

State probation Service of Latvia (SPS) imposed changes on its work as soon as state of emergency in Latvia was declared in preventing COVID-19 spread. In order to provide safety for probation officers and clients a detailed instruction is issued which deals with communication with clients and organizing everyday work.

Case managers are ordered to identify all clients who were allowed to leave country or about whom is available information about visits abroad.

For clients who returned from travel abroad a self-isolation time for 14 days is required, in accordance with State health service prescriptions. Those clients who already have received invitation to visit office of SPS, the face-to-face meeting is replaced by phone call (audio or video call). All meetings on-site are postponed at least till 14.04.2020. Community service for those clients is suspended and clients and their employer are informed accordingly.

For other clients the time of probation visits have to be agreed beforehand. Face-to-face meetings occur only with high or medium risk violent offenders and sex offenders. All other meetings are replaced by telephone or video calls.

During the face-to-face conversation of probation officers with clients physical distancing (at least 2 meters) and other measures of safety (e.g. avoiding physical contact, use of masks and gloves) have to be observed.

Authorisations to leave country are dealt with as usual, but authorisation is complemented with warning about the health-related risks.

On-site visits to client homes are suspended. If the community service is impossible due to state of emergency, the enforcement of the sentence is suspended till further notice from probation.

All probation programmes as well as programme conducted in correctional facilities are suspended.

Parole and pre-sentence reports are issued as usual, taking into account the restrictions imposed on physical meetings with convicts in correctional facilities.

In organizing mediation safety measures are provided for all involved parts.

Probation employees are advised to work from homes and avoid direct social contact when possible. The staff is informed on daily basis about current situation in limiting the spread of COVID-19 and regulations concerning actual work.