

SPSO decision report

Case: 201204220, Scottish Prison Service
Sector: scottish government and devolved administration
Subject: hygiene
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C, who is a prisoner, complained that the prison were failing to provide him with adequate clean towels. He said that they have a duty to provide prisoners with suitable towels and toiletries necessary for health and hygiene. He said that there was an insufficient supply of towels at weekends, when the prison laundry is closed. Having considered his complaint, the prison concluded that providing two towels for weekend use was reasonable.

In bringing his complaint to us, Mr C noted that prisoners were issued with two clean towels every weekday evening. He indicated that he used a towel in the morning when he showered and again in the afternoon following use of the gym. He said that there were no facilities for drying towels and that he had no family who could send him in extra towels.

The prison told us that they considered two towels for weekend use to be reasonable. They advised that prisoners are allowed to purchase four extra towels (or have these handed in). The prison rules require them to provide facilities for showering on a daily basis or at least every other day where adequate arrangements cannot be made for daily provision. They advised that the latter would apply over the weekend when the prison laundry does not operate. We considered the level of towel provision reasonable, and in line with prison rules, and did not uphold the complaint.