

SPSO decision report

Case: 201004776, Scottish Prison Service
Sector: Scottish Government and devolved administration
Subject: visits
Outcome: not upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained that his partner was falsely accused of exposing her breasts to him, in the presence of her teenage daughter, during a closed visit. The matter came to Mr C's attention when his partner received a visit from social work. He also complained that the SPS failed to properly investigate his complaint in this regard as they had not viewed CCTV to substantiate the allegation.

We asked the SPS about this incident. They confirmed that there was no direct camera coverage in the closed visit area at the time in question so no CCTV footage existed. As such, there was no evidence to establish what happened on the day so we did not uphold that complaint, nor his complaint about CCTV footage not being viewed.

However, as a result of the complaint, it came to our attention that the SPS had not told Mr C or his partner that the matter was being referred to social work. In addition, the completed child welfare report was not countersigned by a line manager. As SPS policy dictates that both of these should have occurred, we recommended that SPS highlight the relevant policy (GMA 25A/04) to staff.

Recommendations

We recommend that Scottish Prison Service:

- highlight the relevant policy to staff and remind them of their duty to inform the carer/prisoner when referring matters to social work; and
- remind line managers that they must countersign any completed child welfare reports.