

Department of Prisons

The Department of Prisons of the Ministry of Justice is the central authority of the Estonian Prison Service, the task of which is to manage and develop the work of prisons. The Department is led by the Ministry of Justice Deputy Secretary-General for Prisons and consists of four divisions managed by the Chief Chaplain and Heads of Division that also act as Assistants to the Deputy Secretary-General. The Deputy Secretary General for Prisons issues orders to prisons in all relevant areas of activity.

The **Sentencing Enforcement Division** serves the primary task of ensuring safety in prisons. To that end, the Division monitors efficient guarding activities and security in prisons, ensuring firm order and consideration of all security risks in prisoner placement. In addition, the Division keeps records on prisoners and organizes the activity of armed units in prisons. The Head of Division gives orders to prisons in relation to security and enforcement of prison sentences.

The **Rehabilitation Division** makes sure that prisoners, having served their sentence, are as well-prepared as possible to re-enter society. Related activities involve education, social work, health care, drug prevention, and rehabilitation. The Division's second expansive area of activity involves probation supervision. The Head of Division gives orders to prisons in relation to social work, probation supervision, and provision of health care services.

The **Legal and Development Division** focuses on developing prison organization and staff: making sure prison work runs without a glitch (developing new relevant legislation if necessary), arranging staff recruitment and training, resolving issues related to prison budgets, and handling international cooperation and communication as well as developing minimum-security imprisonment (open prison). The Head of Division gives orders to prisons in relation to finances and the work of the economics and general affairs department.

The **Internal Control Division** ensures the Prison Service's credibility, making sure that only people that are a perfect fit for their position are employed at the Service. The Division also makes sure that prison staff refrains from violations of law: background checks are run on employment candidates and people wishing to commence studies in the specialty of Prison Officer. Furthermore, the Division processes offences, exercising supervision over prisons and carrying out surveillance and criminal proceedings in prison as well as collection and analysis of information. The Head of Division gives orders to prisons in relation to surveillance, protection of state secrets and classified foreign information, and investigative activities.

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