



HM Prison & Probation Service

OFFICIAL

Probation Reform Programme: Advice to Court Workstream Prepare a Case for Sentence Tool Staff FAQ November 2021

Probation Reform Programme: Advice to Court workstream background

We are improving local and national court liaison and engagement so that the judiciary are:

- Aware of the range of effective interventions being delivered or commissioned by probation
- Assured of the quality and effectiveness of those services
- Confident about probation services and the delivery of community sentences

Improving the quality of our advice to court will ensure that our proposals target specific interventions and treatment requirements, supporting reduced reoffending and promoting judicial confidence.

Prepare a Case for Sentence tool Staff FAQ

These FAQ provide staff with key information about the new Prepare a Case for Sentence tool.

If your role is in scope to adopt this service, your Regional Probation Director will keep you informed about when it will be available to you. They will also ensure that you have the appropriate learning and development and support resources to support a smooth and successful transition.

If you have a question that isn't addressed in this document, please speak with your manager in the first instance.

Service overview

Q. What is the Prepare a Case for Sentence tool?

A. Prepare a Case for Sentence is a new digital tool for probation practitioners and administrators in magistrates' courts.

This tool provides an overview of all defendants attending court on a given day, including their probation status and probation record, as well as information about any current orders, including offender manager details, requirements and attendance information.

By providing this information in a more accessible and usable format, staff will be able to provide better advice to the court with less effort and minimise avoidable adjournments.

Q. What is the key feature of the tool?

A. The tool automatically identifies if a defendant has an existing probation record and their probation status – current, previously known, or no record.

If a defendant is known to probation, the tool links the probation record to the case and displays key information from NDelius and Libra, covering three key areas: case summary, probation record and risk register.

If the tool finds the defendant's details match multiple NDelius records, or the details only partially match against an NDelius record, it presents the user with possible records and allows them to review and select the right record to link to the case.

Q. What are the other features of the tool?

A. Other features include:

- Seven (7) working days of court listing information, including offence summary, listing and defendant details from the police
- Current and previous order information is displayed in the service, including start and end dates, requirements, licence and PSS conditions, offender manager contact details, details of the last PSR and OASys assessment and attendance information
- Defendants in breach of an order flagged on the case list and the ability to view breach notes and documents
- Active and inactive risks for a defendant, including notes
- Direct link to a defendant's nDelius contact log
- Ability to switch between case lists at different courts
- Ability to filter case lists by probation status, courtroom and session
- Same login details as nDelius username and password

Q. How often are case lists updated?

A. A case list first appears seven (7) working days in advance. The list is first updated 48 hours before the cases are due to be heard. The list is then updated twice on the day, once at about 8:30am and again at about 9:30am, to include any overnight cases.

The case lists highlight recently added and removed cases in separate tabs, so users can easily see any changes to the list since the last update.

Staff benefits

Q. What are the main benefits for court staff?

A. The main benefits for staff include:

- Quick identification of potential probation cases of interest
- Time saved identifying defendants known to probation and gathering case information, such as offender manager details and current order information
- A significant reduction in the number of clicks, screens and systems staff have to move between when preparing cases

Trial and rollout

Q. Where is the tool being trialled?

- A. The Prepare a Case for Sentence tool was trialled and adopted in Greater Manchester and Kent in August 2021 and September 2021.

The tool is being trialled in the North East region in November 2021; regional court lead / Senior Probation Officer briefings will commence in all regions from November 2022, with the aim of Senior Probation Officers and regional operational leadership teams leading each region's rollout from December 2022.

We anticipate that all court staff in all 11 regions and Wales will have adopted the tool by June 2022.

Q. How will I find out about my region's trial or adoption of the Prepare a Case for Sentence tool?

- A. Your regional operational leadership team is responsible for providing you with the operational communication to support your successful adoption of this new tool. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak with your manager or team leader in the first instance.

Q. What learning and support resources will be available to court staff to support their successful adoption of this new service?

- A. You will be provided with core information about the new Prepare a Case for Sentence tool by your Senior Probation Officer, with additional support resources available as required.