

SPSO decision report

Case: 201709050, Scottish Prison Service
Sector: Scottish Government and devolved administration
Subject: policy / administration
Decision: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained that the Scottish Prison Service (SPS) stopped his Special Escorted Leave (SEL). He also complained about the handling of his complaint.

We found that the prison did not stop Mr C's access to SELs but, within their authority under the relevant legislation, they questioned Mr C's need for visits to a specific place, given a change in circumstances. The SPS can limit access to SELs if they consider a proposed visit no longer serves the intended purpose. Mr C still had access to SELs to visit other places. Therefore, we did not uphold this part of Mr C's complaint.

In dealing with Mr C's complaint, the SPS said that they would review the subject of Mr C's complaint. However, they did not share the outcome of the review with Mr C. Providing an explanation to him would have been appropriate and good practice. Therefore, we upheld this part of Mr C's complaint.

Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to Mr C for failing to respond reasonably to his complaint. The apology should meet the standards set out in the SPSO guidelines on apology available at www.spsso.org.uk/leaflets-and-guidance.
- Provide a full response to the issues raised in the complaint, and communicate the findings of the review.

In relation to complaints handling, we recommended:

- Staff should respond to points of concern raised within prisoners' complaints, and ensure that the main aspects of the complaint are addressed.