# Unwanted Prisoner Contact Service - March 2024

## 1.Background?

The **Unwanted Prisoner Contact (formerly Victims Helpline)** is anational service that prevents victims, or any member of the public, receiving unwanted contact from prisoners.

This is especially important if the victim is vulnerable or subject to controlling or coercive behaviour, exploitation, harassment, or intimidation.

Preventing contact, whether direct or through a third party, is critical in stopping further harm or trauma, maintaining confidence, and supporting prosecutions. Professionals must be alert to the determination of some prisoners to gain contact with victims or others. Victims may decline this service and maintain some form of contact for many reasons and the prisoner may continue to intimidate, threaten and control the victim.

## 2.Who can use this service?

The service is available to any member of the public, including all victims of crime, and survivors of domestic abuse who want to STOP contact from prisoners. This includes police, probation, family and friends of the victim and 3rd party organisations working on behalf of the victim.

The prison will consider the request in line with four pathways, whether the victim is aware of the application or not.

Pathway 1: **Contact is Identified as Victim of a Prisoner’s Offence**

Pathway 2: **No Contact Request is Made (Directly)**

Pathway 3: **No Contact Request is Made (Indirectly/By Third Party and with subject’s consent)**

Pathway 4: **Information/Intelligence/Risk Indicates Restriction is Necessary and Proportionate**

(“Contact of Concern”) this involves an assessment of necessity and proportionality.

## 3.What contact can be stopped?

This includes

* + - stopping unwanted letters,
		- blocking phone calls,
		- texts or
		- messages from a prisoner

The prison must inform prisoners when a no-contact request has been put in place, and this includes the name of who they are restricted from contacting.

## 4.How do you access the service?

Email to unwantedprisonercontact@justices.gov.uk

Follow this link to complete an online form or use the below QR code. [Complete an online form.](https://gov.uk/stop-prisoner-contact)



Or Telephone 0300 060 6699

Monday to Friday

9am to 4pm

## 5.What happens if contact continues?

Using the same request form provide information as to how the contact is continuing. The prisoner may be using a third party, a fellow prisoner, an illegal mobile phone etc. The prison will investigate any breaches. It should also be considered whether a breach of a court order has occurred or a crime committed, such as harassment, witness intimidation, coercive or controlling behaviour.

Victims at risk of intimidation and control who decline this service or continue contact should be offered support, all offences investigated and consideration of a multi-agency risk management meeting.

## 6.Multi-agency working

If there are complications with blocking the telephone number or address eg legitimate contact with another person, then the prison will work with parties to try and reach a resolution, the application should still be made.

Don’t assume another person has made this request. Agencies should work together to protect victims of crime particularly victims of domestic abuse.

The victim may need support to report that contact is continuing and feel let down and unprotected.

Where a victim or witness may lack capacity to decide regarding this service then guidance in respect of the Mental Capacity Act and best interest decisions should be followed.

Coercion can impact on a person’s decision making ability.

## 6.Resources

[West Yorkshire Police](https://www.westyorkshire.police.uk/advice/unwanted-prisoner-contact-service) -Unwanted Prisoner Contact Process and video

[Thousands-of-survivors-to-be-protected-from-prison-abusers](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/thousands-of-survivors-to-be-protected-from-prison-abusers)

[Unwanted Prisoner Contact](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Funwanted-prisoner-contact.form.service.justice.gov.uk%2F&data=05%7C02%7Csally.fletcher%40calderdale.gov.uk%7Cab160310395241ae12cd08ddcb9f4560%7C07162ea21b0e498fbb555b41fd4dce4f%7C1%7C0%7C638890607105083546%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=D6z8jN98fs0GI0rFzqaRV8zE7gK5r9sI7bNqucSjx%2FM%3D&reserved=0)

[Mental Capacity Act guidance](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5f6cc6138fa8f541f6763295/Mental-capacity-act-code-of-practice.pdf)