limerick Prison	5	**5**	*6*	***1***	*7*	**8**	90	**96**
Loughan House	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	1	**0**
Midlands Prison	19	**13**	*0*	***3***	11	**18**	92	**114**
Mountjoy Mens Prison	22	**27**	*2*	***5***	13	**15**	62	**75**
OSG	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Portlaoise Prison	0	**2**	*1*	***3***	0	**4**	12	**14**
Prison Service Escort Corps	10	**2**	*2*	***3***	9	**5**	1	**4**
Shelton Abbey	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
The Dochas Centre	8	**11**	*1*	***1***	3	**1**	17	**44**
Training Unit	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Wheatfield Prison	4	**8**	*8*	***2***	18	**16**	*69*	**58**
No Data	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	*2*	**0**
Grand Total	**110**	**107**	***25***	***23***	**118**	**89**	**663**	**874**
Percentage difference		**-3%**		**-8%**		**-25%**		**+31%**

[1] *Direct Physical Assaults in this context represents 'direct physical assaults' whereby a prisoner 'intentionally applies force to or intentionally causes an impact to the body of an operational prison staff member'.*

[2] *Additional Aggressive and Threatening Incidents represents, but is not limited to serious threat/intimidation, sexual harassment, sexual assault, exposure to bodily fluids, etc.*

[3] *Physical Intervention in this context represents where inadvertent or unintentional striking of a staff member or injury to a prisoner occurs in the course of a planned physical intervention or spontaneous physical intervention.*

Occupational Injury or Disease (OID)

Total number of OIDs sick leave days, total number of days and average days lost per employees for recent years:

Year	Incidents (* number of officers who availed of OIDs)	Total Number of Days	Average Days lost per employee
2016	112	3,548	32
2017	117	4,712	40
2018	142	6,884	48
2019	180	6,647	37
2020	124	4,419	36
2021	110	4,100	37
2022	86	4,233	49
2023	172	6,150	36

*Please note these figures includes all OID injuries in the work place not just direct assaults

** 2024 OID Figures are currently being finalised and will be available in the coming weeks.