



Ministry  
of Justice

# Alcohol Monitoring England and Wales

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Protecting and advancing the principles of justice

# When we use alcohol monitoring

## Community Sentence

&

## Licence

As a Community Order or Suspended Sentence Order  
(Community sentences)

### Alcohol Abstinence and Monitoring Requirement (AAMR)

- Offence or associate offence is alcohol related
- 18 and over
- Not alcohol dependent
- Ban on drinking alcohol for up to 120 days
- Any offence type
- Primarily punishment
- Non-compliance potential return to court for either:
  - Resentencing
  - Imprisonment

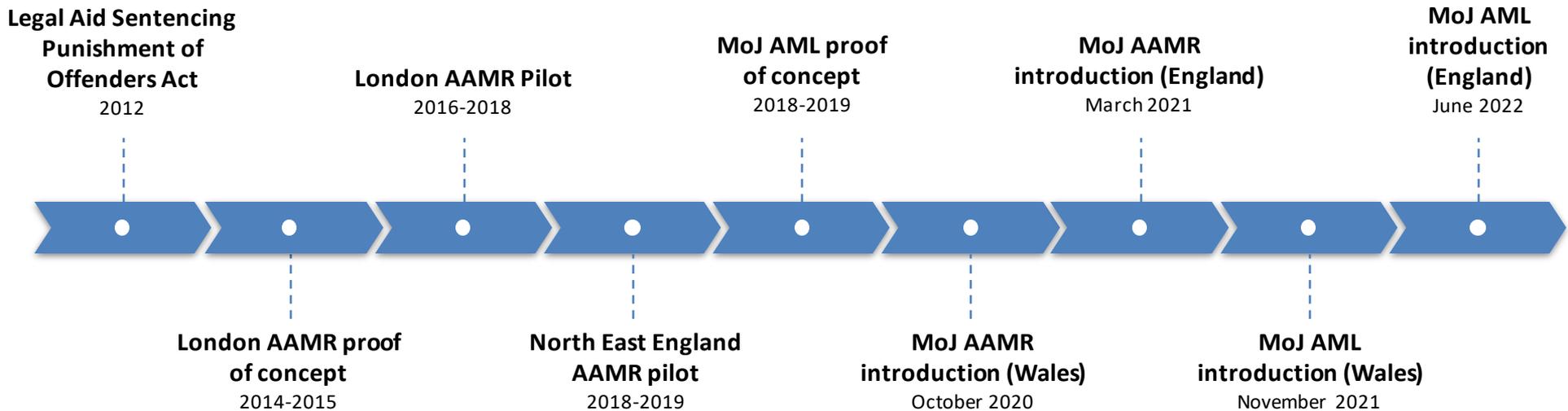
As an additional Licence Condition

### Alcohol Monitoring on Licence (AML)

- Alcohol misuse criminogenic need
- 18 and over
- Considered for history of alcohol misuse, dependency and following alcohol detox during sentence
- To reduce reoffending, support rehabilitation and reduce risk – not as a punishment
- Must be necessary and proportionate
- Any offence type
- Non-compliance may result in return to custody

# Timeline to introduce alcohol monitoring

**AAMR: Alcohol Abstinence and Monitoring Requirement**  
**AML: Alcohol Monitoring on Licence**



# Operational delivery of alcohol monitoring

1

Good practice to consider alcohol interventions to support monitoring

2

Compliance monitored using an alcohol tag

3

Supervised by Probation

## Community Sentence

Imposed at court:

- Probation assess offender using the Alcohol Use Disorder Identification Test (AUDIT) to check for alcohol dependence
  - May also require substance misuse assessment
- Recommend AAMR in Pre Sentence Report
- Good practise to consider additional requirements particularly in Domestic Abuse cases where alcohol misuse a trigger
- Sentencer (Judge or Magistrate) may impose AAMR without recommendation
- Field and monitoring services fit tags
- Probation receive daily non-compliance alerts directly
  - Should make contact with offender as soon as possible

## Licence

Recommended in preparation for release from prison:

- Offender assessed by Probation for history of alcohol misuse
  - Two licence conditions available:
    - Complete ban on drinking alcohol
    - Alcohol use controlled as set out by Probation
- Good practise to consider continuing interventions post release
- Must be reviewed every 3 months
- Field and monitoring services fit tags
- May have alcohol tag fitted at prison where sufficient risk
- Probation receive daily non-compliance alerts directly
  - Should make contact with offender as soon as possible
- Probation encouraged to discuss data from monitoring with offender

# AAMR – what we know

## Pilots

- Sentencers used AAMR from the outset
- Compliance with AAMR was high at 94% for the London and North East pilots
- Compliance with the alcohol ban was at a rate of 98% of days monitored i.e. without alcohol or a tamper.
- Offenders were generally optimistic about the requirement and felt that the AAMR had a positive impact on their lives, particularly around their health, wellbeing and offending behaviour.
- London evaluation showed that overall AAMR made no impact on arrest and charge rates (proxy for proven reoffending)

## Roll out (England & Wales)

- Sentencers appear to welcome AAMR
- Between 1 April 2021 to 28 February 2022 3,121 alcohol monitoring orders imposed from across England and Wales
- Compliance with the alcohol ban was at a rate of 97.2% of days monitored i.e. without alcohol or a tamper.

## Findings

- ✓ Improved relationships with family
- ✓ Better understanding of alcohol use and need
- ✓ Reports of sustained reduction in alcohol use
- ✓ Flexibility to fit tag at prison / move Wireless Base Station/ suitable for No Fixed Abode
- ✗ The size of the alcohol tag and nickel back plate
- ✗ Some offenders were alcohol dependent and were resentenced

Unpublished findings – verbal only

## AML – what we know

### Proof of concept

Welcomed by Probation who perceived that AML can:

- support reducing reoffending
- enhance offender management
- mitigate the 'cliff edge' when leaving Approved Premises, as well as custody
- provide evidence and assurance in matters of safeguarding
- support compliance with other licence conditions
- help to rebuild trust in relationship with the offender

### AML roll out

- Wales only plus three women's prisons
- Numbers lower than expected
- Successful tagging at the prison

## Probation anecdotes

“

*I think the tag is an excellent addition to the tools we have at our disposal to protect the public and support offenders to achieve positive changes to their lives.*

“

*The tag will have a wonderful impact because when we ask offenders, for whom we know alcohol is a risk factor, what they are drinking they can tell us 'nothing'. We might know that's not true, but we can't guess the scale of the problem.*

“

*The tag forces people to be honest. That honesty opens-up conversations that we wouldn't ordinarily be able to have.*

## AML Roll out to England begins in June 2022



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# Annex

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# AAMR Case studies

## An offender with a history of violent offences

### Case context

The offender had been convicted of common assault and battery. Having been arrested whilst intoxicated, the offender had no recollection of the incident and hadn't realised they were in a police cell until they woke up the next morning.

With previous convictions of ABH and driving whilst disqualified, the court imposed a Suspended Sentence Order for 12 months with a 60 day AAMR and a 20 day RAR.

### Outcomes

The offender reacted positively to the Suspended Sentence Order and had a sober day rate of 100%, having abstained from alcohol throughout the order.

The offender stated that wearing an alcohol tag didn't have any negative impacts on their life during the requirement and stated "I forget the tag was there". They were able to continue with employment at a car garage and focus their efforts on continuing to build family relationships.

The offender completed their AAMR on 10 January and stated they had continued to abstain from alcohol 6 weeks after the alcohol tag was removed.



Improved relationships



Helped the offender to continue to be a constructive member of the community



Allowed the offender to continue working

# AAMR Case studies

## An example of where AAMR can positively impact the offender and their family

### Case context

The offender was convicted of a public order offence & threatening behaviour, with previous offences relating to domestic violence and racially aggravated harassment.

The court imposed a 12 month Suspended Sentence Order with a 70 day AAMR, 20 day RAR and 120 hours of unpaid work.

### Outcomes

The offender reported that they found the instant ban after court to be a good deterrent which allowed them to reflect on their alcohol use and subsequent behaviour at the start of the requirement.

There was an incident during their requirement regarding a verbal altercation with their partner but the alcohol tag confirmed the offender had not consumed any alcohol. This enabled the Probation Practitioner to have a more informed conversation with the offender because the Probation Practitioner could be certain that their claim of being sober during the incident was honest.

The offender stated the alcohol tag gave them the opportunity to prove to themselves that they could abstain from alcohol and they were proud to have successfully done so throughout their requirement.

The alcohol tag also had a positive impact on the offender's family as it influenced their partner (who was a heavy drinker) to reduce their alcohol consumption during and after the requirement.



Deterrent for offenders



More informed conversations between offenders and Probation Practitioners



The alcohol tag made a positive impact on the offender's family



# AAMR Case studies

## An example of an offender gaining employment during their AAMR

### Case context

The offender had a large number of previous offences and was convicted of aggressive behaviour. The court imposed a 12 month Suspended Sentence Order alongside a 60 day AAMR, 10 day RAR and Thinking Skills Programme.

### Outcomes

The offender completed their 60 day AAMR with a compliance rate of 100%.

The offender stated being on the alcohol tag made him more conscious of his relationship with alcohol because he knew that the alcohol tag monitored the levels of alcohol in their system which worked as a deterrent.

Being on the alcohol tag enabled the offender to abstain from drinking and subsequently gain employment during the requirement.

Since completing their AAMR, the offender states they have remained sober. When they have had an urge to drink alcohol, the offender has taken support from a friend and consciously avoided drinking habits.



Offender gained employment



The alcohol tag acted as a deterrent



Led the offender to think about the longer term support required

## AAMR Case studies

### An offender with a history of domestic violence and binge drinking

#### Case context

The offender reported a long standing issue with alcohol following the death of a friend and worsening following his discharge from the Armed Forces. Alcohol use has been a feature of much of their offending, either offending under the influence, or acquisitive offending to obtain finances for alcohol.

The offender's pattern of alcohol consumption tends to be long periods of binge drinking that can last for weeks at a time. He is able to abstain for significant periods between binges, however relapses at times of emotional pressure.

The index offences that lead to the AAMR order being imposed are common assault criminal damage (domestic abuse).

He was sentenced to a 24 month Community Order with requirements to attend the Building Better Relationships programme, an 8 week curfew, a Rehabilitation Activity Requirement of 15 days and a 90 day AAMR.

#### Outcomes

The offender is keen to promote the effectiveness of the AAMR. He has stated 'this tag has saved my life'. They self reported that alcohol abstinence gave them a foundation to engage with intervention and reduce their anxiety. This directly improved their emotional wellbeing and resulted in a less chaotic lifestyle.

The offender also reported their hard work and abstinence was being evidenced during supervision sessions which reinforced good behaviour and improved motivation to abstain.

The Probation Practitioner and offender are now exploring employment options, with referrals being made to specialist ex-forces agencies.



Positively reinforced good behaviours



Helped break the cycle of repeated behaviour caused by alcohol



Helped the offender to be a constructive member of the community

## AAMR: Published findings

Prior to the introduction of the Alcohol Abstinence and Monitoring Requirement (AAMR), as required by the legislation, the department supported two pilots testing the option for community orders and suspended sentence orders, both pilots undertook to evaluate the requirement and publish their findings, which can be found at the following links:

[https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/aamr\\_final\\_impact\\_report\\_100521.pdf](https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/aamr_final_impact_report_100521.pdf)

[https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/aamr\\_final\\_process\\_performance\\_y2\\_report\\_final.pdf](https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/aamr_final_process_performance_y2_report_final.pdf)

[https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/annex\\_1\\_-\\_aamr\\_early\\_impact\\_report\\_210417.pdf](https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/annex_1_-_aamr_early_impact_report_210417.pdf)

[https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/aamr\\_final.pdf](https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/aamr_final.pdf)

<https://www.northyorkshire-pfcc.gov.uk/content/uploads/2020/01/Evaluation-of-the-AAMR-tagging-pilot.pdf>

We have published statistics regarding take up and compliance with AAMR and will continue to do so, these can be found at the following links:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1060084/Alcohol\\_Monitoring\\_Statistics.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1060084/Alcohol_Monitoring_Statistics.pdf)

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1042107/Ad\\_Hoc\\_Alcohol\\_Monitoring\\_Statistics.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1042107/Ad_Hoc_Alcohol_Monitoring_Statistics.pdf)