

SPSO decision report

Case: 201301838, Scottish Prison Service
Sector: scottish government and devolved administration
Subject: earnings
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C, who is a prisoner, complained because he said the prison were unfairly operating the prisoner wage earning policy in relation to passmen positions (which generally involve cleaning duties). The policy applies to all public prisons and sets out the wage levels prisoners should be paid, depending on their role and the skills required. In Mr C's case, he said that he had relevant qualifications and training but despite that, prisoners with no qualifications or training were paid the same amount as him, which was unfair.

In light of the evidence available, we did not uphold Mr C's complaint. When we investigated, the prison told us that staff assessed Mr C's work role and placed him at the wage band they felt was appropriate. His role involved general cleaning, including sweeping, mopping and emptying bins. In addition, they advised that there were a number of prisoners with passmen roles and their wage levels varied depending on the quality of their work, the application of their skills, the demand placed upon them and their levels of trust, their personal motivation and their ability to adhere to instructions.