

The Lord Hodgson of Astley Abbotts CBE
House of Lords
London
SW1A 0PW

MoJ ref: 124461

30 May 2025

Dear Lord Hodgson

RELEASING INDIVIDUALS FROM PRISON ON A FRIDAY

On the 15 May, I answered an Oral Question in the House regarding Government's support for ex-offenders to effectively transition into the community from prison.

During the debate you raised an important issue about Friday prison releases and the impact this can have on individuals' reintegration. You specifically asked what is happening and what progress is being made to resolve this problem.

We know that accessing timely support on release can be particularly challenging for some individuals on a Friday, due to the number of different services that need to be accessed on release; the limited time before services close for the weekend; and the additional pressure on support services due to the increased number of releases that occurred on Fridays.

To address this, the Offenders (Day of Release from Detention) Act 2023 was introduced in June 2023.

The scheme created a presumption that all prisoners due for release on a Friday or the day before a bank/public holiday would be eligible for release one working day earlier unless exceptional circumstances apply. This scheme better enables effective resettlement for those offenders who otherwise would have faced the practical challenges of Friday release from prison.

As a result of the Act, the Discretionary Friday Release / Pre-Bank Holiday Release scheme was brought into force on the 30th November 2023, with the first adult releases under the scheme taking place on Thursday 14th December 2023. The first releases under the scheme in the Youth Custody Service were from Wednesday 13th December 2023.

By removing the barriers that a Friday release creates, we are giving prison leavers a greater opportunity to access the support they need to effectively reintegrate into the community.

I hope the information I have provided on Friday Releases is useful.

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I am also placing a copy of this letter in the library.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Ponsonby', is centered within a rectangular box. The signature is fluid and cursive.

LORD PONSONBY OF SHULBREDE

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