



PSA Submission

Parole (Mandatory Completion of Rehabilitative Programmes) Amendment Bill

April 2024

PSA submission to the Justice Select Committee on the Parole (Mandatory Completion of Rehabilitative Programmes) Amendment Bill

About the PSA

The New Zealand Public Service Association Te Pūkenga Here Tikanga Mahi (the PSA) is the largest trade union in New Zealand with over 95,000 members. We are a democratic organisation representing members in the public service, the wider public services (including Te Whatu Ora and other crown agents, and other crown entities), state owned enterprises, local government, tertiary education institutions and non-governmental organisations working in the health, social services and community sectors.

The PSA has been advocating for strong, innovative and effective public and community services since our establishment in 1913. People working in public and community services join the PSA to negotiate their terms of employment collectively, to have a voice within their workplace and to have an independent public voice on the quality of public and community services and how they're delivered.

The PSA is an affiliate of the New Zealand Council of Trade Unions Te Kauae Kaimahi (CTU), Public Services International (PSI) and Uni Global.

PSA in the Department of Corrections Ara Poutama Aotearoa

The PSA is the largest union within the Department of Corrections Ara Poutama Aotearoa; representing more than 4200 PSA members; including psychologists, probation officers, case managers, programme facilitators, reintegration co-ordinators, corrections officers, instructors, social workers, counsellors, education tutors, employment and training consultants, bail support

officers, operations advisors, policy analysts, administration staff, resident supervisors, executive officers, practise leaders, service managers, security advisors, pou arahi, senior advisors, learning and development, hospital guards, community work supervisors and many more positions.

Department of Corrections Ara Poutama Aotearoa is a large core public service agency, with approximately 10,000 staff at any one time, operating the more than 150 Community Corrections sites, 18 prisons and multiple auxiliary functions such as Electronic Monitoring and Residences.

We also have members who work for community organisations providing rehabilitation and other services contracted and funded by Corrections.

PSA recommendations to the Committee

We strongly support all people in prisons being able to access the rehabilitative programmes they need and are entitled to, to reduce their risk to others. We do not support this bill as simply legislating for completion of programmes to be a requirement before being able to access parole will have many unintended side effects for our members and the rehabilitation itself. It will hamper the existing and effective work by programme facilitators, case managers, Parole Board staff, psychologists, and probation officers, and effectively bar many people from accessing parole and result in extended incarceration. This is unjust.

There has been no commitment signalled by government to provide the funding or increasing the capacity of programme facilitators, case managers, psychologists and community corrections staff, or private and community providers to provide sufficient rehabilitation programmes to make this a reality. In the absence of this bill being part of a larger and well thought through plan for reform, we do not support it and believe its impacts would be perverse and negative.

- We strongly recommend that the Committee report back that the House should not progress this Bill unless there is a commitment to increasing funding and capability to the level needed for the Bill to have a positive effect on access to rehabilitation.

For further information, please contact:

Kirsten Windelov
Senior Advisor Policy and Strategy
New Zealand Public Service Association
PO Box 3817
Wellington 6140
Phone: 027 213 7184
Email: kirsten.windelov@psa.org.nz