HM Prison & Probation Service

Restriction Zones

A licence condition used to help protect victims and the public

This leaflet provides general information.

Your Victim Liaison Officer will explain the arrangements that are relevant to you.

My Victim Liaison Officer (VLO) is:

Name: _____

Contact number: _____



What is a restriction zone?



A restriction zone is a new, serious licence condition that requires an offender to remain within a specific area.

A licence condition is a requirement that an offender must comply with after they are released from prison. They are designed to manage risk and help protect victims and the public.

A restriction zone is different from an exclusion zone which prevents an offender from entering a specific area.

When can a restriction zone be used?

A restriction zone is one of the most serious conditions that can be added to an offender's licence. This means that there are stricter rules relating to when and how they can be applied.

Not all offenders will meet the criteria for a restriction zone. They are used for offenders who have committed serious offences, including sexual or violent offences, and controlling or coercive behaviour, and where victims are eligible for the Victim Contact Scheme (VCS).

They can only be used if probation assesses that no other licence conditions can manage the risk they have identified. In many cases, it may be more appropriate for an offender to be given an exclusion zone.

Most offenders that are subject to a restriction zone will be electronically monitored (tagged).

You can speak to your Victim Liaison Officer (VLO) about any concerns you have about the offender's release and share your views about measures that may help keep you safe. These views will be considered alongside all other relevant information when formal decisions are made about licence conditions.



What happens if an offender breaks a restriction zone?



If an offender breaches a licence condition, probation will assess the circumstances and determine the appropriate level of enforcement action required.

While this response is not always immediate, any breach is taken seriously and managed in accordance with the level of risk presented.

If you believe the offender has breached their licence conditions, including a restriction zone, please inform your VLO. Your VLO may not be able to respond immediately and does not provide an emergency service.

If you feel in immediate danger or fear for your safety, call the police on 999.

Probation has the option of recalling an offender to prison (or taking other enforcement action) if they break any of their licence conditions, including restriction zones.

Probation will decide if the nature of the breach is serious enough to send the offender back to prison. This only happens if it is decided that the offender can no longer be safely managed in the community.

It may be that the breach is dealt with through other measures, such as written warnings and/or additional licence conditions.

Your VLO will keep you up-to-date, and you can contact them if you have any concerns or questions.



How long does a restriction zone apply for?

You will be informed that the restriction zone remains in place through the annual contact letter from your VLO. Due to the seriousness of a restriction zone, it is unlikely to cover the whole licence period.

You will be told if probation is considering removing a restriction zone.

Before it is removed, you will be contacted by your VLO and given time to share your views and discuss other licence conditions, such as an exclusion zone. Probation must consider your views and put any agreed measures in place before removing the restriction zone.

A restriction zone may be replaced with an exclusion zone if the probation officer does not assess that the restriction zone is needed any more.

Support for victims

We understand that you may have concerns about an offender's release. You do not have to manage these concerns on your own. If you need support or would like to talk to someone, your Victim Liaison Officer can speak to you and answer any questions you might have.

They will be happy to talk to you in more detail about what a restriction zone is and how decisions are made. They can also help you find local services.

You can also contact national support services:

- **Victim Support – Offender Release Helpline:** 0808 168 9280
- **National Domestic Abuse Helpline:** 0808 200 0247
- **National Stalking Helpline:** 0808 802 0300
- **NSPCC Helpline:** 0808 800 5000
- **Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Line:** 0808 500 2222
- **Live Fear Free Helpline (Wales):** 0808 80 10 800



