

Families Outside - Support & Information Helpline

T **0800 254 0088**

E support@familiesoutside.org.uk

W www.familiesoutside.org.uk

Txt text FAMOUT then your message to 60777

Chat webchat via www.familiesoutside.org.uk

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6. Travel and transport to Scottish prisons, and help with travel expenses

Families Outside has found that there are no co-ordinated services for relatives and friends to travel to and from a prison in Scotland. Sometimes a relative may be held some distance from the family home and this can make the planning of the journey to the prison difficult. Some of the information here may help you plan for your journey.

How Do I Get To The Prison?

Families Outside Support and Information Helpline **0800 254 0088** or the Family Contact Officer (FCO) at the prison, may be able to send you travel information. If you have access to the internet, you will be able to find information on the Scottish Prison Service website www.sps.gov.uk

National Rail Enquiries

www.nationalrail.co.uk

Citylink

www.citylink.co.uk

Traveline

www.traveline.org.uk

AA Route Planner

www.theaa.co.uk/routeplanner

I've heard of Sacro. Can They Help?

Sacro is a voluntary organisation that provides transport to some prisons. However, you must live in Glasgow or Edinburgh and the Lothians to access this. For more information contact:

- Sacro Glasgow 0141 248 1763
- Sacro Edinburgh 0131 622 7500



Planning Your Journey

You must plan your journey in line with what time you need to be at the prison, rather than your visit time.

Find it Difficult to Access Public Transport?

If you find it difficult to access public transport you may find it helpful to think about:

- Is there anyone you could ask who has a car and would be willing to drive you to the prison?
- If you were able to get to a mainline train or bus route, is there anyone who could help with this?

Help With Travel Expenses

If you over 16, a close relative of the prison, or sole visitor and receive certain benefits, or hold a Health Benefits Certificate, you may be able to get help with the cost of your visit from the [Assisted Prison Visits Unit \(APVU\)](#).

What benefits do I need to be receiving?

To be able to claim you must also be in receipt of one of the following:

Income Support	Job Seekers' Allowance (income based)
Universal Credit	Employment and Support Allowance (income based)
Child tax credit	Working tax credit which includes the disability element
Pension credit	Health certificate 2 or 3

How Often Can I Claim?

You can claim for one visit every two weeks and up to a maximum of 26 visits in a 12 month period.

Additional Visits

The prison governor may authorise additional visits e.g. for you to attend a case conference or special visit. Payment for this is allowed and does not count towards your annual allowance.

How Do I Claim?

Applications for the cost of visits are made online at <http://www.gov.uk/helpwithprisonvisits>.

The online application process allows you to upload your income details, receipts and visit confirmation. Payment is made into your bank account or cashed at a Post Office.

To apply online you will need to have an email address. For advice on how to get an email address contact APVU.

If you are unable to make an online claim, you should contact APVU on 0300 063 2100 and APVU staff will make arrangements for a paper application to be sent you.

You must get a confirmation of visit form stamped at the prison and keep all receipts.

Claiming in Advance of Your Visits

You may find it helpful to claim in advance of your visit so that you are not out of pocket. Further details of how to do this are found online at www.gov.uk/helpwithprisonvisits or by contacting APVU on 0300 063 2100. For an advance claim, tickets are sent after you book the visit.

What if it is too far to travel there and back in a day?

You may be able to apply for overnight accommodation costs if you cannot travel there and back in the same day. The APVU will take several factors into account.

If you are away from home for more than 5 hours you will also be able to claim a light refreshment allowance called subsistence.

Further details are available from the APVU or Families Outside.

Assisted Prison Visits Helpline

If you have any queries about the Scheme, difficulties in completing an application, or seem to be waiting a long time to hear anything about your claim you can contact the Assisted Prison Visits Scheme:

Assisted Prison Visits Scheme

T 0300 063 2100 (9am-5pm Monday to Friday)

E assisted.prison.visits@noms.gsi.gov.uk

W <http://www.gov.uk/helpwithprisonvisits>