

The emergency working situation and probation supervision

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Working from home

The 7th week of remote work is about to begin. By now, a certain routine working from home has become a habit. Very clear guidelines were provided for the functioning of probation supervision quite early in the crisis. Of course, such a drastic change in everyday work order requires time to think things through, as in how work could be most effective with limited resources and options, while ensuring that the essential work of probation supervision would not come to a halt. In the first days, it was difficult to imagine how working from home would function and it is somewhat more difficult to keep the focus on work matters. The fact that work could not stop and that often immediate action was required helped to get the hang of things very quickly. During the emergency situation, registrations with probationers took place via telephone, which also meant that the first task of officers was to notify probationers of the changed living arrangement to ensure that no one would risk the health of themselves or others by coming to the Probation Supervision Department.

Thanks to the opportunities of the e-state, nearly everything is possible: documents can be digitally signed and forwarded via email and substantive work with people can be successfully carried out by telephone. Even court sessions can be held via video. Only home visits and inspection of additional obligations, for instance random checks to discover possible use of narcotics, have been suspended. However, there is still preparedness to check on persons in the event of clear indication or certain suspicion of intoxication.

Conversations by phone

Telephone conversations with probationers have gone smoothly and without problems. The seriousness of the situation is mostly understood and the conversations take place exactly as they would have gone in face-to-face meetings. A few persons have admitted that they feel more comfortable communicating with the officer directly and would very much welcome the opportunity to arrange an actual meeting.

The benefits

After a quick settlement period, it can be said that the biggest benefits of working from home are saving time on driving to work and home, and overall concentration has improved thanks to the mere fact that there are less people in the building. However, focus on work is, for instance, distracted by pets that demand attention, as well as children studying at home in the case of families with children. The long isolation has also made people miss face-to-face communication, as well as their colleagues and having lunch together.