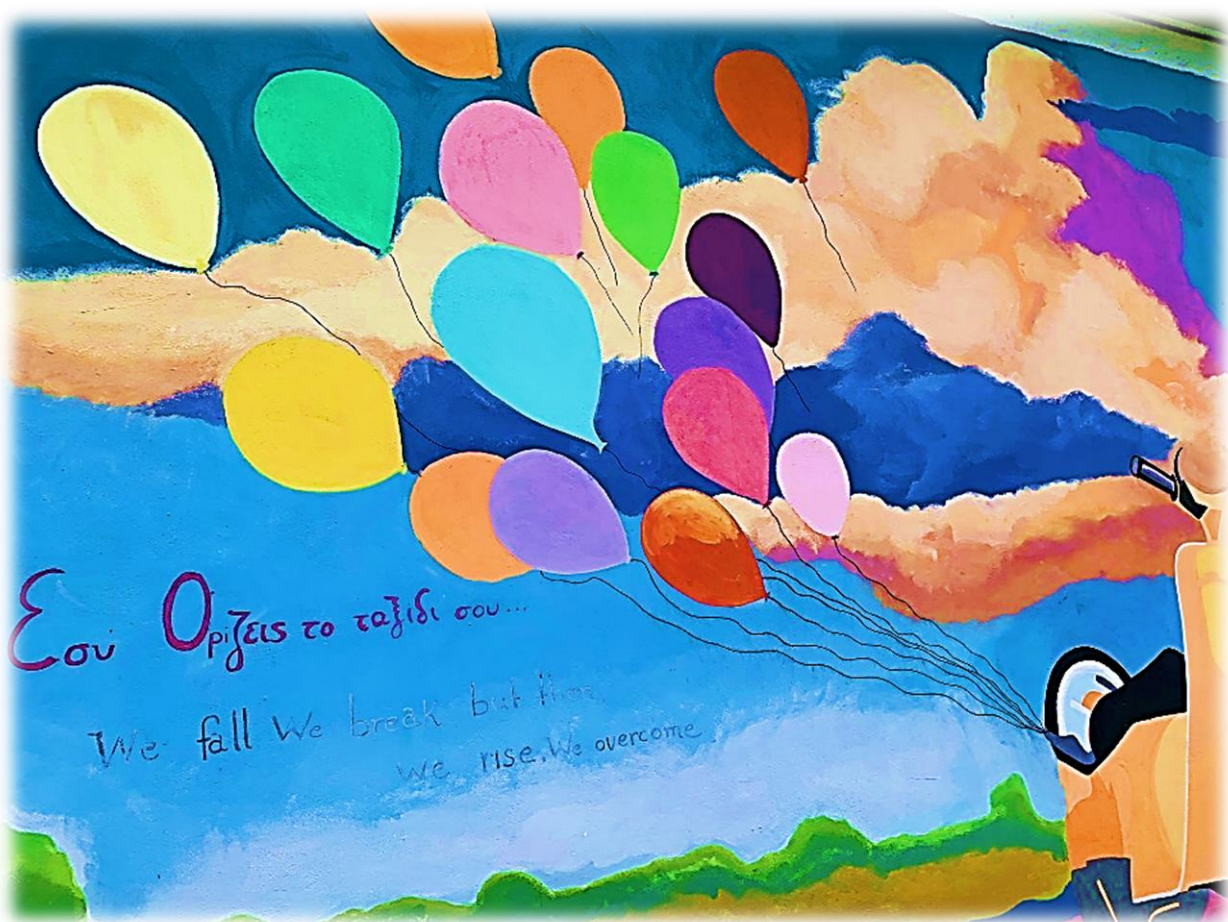


GUIDE OF PRISONER'S FIRST CONTACT



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ΧΡΟΝΙΑ



ΕΠΙΤΡΟΠΟΣ ΔΙΟΙΚΗΣΕΩΣ
& προστασίας ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων

1991 OMBUDSMAN



**Σύνδεσμος Προστασίας
των Δικαιωμάτων
των Φυλακισμένων
& Στήριξης Αποφυλακισθέντων**

Cover: Artistic creation of prisoners in the area of the Central Prison.
«Εσύ Ορίζεις το αξίδι σου... We fall. We break but then we rise. We overcome».

Scientific Word Processing:

*Katerina Kallitsioni
Kyriacos Kyriacou
Alexandros Clerides*

Printing:

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CENTRAL PRISONS
«GUIDE OF PRISONER’S FIRST CONTACT»
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1st EDITION

This guide was prepared by the Commissioner for Administration and the Protection of Human Rights (Ombudsman) and lawyers of the Association of the Protection of the Rights of Prisoners & Ex-Prisoners, taking in consideration the articles of the existing legislation and the rules and regulations in force, as well as real experiences gained from having contact with persons who remained in custody either as detainees pending trial or convicts in the Central Prisons of the Republic of Cyprus.

It is noted that for the publication of this guide we requested and received the views of the Department of Prisons.

This is a guide to inform new detainees / prisoners about their rights, obligations, and rules of safe cohabitation within the prison. The guide aims to answer, in a plain and simple language, some initial simple questions about prisoner's rights.

This will be followed by translations into languages understood by foreign prison inmates and will be reissued.

In case someone wishes to be informed of something more specific or has a complaint against a staff member of the prison or any rules and regulations he/she can contact the Commissioner for Administration and the Protection of Human Rights (Ombudsman), the Association for the Protection of the Rights of Detainees & Prisoners and the Director of Central Prisons.

Chapters are in random order.

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**Σύνδεσμος Προστασίας
των Δικαιωμάτων
των Φυλακισμένων
& Στήριξης Αποφυλακισθέντων**

1. Laws and Regulations of Central Prisons

The fundamental Constitutional Rights and Rights under the European Convention on Human Rights apply to all persons inside and outside the Prison. Consequently, the Articles of Cyprus Constitution and the European Convention on Human Rights remain in force and effect throughout detention within the Central Prisons with the exceptions mentioned in their own text.

In addition to the above, of relevance are the Council of Europe's 2006 "European Prison Rules", Recommendation REC 2006, as amended in 2020, and the United Nations Minimum Basic Rules on the Treatment of Prisoners (Mandela Rules) of 2015.

It is worth noting that the Commissioner for Administration and Protection of Human Rights as the National Torture Prevention Mechanism regularly makes unannounced visits to the Central Prisons during which she inspects the premises, has confidential interviews with prisoners and makes reports and/or interventions with recommendations to the competent authorities.

More specifically, in the Central Prisons are applicable and in force the Prison Law of 1996, 62(I)/1996, and the Prison Regulations CDP 121/97 with amendments made from time to time.

2. Transfer from the Court to the Central Prisons

If a prison sentence is imposed, which will apply immediately, then the person is transferred, accompanied by the Police, from the Courtroom to a holding cell, in the building of the Court, waiting until the vehicle comes to transport him or her to the Central Prisons.

From this point on the person is considered in custody, and most of the times, he or she will be given the right to communicate with his/her own people, family or friends, before he or she is asked to surrender his/her phone and other personal property to the authorities.

In the Court, any personal belongings, of the convicted person, are handed over to the Police, which will take them to the Central Prison, where they

will be stored in the warehouse and returned to the convicted person upon his release from prison.

The prisoner, when admitted to the Central Prisons, undergoes an individual search and a search of his property, in a private setting by a person of the same sex.

The prisoner, according to the practice followed in the Central Prisons, is not entitled to have anything in possession except the clothes he or she wears on the day of transfer to the Central Prison. Anything else can be purchased from the prison canteen (for example hygienic items) and clothes can be sent to him/her by one of his friends or relatives. In case there is no one to send clothes to the prisoner, then s/he can carry with him/her and deliver a bag with various clothes that will be given to him/her after his or her transfer to the Central Prisons.

3. Appeal of the Conviction and / or Sentence

It is important for the person to know that he or she has a Constitutional Right to appeal both the Conviction and the Sentence within 10 days of the day the sentence was imposed (decision day). The 10-day deadline is strictly enforced by the courts, meaning if the prisoner does not appeal within the 10-day deadline will lose the right to appeal with some specific exceptions.

The appeal can be filed either by a lawyer or by the person himself or herself even from inside the prison with simple grounds of appeal.

4. Classification Committee

The Classification Committee, under the relevant legislation, consists of the Director of the Central Prisons, the Prison's High-Ranking Officers, the Teacher in charge of the Prison School Program, the Prison Social Officer, and the Prison Psychologist.

The Classification Committee is responsible for the evaluation of prisoners, their placement in the appropriate living quarters / wings, the assignment of

appropriate work to them, the inclusion of prisoners in the Open Prison, the implementation of the house arrest measure, the granting to them of exit / leave permits to visit their family, and in general for assisting the Central Prisons Director in the formulation and implementation of the whole rehabilitation and reintegration of prisoners. The Classification Committee shall be in quorum when at least five of its members are present.

The Classification Committee shall, in accordance with the practice followed, have for each prisoner a card with his number, the sentence imposed and the day of his release.

5. Detainees pending trial

A detainee pending trial is a person who has been sent to the Central Prisons on the order of the Court and has no date of release since he is not yet serving a sentence. The detainee will remain in custody until the next time s/he appears before a court where it will be decided whether to continue his or her detention.

A detainee has the right to meet with his relatives daily for up to 1 hour, in the presence of a member of the Police, and is entitled to have as much communication as necessary with his/her lawyers for the purpose of preparing his/her defence.

The detainees remain in their own separate wing, if the premises or existing facilities permit it, and have their own daily schedule unless they wish to join another wing together with convicts, in which case they will have the appropriate daily schedule. For these changes detainees must make a request to the Director of Central Prisons. It should be noted that, as a rule, the detainees are not held in the same wings as the convicts.

The detainees have no obligation to work unless they, themselves, request to work.

6. Convicts / Prisoners

A convict is the person convicted by the Court of Justice and serving a predetermined sentence imposed on him / her. Once s/he has served his or her sentence, the prisoner is released and cannot remain in the Central Prisons.

His or her release, upon serving his or her sentence comes no later than noon on the last day of his prison sentence.

A prisoner who has been sentenced to prison for not paying a financial debt, when he or she pays it to the Prison Authorities is released.

7. Aliens / Foreigners

All detainees / convicts, regardless of ethnic origin, enjoy the same protection and should be treated equally before the regulations and laws of the Republic of Cyprus.

The difference for foreigners concerns the procedures that can be applied to continue serving their sentences in their country of origin and to deport them.

It is important to note that orders for the expulsion of prisoners may be subject to judicial review through an Administrative Appeal to the Administrative Court, which should, in any case, be filed within 75 days of the day on which the prisoner became aware of the decision to expel him or her.

✿ *Transfers within the European Union*

The Law (67(I)/2014) and the Framework Decision 2008/909/JHA established a new procedure for transferring and serving the sentence of a European convict in his/her country of origin or in his/her country of permanent residence or in any other country requested, within the European Union. The criterion now is whether serving his sentence in another country will help his social reintegration.

✿ *Transfers Outside the European Union*

For this type of transfers, of relevance are the reports found within the Immigration and Migration Law, Chapter 105, but also the general references in the [United Nations Handbook on the International Transfer of Sentenced Persons](#).

8. Medical Check-up / Examination

Immediately, after the admission of a prisoner to the Central Prisons, a competent medical officer will carry out an examination to determine the health status of the prisoner. Also, a team of mental health experts, of the Department of Prisons, will carry out appropriate tests to evaluate the mental health of the prisoner.

Please note that prisoners have the right of access to medical services.

A prisoner may request to be examined by a doctor of his or her own choice. Such an examination must receive the approval of the Director of the Central Prisons and it will be carried out in the presence of the medical officer of the Central Prisons, during the hours of service of the medical officer.

If the prisoner is required to be treated by a private clinic and if the prisoner so wishes, with the permission of the Director of the Central Prisons, the prisoner shall be referred to the private clinic. The costs of the private clinic are borne by the prisoner.

In the event of a serious illness or serious injury of the detainee or his/her transfer and stay, for this reason, in a hospital for treatment, the nearest relative or any other person named by the detainee, is notified immediately.

Mental health issues are also handled within the Central Prison by the in house psychiatrist but if a person needs specific psychiatric treatment, they can be sent to the psychiatric hospital as mentioned in the Psychiatric Care Law [77(1)/1997].

9. Separation / Assignment into Wings

There are different types of wings in the Central Prisons:

- ✿ **Wing for Detainees Pending Trial:**

The detainees are, as a rule, kept separate from the rest of the prisoners, but the possibility exists that there will be some contact or communication with the prisoners.

- ✿ **Reception Wing for new prisoners:**

The new prisoners, with their admission into the Central Prisons, are held in a separate wing, called, the reception wing of new prisoners, until some necessary procedures are completed. This time gives new prisoners the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the environment and life of the prison.

- ✿ **Young Prisoners' Wing – under the age of 21 years.**

- ✿ **Mentally Disturbed Prisoners Wing.**

- ✿ **Sexual Offenders Wing.**

- ✿ **High Security Wing.**

- ✿ **Women's Wing**

The numbering of wings here does not reflect the actual numbering of the wings in the Central Prisons.

10. Personal Property / Personal Items

When a prisoner is admitted to the Central Prisons all his/her personal belongings are handed over to a prison officer for safekeeping, such as money, clocks, chains, rings, telephones, etc.

Anything that can be considered an object of value stays out of prison.

At the request of the prisoner, and with the approval of the Director of the Central Prisons, a prisoner may carry with him/her a wristwatch, a neck chain with a cross or other religious symbol and the married prisoners shall be entitled to bring with them their wedding ring.

11. Prison Cells

In all wings there is an installed central heating system / central air conditioning and ventilation system.

The wings have cells. If conditions permit, each prisoner must have his own individual cell. Where this is not possible, they reside in wards with a maximum number of 5 persons, each.

Each cell is equipped with a double bunkbed, up and down, as well as outlets to supply the prisoners with electricity.

Also, in the cells and wards, sunlight is provided, through windows, as well as good ventilation. The size of the cells is such as to give to each prisoner sufficient space for movement.

In the cell there is, usually, a desk and a clothing cabinet with two (2) compartments, one for each prisoner.

Anything else in an electrical appliance, but also items such as pillows, quilts, duvets, etc., can be purchased from the canteen by any prisoner.

12. Hygiene Areas

Each Wing has 24-hour access to hot water, for the personal hygiene of prisoners, to sanitary areas and to drinking water.

13. The Right of Communication outside the Prison

In the Central Prisons there are telephone booths in which prisoners have unlimited access daily from 08:00 a.m. to 20:30 p.m.

For an inmate to use the phone, s/he must first buy a telecard, from the prison canteen. No free phone is provided.

The prisoner may send unlimited number of letters to family members, associates and friends after submitting these letters for inspection to the

competent prison officer. The prisoner may, also, receive letters from people he / she associated with, others, without any restriction on the number.

The content of telephone calls or letters is checked if the Director of Central Prisons considers that this is necessary for security reasons or for any other legitimate, reasonable, or lawful reason.

However, letters sent by the prisoner to his/her lawyer, the Attorney General, the Commissioner for Administration and the Protection of Human Rights, the Council of Prisons, the Council of Europe Commission for the Prevention of Torture and Other Forms of Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the European Court of Human Rights are sent without delay and are not opened.

Communication can also be done additionally by using SKYPE through the internet.

14. Submission of a complaint to the Commissioner for Administration and the Protection of Human Rights

The Commissioner for Administration and the Protection of Human Rights is the eminently independent incumbent who deals over time with the promotion and protection of the rights of prisoners. The Commissioner's firm position is that anyone who is deprived of his personal liberty in any form of detention or imprisonment is entitled to respect for his inherent dignity.

The prisoner may, by letter, at any time of his detention, contact the Commissioner complaining of any violation of his/her rights or any problem s/he faces in prison. A complaint can be made to the Commissioner by him / her, by letter, which s/he can be placed in the special box which is in every wing and is labelled «Commissioner for Administration and the Protection of Human Rights “OMBUDSMAN” ».

These letters, which are addressed to the Commissioner and placed within this box, are not subject to the control or inspection of the Director of the

Central Prisons. Every week an Officer of the Office of the Commissioner inspects these boxes, in all wings, and collects their contents. At the same time, a complaint may be lodged with the Commissioner by the prisoner's relatives or his lawyer on his behalf.

15. Visit of the National Mechanism for the Prevention of Torture

By Law 2(III)/2009, the Commissioner for Administration and the Protection of Human Rights was designated as the National Torture Prevention Mechanism.

Specifically, under the Law, the Commissioner is designated as the National Body of Visits and is authorized to **visit detention sites freely and unannounced**, at regular intervals, with a view to monitoring compliance with the provisions of the United Nations Convention against Torture. During his/her visits, the Commissioner shall have **free access to all premises and facilities of each place of detention** and to have confidential private interviews with any person s/he deems necessary.

The Commissioner could submit recommendations and reports to any Detention Center Authority, and the competent authority must then submit a reply on the measures taken based on the report or recommendations submitted to it.

Furthermore, the Commissioner is authorized to submit suggestions for better regulation and to express opinions in the House of Representatives when considering relevant bills. In addition, the Commissioner presents, to the Attorney General of the Republic and the Independent Police Allegations and Complaints Authority, any allegations of human rights violations by detainees.

The prisoner, during such regular visits, by the Commissioner, may himself freely request to speak with the Officers making the visit to his / her detention wing. All interviews with the Commissioner or his/her designee are confidential.

16. Visits

Each prisoner is allowed to receive up to 10 visits per month, 3 adults per visit, from family members, relatives, and friends. The prisoner may have additional visits from embassies, consulates, high commissions, as well as from religious representatives of his choice.

For any person to be able to visit, the prisoner must enter the person's name on his/her list for visits, which is provided by the prison staff, and send the visitor an invitation. If this procedure is not followed, the prison staff may not allow the visitor to enter the Central Prisons.

Usually, visits by family and friends take place from Monday to Thursday, and Saturday to Sunday, from 8:00 in the morning until 12:00 in the afternoon. Visitors are not allowed to bring anything with them upon entering the Central Prisons, for example food or drinks.

The visitors can bring clothing, for the prisoner, during the visit to the Central Prisons. The clothing must be left with the staff at the front gate / entrance and will be received by the prisoner after 1 day.

To plan a visit, people can call 22406259.

17. Feeding

The meals provided to inmates are prepared in the prison's kitchens. There is a selection of 8 menus, that are determined monthly by a nutritionist of the Ministry of Health in collaboration with the Director of Central Prisons and the Chief Officer of the Kitchens, addressing the issues that each prisoner may face (e.g., medical), his dietary preferences and his religious convictions.

In particular, there is a daily regular menu, as well as special menus for gastric diet, hypolipidemic diet for heart patients and diabetics, vegetarian diet as well as other menus that are determined by a medical officer based on the medical problems that a prisoner may face. There is also a special menu for the needs of Muslim prisoners and for the specific fasts for Christians.

Each menu includes breakfast, lunch, and dinner. In addition to dinner the prisoners are provided with an evening sandwich or other snacks such as cheese pie, olive pie, etc. with juice that the prisoners are allowed to take to their cells after dinner.

18. Canteen

In the Central Prison there is a canteen where a prisoner can procure whatever he wants.

There is a relevant list of the items available in the canteen. In the canteen prisoners can purchase everything from food, sanitary ware, household items, even electrical items, etc.

Payment in the canteen is made through the prisoner's account and the prisoner is informed of the balance of his/her account per his / her request.

Prisoners can be informed of the balance of their account on Wednesdays and Fridays.

19. Money in Central Prison

No prisoner can have any money in his / her possession within the Central Prisons.

His/her money is deposited into a personal account and the prison officer issues a receipt.

Each prisoner has his own account.

20. Requests

When a prisoner wants to ask for anything, he / she asks for it in the form of a request. He / she writes his / her request on the Application Form, provided by the staff, which is examined by the Officer of the Central Prisons of each

wing, every day except weekends. In his/her request the prisoner may ask for example to be examined by a doctor, to request the provision of electrical appliances, as well as to request communication with the Director, requesting the change of wing, a roommate or change of roommate.

21. Prison Administration

The general public can communicate with the Director of Central Prisons by calling the phone number 22406141 or 22406142. It is understood, of course, that prisoners can communicate with the Director through written requests that they can submit themselves.

22. Daily Program

The daily schedule and occupations for each prisoner are not the same. There are inmates, for example, who are part of the work program, other inmates who are part of the drug rehabilitation program, yet others are assigned to the Central Prisons Schools.

At 6:00 a.m., the cells are opened, and the prisoners are counted.

Then around 7:30 in the morning the prisoners receive their breakfast.

Immediately, after breakfast, prisoners report to their approved work assignments, go to school, or participate in various educational programs and activities within the prison.

Each prisoner from 7:30 until the locking of the cells has free access to the courtyard of his/her wing and can work out in the yards and gyms that exist within the wings, based on a program and under the guidance of physical education teachers of the CAO.

Further, prisoners have access to a TV with free subscription service from the Department of Prisons, radio, CD player, etc.

At around 12:00 noon lunch is offered, which is prepared by prisoners who work in the prison kitchens. Then, after lunch, the prisoners use their time in activities, in the gym, at work, etc.

At 5:30 p.m., the prisoners return to their wings, where the afternoon count takes place. They enter their cells at 21:00 in the evening on weekdays and at 22:00 in the evening on weekends and public holidays. On New Year's Day, the cells close at 24:00, at midnight.

23. Work Assignments

Under Article 12 of the Prison Law of 1996, a prisoner serving a prison sentence, other than that of a life imprisonment, can obtain a reduction in his / her sentence if he / she demonstrates good conduct and hard work.

All prisoners sentenced to more than one (1) month in prison who wish to receive gratuity allowance must work in a job assigned by the Classification Committee. Prisoners, usually, work five days a week about 5 hours a day.

The categories of the gratuity allowance and the amount of the allowance corresponding to each category are determined by decisions of the Council of Ministers. No cash payment may be made to a prisoner who works and resides in the Closed or Open Prison except in special cases with the approval of the Director of the Central Prisons.

The gratuity allowance is deposited in a separate individual account of each prisoner, not their personal account.

Prisoners who have been sentenced to one (1) month or less in prison and wish to work in an assignment assigned by the Classification Committee are not entitled to benefits or any salary.

There are various types of work assignments where prisoners can join upon request and approval, such as wing cleaner, barber, carpentry, etc., always depending on the prisoner's specialties and inclinations.

During their work assignment, prisoners are not entitled to leave their place of work without the prior permission of the competent / supervising officer.

A prisoner who wishes, during his/her free hours, to work in his/her cell or in another approved special place, for the construction of art or handicrafts, may submit a request to the Director of the Central Prisons for approval.

24. *Schooling / Learning within Central Prisons*

Every prisoner has the right to be trained, educated, and informed by special educational programs, books, newspapers, magazines, seminars, lectures, etc. These programs take place within the Central Prisons.

There are eight schools in the Central Prisons where prisoners can attend.

In addition, prisoners are given the opportunity to attend various vocational training programs in prison laboratories and many activities, such as music, dance, theatre, technology, handicrafts and much more.

There are cases where the right to education is also granted to the detainees depending on which wing, they are in.

This usually happens when a detainee is part of a wing which houses convicts, then he/she can join programs with the convicts.

25. *Schooling / Learning outside the Central Prisons*

There is also the possibility of a prisoner, at his/her request, to receive an educational permit / leave. Educational leave is the license granted to attend non-prison courses.

Educational permits are granted to prisoners who:

- ✿ When they were admitted to Central Prisons, they were students in a recognized school or university,
- ✿ Their prison sentence does not exceed three years.

- ✿ During their detention they demonstrated consistency in their behaviour and hard work,
- ✿ The remainder of their sentence does not exceed one year.

If one or more of the above conditions are not met, but the prisoner during his/her detention has demonstrated good conduct, behaviour and hard work and is interested in attending courses for his/her subsequent professional rehabilitation, the following conditions must be met:

- ✿ He / she must be under 35 years of age,
- ✿ The educational leave to relate to vocational training in a profession for which during his / her detention,
- ✿ He / she showed particular interest by attending special training courses and,
- ✿ To possess the necessary qualifications to be admitted to a recognized vocational school.

Interested prisoners should prepare their application and, together with the Director's recommendation, be sent to the Minister for approval.

26. Detoxification Programs and Therapeutic Interventions

In the Central Prisons an open drug rehabilitation program is provided on a voluntary basis.

Specifically, there are and operate experiential workshops and programs for special groups of prisoners, including drug users, such as the DANAI Detoxification Program and the LEMVOS Substitution Program.

There are also opportunities for detainees to join detoxification programs outside of prisons with therapeutic communities, such as the therapeutic community of Agia Skepi, RETO.

The participation of prisoners is not compulsory, but is considered in their further course, by the Classification Committee, with regard to the inclusion

of a prisoner in the Open Prison and in the Center for Extra-Institutional Employment and Rehabilitation.

27. Center for Guidance and Extra-Institutional Employment

Prisoners selected by the Committee, for the Guidance of Extra-Institutional Employment and Rehabilitation of Prisoners, from the Open Prison may be included in the Center.

The period of inclusion of prisoners into the Center may not exceed 12 months or be less than one month. Prisoners who join the Center, work on the free market in a job which is approved by the Committee, their conditions of employment are the same as other workers in the free world.

To get to their place of work these prisoners can use a public, a private or a prison vehicle.

It is understood that the prisoners are not allowed, during their work, to visit other places, they cannot leave their place of work and go someplace without the approval of the Director of Central Prisons, do not receive visits from relatives or friends at their place of work, they are punctual in their departure and return times. In case of any illness, during their working hours, they, immediately, must notify the Director.

Inmates who reside at the Center and wish to receive food from the prison must submit a written request to the Director. If the request is approved, they pay a daily cost for the food they will receive.

In all other cases, the inmates procure their food from anywhere outside the prison.

Prisoners working outside the Central Prisons surrender their wages immediately after being paid, by their employer. Their wages are entered in a special register and deposited into the prisoner's personal account, after deduction of an amount for any financial, family, or personal obligations.

In case of non-compliance with the Regulations or if the prisoner commits a disciplinary or other offence or shows bad behaviour he/she is immediately transferred to the Closed Prison until his misconduct is examined.

If his/her sentence is longer than that of the reprimand, the Director may order his/her detention in the Closed Prison.

28. Leave / Exit Permits

A prisoner who has served a third of his/her sentence and during his/her detention has shown hard work and good conduct can apply to the Director of Central Prisons to obtain a permit to leave the prison. These applications shall be examined and decided by the Classification Committee.

The unaccompanied exit permit shall be granted if the following conditions are met:

- ✿ The prisoner has actually served a third of his sentence,
- ✿ During his / her detention s/he demonstrated hard work, stability in his / her behaviour and credibility,
- ✿ No disciplinary proceedings are pending against him / her,
- ✿ He / she has not been punished for disciplinary misconduct in the last 3 months prior to the decision to grant him / her an exit permit,
- ✿ It has not been established that he / she has tendencies to escape or commit another new crime,
- ✿ There is no question of his own safety during his / her leave.

The duration of the exit permit, for inmates in the Closed Prison, shall not exceed 24 hours and for the prisoners in the Open Prison shall not exceed 120 hours.

Prisoners in the Closed Prison, to be able to obtain a 2nd leave of exit without an escort must have a period of at least 3 months from the 1st leave of absence and for prisoners in the Open Prison at least a period of at least 2 months.

The total leave of exit may not exceed 72 hours for prisoners in the Closed Prison and 360 hours for prisoners of the Open Prison within the year.

Exit permits are issued (a) accompanied, (b) unaccompanied and (c) for educational purposes.

Convicts serving a life sentence can apply for a license to leave prison after serving at least ten years in prison.

29. Open Prison

In accordance with Regulation No. 127, prisoners may join the Open Prison, after there is a decision from the Classification Committee that there exists no safety or discipline issue.

In the Open Prison are transferred prisoners who have been sentenced to:

- ✿ a prison sentence of less than six months,
- ✿ for debts, regardless of the size of their sentence,
- ✿ a prison sentence of more than 6 months and less than 24 months and have served 3/12 of their sentence with good conduct and exceptional behaviour,
- ✿ a prison sentence of more than 24 months and less than 5 years and have served 4/12 of their sentence with good conduct and have demonstrated exceptional behaviour in the last year in prison,
- ✿ a prison sentence of more than 5 years and less than 12 years, they have served at least 5/12 of the sentence and in the last 2 years have shown exceptional behaviour in prison,
- ✿ a prison sentence of more than 12 years and served 6/12 of the sentence with exceptional conduct in the last 3 years.

Inmates who have previously been prosecuted disciplinary or criminally and found guilty of the offence of escaping or attempting to escape cannot be placed in the Open Prison.

An inmate who during his stay in the Open Prison exhibits bad behaviour or commits disciplinary misconduct or an offence is immediately transferred to

the Closed Prison until his/her misconduct is examined. If he/she is found guilty of disciplinary misconduct and is given a sentence greater than the reprimand, the Director may order his/her stay in the Closed Prison for a certain period or for the remainder of his sentence depending on the seriousness of the misconduct.

The real difference between the Open Prison with the Closed Prison is that the inmates are fewer in number, in the Open Prison, all the prisoners have their own room, receive more leave time per year, and basically have the freedom when they can get in and out of their room.

30. Disciplinary Misconduct within the Prison

The prisoner who has been subject to disciplinary proceedings has the right to be aware of the offence for which s/he is accused, has the right to be heard and to defend him/herself. Also, s/he has the right to contact his/her lawyer and have, in private, meetings with him/her. Furthermore, he / she reserves the right to a telephone or private meetings with his family every 10 days.

The Director could, when imposing any disciplinary penalty, suspend its application if, at his/her estimation, the prisoner is expected to demonstrate good conduct.

31. Criminal Offences within the Prison

A prisoner who commits an offence, which is considered a criminal offence, is prosecuted.

In such a case, disciplinary proceedings may not be brought against him/her for the same reasons as the criminal proceedings, until the criminal proceeding it has come to a definitive end.

In addition, to his/her rights as a prisoner, in this case, his/her rights as a suspect are not suspended, but rather are in full force in relation to the offence in question for which he / she is considered a suspect.

32. Reduction of the Sentence for good behaviour/conduct and hard work

When a prisoner demonstrates good conduct and hard work, following a decision of the Director of Central Prisons, he/she may receive a reduction in his/her sentence, except where his/her sentence is that of life imprisonment.

33. Presidential Pardons / Favours

Based on Article 53, paragraph (4) of the Constitution of the Republic of Cyprus, the President has the power, with the consent of the Attorney General and the Assistant Attorney General, to reduce, suspend or convert any sentence imposed by the Court.

Presidential favours are granted each year at various intervals to several prisoners.

Usually, Presidential Pardon is given every Christmas, New Year's Day, Independence Day, and August 15th. In such cases, save any exceptions, the Presidential Pardon applies to all prisoners who have 3 months or less left in their sentence. These prisoners are automatically released and thus, served 3 months less, at the most, on their sentence.

When a new President is elected or the sitting President is re-elected it is customary, in accordance with current practices, for the president to reduce the sentence of prisoners, with some exceptions.

34. Parole Board

The Parole Board consists of five (5) members of which one (1) member is a former judge with experience in criminal law, one (1) member is a lawyer, and the remaining three (3) members hold qualifications such as Forensic Psychiatry, Forensic Psychology, Psychiatry, Psychology, Criminology, Sociology, and the Social Officer's specialty. One of them is appointed to the post of President and another member as Vice-President of the Parole Board.

A prisoner, who has a sentence of two (2) years or more, who has served half of his/her prison sentence, counting the actual days in prison and days

he or she earned for good behaviour and work, or who has been sentenced to life imprisonment and has served at least twelve years of the sentence shall be entitled to submit directly to the Parole Board a written request for his/her conditional release on leave, to continue serving the remainder of his/her sentence outside the Central Prisons.

The prisoner's written request may be submitted to the Parole Board up to six (6) months before the completion of half of his/her prison sentence.

As soon as the Parole Board receives the written request of a prisoner for release on leave, it shall inform him/her in writing of receipt of the request.

Contact details with the Parole Board – **22406295**.

35. House arrest and electronic bracelet monitoring

Under Article 21B of the Prison Law, the Classification Committee may allow a convict to serve part of his/her sentence under house arrest if:

- ✿ He / she was sentenced to more than twelve (12) months and less than five (5) years and has served at least half of his/her sentence,
- ✿ He / she was sentenced to less than 12 months in prison and has served at least a third of his/her sentence,
- ✿ He / she is in the Open Prison and has joined a drug rehabilitation program,
- ✿ He / she is in the Open Prison and has been granted unaccompanied leave to serve part of the sentence,
- ✿ He / she is in the Open Prison and is 70 years of age or older unless s/he has been convicted of certain offences that do not allow it.

To ensure that the convict does not abscond, run away, a special electronic device (special bracelet) is applied to one of his/her wrists or ankles.

Although it is not specifically provided for in the Law, according to the relevant Law of the Supreme Court, the bracelet can be used for detainees to ensure that they will appear during court hearings.

«Εσύ Ορίζεις το ταξίδι σου...
We fall...
We break but then we rise...
We overcome...»



Σύνδεσμος Προστασίας
των Δικαιωμάτων
των Φυλακισμένων
& Στήριξης Αποφυλακισθέντων

Office of the Commissioner for Administration and
the Protection of Human Rights (Ombudsman)

Address: Era House, Diagorou Str. 2,
1097 Λευκωσία

P.O. Box: 22166, 1518 Nicosia

Tel: +357 22405500 / 501

Fax: +357 22672881

ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.cy

www.ombudsman.gov.cy

Twitter: @CYOmbudsman

Facebook: Επίτροπος Διοικήσεως και Προστασίας
Ανθρωπίνων Δικαιωμάτων – Cyprus Ombudsman

Association for the Protection of the Rights
of Detainees & Prisoners

Address: Artemidos Avenue 33,
Metropolitan House 401-402,
6025 Larnaca

Tel: +357 24102559/ 96129133

Fax: +357 24102546

info@frontline.cy

www.frontline.cy

Facebook: Σύνδεσμος Προστασίας των Δικαιωμάτων
των Φυλακισμένων και Αποφυλακισθέντων
[@frontline.cy](https://www.facebook.com/frontline.cy)