



THE NORWEGIAN CORRECTIONAL SERVICE

Fact sheet about especially high security level

- A department with an especially high security level was first established upon the adoption of the Execution of Sentences Act on 1 March 2002.
- Especially high security is a higher level of security than what is found in a high security prison and it is the highest level of security for prisoners in custody on remand or serving a sentence in Norway.
- Telemark Prison Skien Unit has a department with an especially high security level.
- Especially high security is seldom used: A total of 13 prisoners have been committed to an especially high security level since 2002. At the moment 3 persons are imprisoned there.
- A department with an especially high security level was not in use in the period from March 2008 to July 2011. Since then, an especially high security level has been used for 7 different people.
- The length of time spent by prisoners in a department with an especially high security level has varied from 1 month, to 2 years (with the exception of the person convicted in connection with the 22 July case).
- The prisoners who have been in the department have either been charged with/sentenced for aggravated drug crimes or murder.

Conditions for committal to a department with an especially high security level

Section 10, paragraph two of the Execution of Sentences Act states that a department in a prison that has a high security level may be converted to an especially high security level.

Convicted prisoners and prisoners remanded in custody who are considered to represent a high risk of escape, risk of receiving outside assistance to escape, risk of taking hostages or risk of committing new, very serious crimes, may be placed in a department with an especially high security level, cf. Section 11 of the Execution of Sentences Act.

Additional provisions relating to committal to a department with an especially high security level have been included in Chapter 6 of the Regulations to the Execution of Sentences Act.

Decision-making authority and duration

The regional level of the Norwegian Correctional Service hands down decisions regarding committal to a department with an especially high security level for up to 6 months at a time. The length of time spent in the department may continue without interruption if the regional level upholds the decision after a renewed assessment. Such decisions may be appealed to the Directorate of Norwegian Correctional Service.

Interaction with other prisoners

Prisoners in a department with an especially high security level shall not interact with

prisoners from other departments. However, measures to prevent isolation, such as restricted togetherness with prisoners from other departments, may be considered in individual cases.

A decision regarding whether multiple prisoners in a department with an especially high security level shall be permitted to interact with one another must be made based on, among other things, police information and other information about the prisoners that the Norwegian Correctional Service has received.

Work, training, programmes or other initiatives

Restrictions on interaction between prisoners shall be compensated through expanded contact with staff and adequate work, training and other activities and leisure options.

Health services

Prisoners receive regular medical supervision from a doctor. The general rule is that all medical supervision and treatment shall be carried out in the department with an especially high security level.

Visits

Visits to prisoners in a department with an especially high security level must be approved in advance by the head of the prison. As a general rule, visits will take place with a glass wall between the prisoner and visitor and will be monitored or a member of staff shall be in the same room. The prison can ease up on these control measures after prior consent is granted at regional level. All conversations must be in Norwegian or English or a language understood by the staff member who is monitoring the conversation.

The Norwegian Correctional Service may refuse visits if there exists any reason to assume that the visit will be misused for planning or committing a criminal act, evading execution of the sentence or acts that may disturb peace, order and security, cf. Section 31 of the Execution of Sentences Act.

Mail

Mail to and from prisoners shall be checked using fluoroscopy or similar methods and opened and read before it is delivered or sent. All or part of this mail can be confiscated. The same controls may be conducted for mail that prisoners have already received. Correspondence shall take place in Norwegian or English or a language understood by the staff member.

The Norwegian Correctional Service can refuse to deliver or send mail to or from prisoners if the mail in question contains information concerning the planning or committing of a criminal act, evading execution of the sentence, or acts that will disturb peace, order and security, cf. Section 30 of the Execution of Sentences Act.

Telephone calls

All telephone calls shall be approved in advance at local level and must be in Norwegian or English or a language understood by the staff member conducting the control.

All telephone calls to and from prisoners shall be fully monitored. However, this does not apply to telephone calls with the prisoner's public defence lawyer or a government representative, including diplomatic and/or consular representatives.

The Directorate of Norwegian Correctional Service, January 5, 2022