



Ministry
of Justice

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COMMUNITY AND SUSPENDED SENTENCES (NOTIFICATION OF DETAILS) BILL

I am writing to you following Second Reading of the Community and Suspended Sentences (Notification of Details) Bill, sponsored by Ruth Jones MP, which successfully passed Second Reading in the House of Commons on Friday 23 February. I am writing as the Minister with responsibility for this policy area. I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for your contribution to the debate and for supporting this Bill.

During the debate, you raised the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS), also known as 'Clare's Law'. As you know, the DVDS enables police forces across England and Wales to disclose information to a victim or potential victim of domestic abuse about their partner's, or ex-partner's, previous abusive or violent offending.

The Community and Suspended Sentences (Notification of Details) Bill will place a new requirement on adult and youth offenders serving a community order or a suspended sentence order to inform the responsible officer if they change their contact details or change their name. This will improve the ability of the Probation Service and Youth Offending Teams to monitor offenders and protect the public by making sure that, while an offender is serving a sentence in the community, the responsible officer has the information that they need to keep tabs on that individual, including if they change their name and their up-to-date contact information.

Probation and Youth Offending Teams are able to disclose information about the management of offenders to the police or other relevant agencies where necessary, under section 14 of the Offender Management Act 2007; this could include any change of name or contact details. This would provide police with more information when they are considering a disclosure request made under Clare's Law.

Therefore, while the Community and Suspended Sentences Bill does not *directly* strengthen the provisions of Clare's Law, it is possible that an offender serving a sentence in the community could be subject to a disclosure by the police under Clare's Law, and the Bill will ensure the individual has as much relevant information about their partner as possible.

My officials are available to discuss the Bill with you in more detail.

RT HON EDWARD ARGAR MP