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Key statistics: What happened to people serving an Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP) sentence[1]- Update January 2024

People serving an IPP in prison[2].

⬇ Prison population down but declining at a slow pace

2,614 people are still in prison. This includes those that are unreleased and those that have been recalled.
The number of people serving an IPP sentence in prison has decreased but remains significant.
Although the IPP prison population is gradually declining, the reduction is minimal. Over the past four quarters, the rate of decrease has remained consistently low, averaging 2%.

⬇ First releases down and almost all people serving IPP who have never been released have now served beyond their tariff

The number of those serving an IPP who have never been released has declined**. Of the 1,045 individuals who have never been released, 99% are now over tariff[3],** with only 8 remaining pre-tariff and 2 where the tariff has not been recorded.

⬇ People over tariff down but proportion who have served 10 years over tariff remains significant

There are currently **1,035 people serving an IPP sentence beyond their tariff**. While this number has decreased since last quarter, **those who are 10 or more years over tariff now make up 67% of those never-released serving an IPP sentence.**
Of the 695 individuals who have served 10 to 19 years beyond their tariff:

- 179 (26%) had a tariff of less than 2 years
- 393 (57%) had a tariff of 2–4 years
- 110 (16%) had a tariff of 4–6 years
- 13 (2%) had a tariff of 6–10 years

⬇ People on recall down

1,569 people in prison have been recalled.
There were 149 people recalled over this quarter this is a 16% decrease compared with the last quarter. The average time that someone recalled on an IPP spends in prison is 26 months, this is a 2 month increase since the last quarter.

Self-harm and deaths in prison

⬇ Suicides down, but the rate of suicides by those serving IPP is higher than the overall prison population

94 people have taken their own lives while in prison.
In 2024, four people serving an IPP sentence died by suicide. In 2024 IPP suicides accounted for 4% of all suicides in prison. This is significant, as people serving IPP in prison made up only 1% of the overall prison population. The highest recorded number of suicides among people serving IPP in prison in a single year was nine, which occurred in 2023.

⬆ Self-harm up, and double that of those on other sentences

Self-harm incidents up in 2023 compared to 2022.
There were 1,866 incidents of self-harm by unreleased people serving IPP in 2023. An increase of 11% from 2022. A major weakness in this information is that it does not include those who are in prison on recall. The IPP self-harm rate remains steadily around double the self-harm rate of those on any other sentence.

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[1] The final IPP sentence was issued in 2012.
[2] Quarterly figures from September – December 2024 quarter. Population as of 31st December 2024. Data taken from Offender Management Statistics Quarterly and Safety in Custody statistics.
[3] Tariff refers to the minimum time people must serve before being eligible to apply for parole.