



PRESS RELEASE

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Publication of Prison (Amendment) Bill 2019

As the public may recall, the Law Commission made a series of recommendations to Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar to reform the Prison Act 2011. These proposals were published by way of a Command Paper on 13th May 2019 for consultation until Tuesday 28th May 2019.

Following from the Command Paper, Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar is now pleased to have today published the Prison (Amendment) Bill 2019. The Bill gives effect to the proposed changes as stated in the Command Paper, to increase the minimum time to be served for inmates serving a fixed-term sentence, from the current third, to half of their sentence. The 3 different categories, as recommended by the Law Commission, remain as follows:

1. automatic, unconditional release at the midpoint of sentence for those serving sentences of 12 months or less;
2. automatic release at the midpoint of sentence, with conditions imposed by the Parole Board, for those inmates serving sentences greater than 12 months up to 4 years; and
3. eligibility for release with conditions at the midpoint of sentence for those serving sentences greater than 4 years. The prisoner will be eligible to apply to the Parole Board as is currently the case.

The Minister for Health, Care and Justice, the Honourable Neil F. Costa MP said: "It gives me great pleasure to have published this Bill. I wish to sincerely thank the Law Commission for the vital work they have carried out in advising the Government on these important reforms to the Prison Act. I am confident that this Bill achieves the objectives of deterring persons from committing criminal offences, protecting the public and promoting successful reintegration into the community."