

Families Outside - Support & Information Helpline



call free on **0800 254 0088**



email support@familiesoutside.org.uk



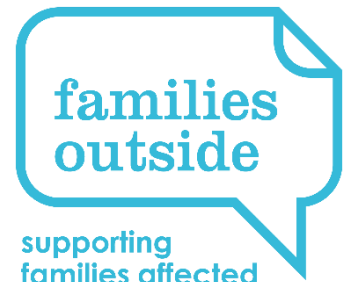
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supporting
families affected
by imprisonment



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

Families Outside has found that there are no coordinated 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, which can make planning 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.travelinescotland.com

AA Route Planner

<https://www.theaa.com/route-planner/route>

- **I've heard of Sacro. Can they help?**

Sacro is a Scottish community justice organisation that can help Edinburgh and Lothian residents with travel to some Scottish prisons.

For more information contact: <https://www.sacro.org.uk/>.



Sacro Edinburgh, Telephone: **0131 624 7270**

- **Planning your journey**

It would be best to 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 are over 16, a close relative of the person in prison, or a 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 [Get Help with The Cost of Prison Visits](#).

What benefits do I need to receive?

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

Income Support
Universal Credit
Child tax credit

Job Seekers' Allowance (income based)
Employment and Support Allowance (income-based)
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 26 visits in 12 months.

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 <https://www.gov.uk/help-with-prison-visits>

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 [Get Help with the Cost of Prison Visits](#).

If you cannot make an online claim, you should contact [Get Help with the Cost of Prison Visits](#) on **0300 063 2100**, and staff will arrange for a paper application to be sent to you.

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

- **Claiming in advance of your visits**

It may be helpful to claim in advance of your visit to avoid being out of pocket. Further details of how to do this can be found online at www.gov.uk/helpwithprisonvisits or by contacting **Get Help with the Cost of Prison Visits** at **0300 063 2100**. For an advance claim, payment can be received before you book travel tickets e.g. train or bus. Once you have paid for these tickets, you can upload the receipts onto the portal. Similarly, after your visit, upload a copy of your stamped visit form.

- **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 on the same day.

Getting help with the cost of prison visits will take several factors into account.

If you are away from home for more than 5 hours, you can also claim a light refreshment allowance called subsistence.

Further details are available from [Get Help with the Cost of Prison Visits](#) or [Families Outside](#).

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 following to get help with the cost of prison visits:

Get Help with the Cost of Prison Visits

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

Email: HelpwithPrisonVisits@justice.gov.uk

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

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