



HM Prison &
Probation Service

National
Probation
Service



BAIL INFORMATION SERVICE



April 2020

What is a Bail Information Service?

The main purpose of a Bail Information Service is to provide sufficient and verified (*where possible*) information to assist the courts in making fully informed decisions about conditional bail.

It is HMPPS responsibility to provide information to the courts under the Offender Management Act 2007 and this includes a bail service.

Why is a Bail Service being Implemented now?

A Bail Information Service has been implemented nationally to assist those courts that remain open during the *Covid-19 pandemic*. It has been deemed **a priority service** that will assist in identifying eligible defendants who may be suitable for conditional bail.

What is the role of a Bail Officer?

A Bail Officer will assess the defendant and complete either an oral or written Bail Information Report. A bail officer can explore objections to bail and verify the suitability of potential bail conditions. The role of the NPS is **not** to recommend the imposition of bail but to provide and verify (when possible) information and/or possible conditions.

An additional part of the role can include a referral to Bail Accommodation services (BASS) provided by Nacro for accommodation if this has been deemed a barrier to receiving bail.

HMPPS will proactively target and provide a bail service to those individuals with 'protected characteristics' to ensure that vulnerable people (incl. those with mental health issues, homeless), women, BAME, and young adults are ensured a bail service.



Specific Duties:

- ✓ **Interview the defendant, assess risk to the public and eligibility for bail conditions;**
- ✓ **Liaison with the defendant's family, home owner, Domestic Abuse Units, Child Protection Services and/or Liaison and Diversion Teams and complete any referrals as required;**
- ✓ **Conduct referrals to Nacro BASS (or similar) if accommodation is required;**
- ✓ **A checking service with Home Office Immigration to confirm legal status of Foreign National Offenders (if requested).**
- ✓ **Complete a bail information report;**

Exclusion Criteria

- **Serving prisoners/ those who are recalled to custody.**
- **Those who pose an immediate risk or threat of serious harm to the public.**

Who will it serve?

This service will be undertaken proactively, where access to the defendant is possible, for Magistrates' and on request for Crown Courts. It can also be requested by the defence or CPS where they believe further information would be beneficial to the presiding Bench or Judge.

Turnaround Time

Where relevant information can be obtained on the day, bail information reports can be expected to be delivered in the following timeframes:

- **On average 30 minutes (for non-BASS) services.**
- **Up to 2 ½ hours - for any bail assessment requiring a BASS or other accommodation referral.**

Bail Conditions That Can Be Assessed

The Bail Officer will be able to consider the following conditions when assessing a suitable bail package.



Electronic Monitoring (EM) with GPS Tracking - An established, robust and disciplined means of monitoring defendants in the community.

- **Electronically monitored curfew** with or without GPS tracking – permission sought from main home occupier.
- **No contact conditions** – explore any potential or ongoing risk to witness and/or alleged victim.
- **Accommodation requirement** – specified address to ensure alleged victim is safeguarded.
- **BASS Nacro accommodation** and Bail support service
- **Specific Appointments** - To assess whether defendant should attend specified appointments (e.g. drug, mental health).
- **Exclusion Zone** (specific place, town centre) with or without location monitoring.
- **Regular reporting** to a local Police Station (daily or weekly), this should be applied with caution in the current operating environment.

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