

# HEADQUARTERS

Office of the Chief Executive

Calton House

5 Redheughs Rigg

Edinburgh

EH12 9HW

0131 330 3500

**Tel:** 0131 330 3607

Good Evening,

The safety and wellbeing of those living and working in our prisons is a priority for the Scottish Prison Service (SPS) and we are working closely with the Scottish Government, Health Protection Scotland and a range of other partners, including your own organisation, to manage the unprecedented challenges we are all now facing.

COVID-19 is impacting across all public services, including the prison system and the SPS has been considering all necessary steps which we could take to reduce the risk of the virus spreading. Difficult decisions have had to be made to protect the health of those living and working in our prisons. In order to implement effective social distancing and balance the competing demands of public health and operational stability, I have taken the decision to suspend prison visits effective from Tuesday 24 March 2020. Critical agents visits will continue to be facilitated, however, as court business reduces, it can be expected that these visits will also reduce.

The SPS is looking at ways in which we can quickly support those in our care to maintain effective family relationships during this time and I would welcome your support in this area. I have attached a communication which has been issued to those in our care today.

This is also an anxious time for all living and working in our prisons. The situation is changing fast and we would like to assure you that we are working tirelessly to prepare for, and respond to the challenges we all face.

Regards

Teresa Medhurst

Deputy Chief Executive