



British High Commission Singapore

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Information Pack for British Nationals detained or imprisoned in Singapore

British High Commission Singapore

October 2021

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Chapter 1: Key Points

Overview

If you are a British national and are arrested or detained in another country, consular staff will do what they can to help you, but they cannot interfere with the local justice system, get you out of jail, or pay for services such as a lawyer. Information about who we can help, including the circumstances in which we can assist dual nationals, is available at: [Support for British Nationals Abroad](#).

This detention information pack is designed to give you, and your family and friends, information about the local system in Singapore and who can help. A printed copy is provided to those in prison or in custody, and [an online version is available as well](#).

We welcome feedback to improve the information we provide.

Contacting us

If you are arrested or detained in another country:

- **You can ask the authorities to contact the British High Commission if this is what you wish. However, under Singapore law, there is no obligation for them to take action while you are detained. They may do this once you are released.**
- **Friends or family can also contact the local British High Commission or the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) in London on +44 (0)20 7008 5000.**

The police will notify us if you request it; in most cases, they will do this once you are released on bail. If you are sentenced to prison, the prison authorities will contact us whether you request it or not.

Who we are

Consular staff work in the FCDO in London and in British Embassies, High Commissions and Consulates overseas.

The British High Commission in Singapore is at:

100 Tanglin Road
Singapore 247919

Your main point of contact is the Consular Section. Our 24-hour consular number is **(65) 6424 4200**.

You can also contact us by phone 24/7 for help or advice from anywhere in the world by calling the FCDO on 0207 008 5000.

What we can do

The FCDO can offer you impartial and non-judgemental help. Once notified of your arrest or detention, consular staff will aim to contact you as soon as possible so that we can assess how we can help you. We then aim to help according to your individual circumstances and local conditions. Our priority is to help those British nationals overseas that need it the most.

In Singapore, notification by the authorities to the British High Commission normally takes place a few days after you're released on police bail, and only if you request that we be notified.

Once we are notified, we will aim to contact you as soon as possible.

We can also:

- > provide a [list of local English-speaking lawyers](#), provide general information about the country, detention conditions, and the local legal system (including if legal aid is available)
- > provide general information about the local prison or remand system, including visiting arrangements, mail and censorship, privileges, and welfare services
- > keep in regular contact with you, either by visiting or by telephone/letter. The frequency of contact will depend on local conditions and your personal circumstances
- > tell the police or prison doctor, with your permission, about any medical or dental problems including medication
- > put you, or your family, in touch with a prisoners' welfare charity called [Prisoners Abroad](#)
- > in some circumstances we may be able to help take up complaints with the police or prison authorities about ill treatment, personal safety, or discrimination, if you are not treated in line with internationally recognised standards

What we can't do

- > get you out of prison or detention
- > help you get special treatment
- > offer legal advice, start legal proceedings or investigate a crime
- > pay for any costs as a result of being arrested
- > forward you packages sent by friends or family
- > prevent authorities from deporting you after release

First Steps

Can you / will you tell my family?

If you want us to, we can tell your family or friends that you have been detained and can provide them with information about how to contact you in prison or detention. With your consent, we can also keep them updated on your well-being.

If you are not sure about informing your family, we can help you consider the impact that not doing so might have. For example, it may cause them distress if they do not know where you are, or cannot contact you. It can also be a disadvantage to you if you need someone to send you money or act on your behalf while you are detained.

Will the UK Police be informed?

If you are accused of certain serious offences, such as sexual assault or drugs trafficking, we are obliged to share information about your arrest with UK police. It is therefore possible that information about this may appear if a Criminal Records Bureau check were carried out by a prospective employer. There may be other circumstances in which information about you may need to be shared by ourselves or authorities in Singapore.

Do I need a lawyer? / How can I find a lawyer?

Although we cannot give legal advice, start legal proceedings, or investigate a crime, we can offer basic information about the local legal system, including whether a legal aid scheme is available. We can give you a list of local English-speaking lawyers is attached to this pack (see also [what kind of legal assistance is available?](#)). You will want to consider the benefits of local legal representation and to discuss all the costs beforehand with the legal representative. In no circumstances can we pay your legal or interpretation costs.

Can you get me out?

We cannot get you out of prison or detention, nor can we get special treatment for you because you are British. However, if you are not treated in line with internationally accepted standards, we will consider whether to approach local authorities. This may include if your trial does not follow internationally-recognised standards for fair trial or is unreasonably delayed compared to local cases.

Who else can help me?

We can put you, or your family, in touch with Prisoners Abroad, a UK charity which supports British citizens detained overseas and their families:

www.prisonersabroad.org.uk

Chapter 2: Detention conditions in Singapore

Visits – friends and family

Can my family and friends visit me? How can I arrange a visit?

Family members are allowed to visit. An appointment to visit must be done online through www.sps.gov.sg - look under 'visit matters'.

Your family must bring a document to show proof of relationship to you during their first visit:

- Parents Your birth certificate stating both parents' names
- Siblings Birth certificates for you and your siblings to show that one or both parents' names are the same
- Spouse Marriage certificate
- Child Birth certificate showing your name as one of the parents

Documents in a foreign language must be translated into English.

If needed, your family can [order a copy of a birth or marriage certificate](#) on GOV.UK.

For each visit, family members must bring their passport as proof of identification. They should follow a dress code – in general, covered legs and covered shoulders.

If you're on remand: you're allowed 4 visits per week, maximum of 2 face-to-face visits/week.

If serving sentence: you're allowed 2 visits per month, maximum of 1 face-to-face visit/month.

There are two types of visits: face-to-face (you and your family are in the same room, with a glass partition between you) and tele-visit (this is similar to Skype or Zoom video calls, but visiting family must be at a designated visit centre in Singapore).

What can visitors expect?

For face-to-face visits, you and your family are in a small room with a glass partition between you. This lasts for 20 minutes.

For tele-visits, your family will be in a designated visit centre in Singapore where a camera in a small room is set up. You'll speak to each other on a video screen. Your family will need to be in Singapore for this – it isn't available if they're in the UK or overseas. Tele-visits last for 30 minutes.

Visitors go through a screening process, so they should be at the visit centre at least 15 minutes before the scheduled booking.

Important to note re: Covid-19: Face-to-face visits and tele-visits were available before the pandemic. They are suspended for foreigners due to border restrictions as at September 2021. Visit [Singapore Travel Advice](#) for any changes to entry restrictions.

What can visitors bring?

Visitors can bring in some books or magazines for you (up to 3 in total), but these must be left at the visit centre reception area. These materials will be screened. It will take at least 2 weeks before the materials are handed to you.

Visits – Consular staff

Consular staff in Singapore normally visit once every six months and if needed. If there's an urgent issue you'd like to discuss with us, ask your officer-in-charge or supervisor to get a message to us. You'll need to complete a form for this. Follow up with them until they confirm that the request has been sent – this is done via fax. We'll aim to visit or speak with you as soon as we receive your request.

The prison authorities have allowed phone calls from us in place of in-person visits during the pandemic.

You can also write to us for non-urgent matters:

Consular Section
British High Commission
100 Tanglin Road, Singapore 247919

Emergency trips outside of prison

It is possible to make an application for an emergency trip if an urgent situation arises (eg. funerals and critical illness of a prisoner's next-of-kin). This only applies to inmates with family in Singapore. Final decision rests with the prison authorities.

Police custody and initial arrival at prison

Arrival at the police station & basic rights

If you're placed under arrest, the police will inform you of the grounds for arrest. They may do this in general terms, without going into detail.

Upon your arrest, you may be detained for up to 48 hours. **You won't be allowed to speak with anyone, not even a lawyer, during this period. This is allowed under Singapore law.**

Within 48 hours, the police must release you on bail or bring you to court if they need to detain you for a longer period. Final decision rests with the courts. At this point, you can ask the courts for permission to contact your family or speak with a lawyer.

If the court allows for you to be detained beyond the initial 48 hours, you might not have access to a lawyer. The Singapore constitution allows for access to legal counsel, but *immediate* access is not guaranteed.

During the initial 48-hour period, you will be asked to give a **long statement**:

- this will be recorded by a police officer with no lawyer present
- this will be read back to you, then you will be asked to sign this statement. It is a legal requirement to sign this statement; make sure that the details recorded are accurate
- if you find any inaccuracies, you must tell the police officer

Speak to a lawyer immediately upon your release on bail. Tell your lawyer as much as you can remember about information you gave in the long statement.

The police will retain your passport to prevent you from leaving the country. This is standard procedure in police investigations.

The investigation process can take anywhere from a few weeks to several months. There is no set timeline or target to complete these investigations. Singapore is one of the most expensive cities to live in, so consider downscaling: find cheap accommodation or stay with friends; minimise spending; contact friends/family for financial support. The British High Commission is unable to help with accommodation or expenses.

Once the investigation process concludes, your case will be referred to the Attorney-General's Chambers (AGC or the prosecution). They will decide on one of these outcomes:

- no charges filed
- issue a stern warning
- impose a fine
- file charges against you

Depending on the offence, your work pass or permanent residency status may be revoked by the Ministry of Manpower or Immigration & Checkpoints Authority.

If you get a warning or have to pay a fine, your passport will be returned once you've complied with the requirements set.

If you are convicted, you will be repatriated back to the UK immediately after you have served your sentence.

If the police tell you that you may be prosecuted for an offence, the officer is required to serve and read this notice to you:

'Do you want to say anything about the charge that was just read to you? If you keep quiet now about any fact or matter in your defence and you reveal this fact or matter in your defence only at your trial, the judge may be less likely to believe you. This may have a bad effect on your case in court. Therefore, it may be better for you to mention such fact or matter now. If you wish to do so, what you say will be written down, read back to you for any mistakes to be corrected, and then signed by you.'

At this stage, you will need to give a **cautioned statement**:

- this will be recorded by a police officer or any person charged with investigating offences
- no lawyer will be present
- this will be in writing; it will be read back to you, then you will be asked to sign this statement
- if you find any inaccuracies, you must tell the police officer

Appearance at court

You will be brought before a Mention Court where charges will be filed against you.

A case number will be assigned.

At Mention Court, one of three scenarios can take place:

- case is adjourned to a later date – prosecution can ask for more time to complete the investigation, or you may request for more time to find a lawyer, if you don't have one at this stage
- you plead guilty – a date could be fixed for you to plead guilty at the next Mention
- you claim trial (i.e. contest the charges) – a Pre-Trial Conference or a Criminal Case Disclosure Conference is set

More information about the Singapore judicial system can be found in Chapter 3 of this document. If you require more details that what this information pack provides, please speak to your lawyer.

Initial arrival at the prison

Once convicted, you'll be taken from the court house to prison. All new inmates go through a screening process:

- your next of kin details are recorded
- a full body x-ray scan is taken
- medical history taken – if you are on any medication, tell the prison officers at this stage
- a blood test is taken after a few days to check for any viruses or infectious diseases

Due to Covid-19 measures, a swab test will be taken as well. You will be in isolation for 14 days. If you are clear of the virus, only then will you join the prison population.

Your belongings and clothes will be taken and placed in a secure storage facility offsite. These will be handed back to you on your day of release.

You will be issued these items:

- White shirts with your inmate number printed on them
- Short trousers
- Rubber flip flops
- A straw mat and blanket (there are no beds in prison)
- Toiletries: toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, toilet paper, cup, plate

Once you are admitted into prison, the authorities notify the British High Commission consular team. We will arrange a visit or phone call with you as soon as possible.

You won't be allowed any phone calls to family in Singapore or the UK. You can relay any messages to family through us.

Prison: conditions and daily life

Accommodation

Those on remand (i.e. awaiting trial or sentencing) are held separately from those serving sentence.

There are shared and single cells. Each cell has a toilet (Asian-style; no Western toilets here) and a shower head directly above it. Water from the shower/faucet is potable.

There are no beds in Changi Prison except in the medical wing (Cluster A). All inmates sleep on a thin straw mat.

Overcrowding is not a problem in Changi Prison but prison cells are small and basic.

The larger cells (dormitories) have a better flow of air. The prisons only provide single occupancy cells for long-term prisoners with good records or extenuating circumstances. When serving a short prison sentence (less than 2 years), you can

expect to be sharing a cell. Prisoners are issued with a straw mat and a blanket for sleeping and they sleep on the floor.

Short-term inmates spend 23 hours in their cell with one hour of exercise a day. This is done in a covered court. Those with longer jail terms can qualify for jobs in prison. You should speak to your officer in charge to find out if jobs are an option for you.

Prison cells usually have a security camera. Cells have some natural light from a small window.

Food and Diet

Prisoners receive three meals each day. The prison authorities state that the food they provide is a balanced diet. The food will be based on local recipes rather than Western food. Prisoners may choose between rice and bread as the starch component of their meal.

If you have special dietary needs, make it known to the prison authorities once you are admitted or soon after. They will accommodate your needs as best as they can.

Prisoners get drinking water from the shower in their cell. Water in Singapore is potable.

Hygiene

Each cell has a shower, and there's no limit to how many times a prisoner can take a shower. The shower/toilet area is separated from the rest of the cell by a low wall – there is no door, so hardly any privacy. Toiletries are provided.

Work and Study

Work is not compulsory for prisoners. It is an option for those serving long sentences. Those who choose not to take up a job, or those on short-term sentences, have to stay in their cells for 23 hours a day. So many of those serving long sentences welcome prison jobs as a chance to spend time outside their cells.

Inmates are paid for their work.

Courses in prison are also offered, but a number of factors are taken into consideration. Inmates should speak with their officer-in-charge to find out if they qualify for these courses.

Contact and Languages

Contact with other inmates is allowed during yard time and working hours. Because of the pandemic, you will be required to wear a mask when in contact with others.

We are not aware of any preferences to place British inmates with other English-speaking inmates. From what we have seen, cell assignments are made at random. The prison officers speak English.

Detainees do not have access to phones. Depending on length of sentence and which institution they're housed at, they may be issued one tablet to send e-letters to up to five designated friends/family members.

Inmates are not allowed to own a television. They can watch an hour of TV during yard time, with a slightly longer period during holidays (e.g. Christmas).

The prison has a well-stocked library. Prisoners can receive books and magazines from friends and family, but they're allowed to keep up to three books at a time. The rest shall be kept in storage. The inmate can request to swap a book they've read with a new book sent by family.

There is the possibility to request local language materials through the post from Prisoners Abroad (including language textbooks and dictionaries).

Exercise

Exercise is allowed once a day in a covered court. You can walk or play team sports with other inmates (e.g. basketball or *sepak takraw* aka 'kick volleyball', an Asian sport).

Important to note re: Covid-19: these measures could change at short notice due to the prevailing Covid-19 situation in prison.

Climate

Singapore has a warm and tropical climate with an average daily temperature of 28 to 32 degrees Celsius. Humidity ranges from 60 to 70 percent. Prison-issued clothing is appropriate to the weather (cotton t-shirts, shorts). There is no air-conditioning or fans in the prison cells so it can be uncomfortable, especially in the hot months.

Religion

Prisoners have the right to receive visits from a priest, imam, or minister of their faith. The prison has no religious ministers as part of their staff, but external volunteers can visit the prison subject to prevailing security and Covid-19 regulations. Participation in any religious activity is subject to the approval of the prison authorities.

Rules and regulations (including drugs)

Prison rules and regulations are explained to prisoners when they are first admitted/processed.

Forms of punishment: having their sentence extended by a number of days, depending on the offence; solitary confinement; corporal punishment, for males under the age of 50, by a number of strokes, depending upon the offence. This is all covered under the Prisons Act.

Singapore has a zero tolerance for drugs.

Prison: access to help and services

Prisoners in Singapore are not allowed to receive money from family or friends in the UK except for buying spectacles or any non-standard medication that's pre-approved by the prison authorities.

For spectacles or non-standard medication, your family can send money through the FCDO. See Annex B for instructions.

Another option is to contact Prisoners Abroad, a UK charity that supports British prisoners around the world. You must be registered with Prisoners Abroad to avail yourself of financial support.

Can I receive medical and dental treatment?

While you are in detention, Singapore is responsible for ensuring your medical needs are met.

Changi Prison has a prison doctor and dentist. Prisoners should speak with their supervisor or officer-in-charge if they need medical attention. There is no charge to see a doctor or dentist. Hospitalisation, medical procedures, and surgeries are covered by the Singapore Prison Service.

A section of Changi Prison's Cluster A is allocated for those needing special care and attention. If prisoners need to be hospitalised, they're usually taken to Changi General Hospital.

With your permission, we can make sure that any medical or dental problems you might have are brought to the attention of any police or prison doctor. We can also liaise with your GP in the UK, if the police or prison doctor requests previous medical records and this is in your vital interests.

Mail/Parcels

Depending on a prisoner's housing unit and sentence length, they are allowed either two outgoing snail mail (letters) or five outgoing e-letters per month through the Singapore Prison Service e-letters system: www.eservice.sps.gov.sg/eletters.

All mail and e-letters are screened by the prison authorities.

The British High Commission does not receive parcels on an inmate's behalf; family/friends should send it directly to the prison, making sure that it has the inmate's full name, prisoner number, and address in the addressee field. It's best to send these via courier to track the delivery.

Can I make telephone calls?

Phone calls are, in general, not allowed; however, exemptions are being made due to border closures arising from the pandemic. This could change at short notice.

How can I make a complaint about mistreatment?

If you have been mistreated, please inform Consular staff as soon as it is safe for you to do so. We will then do our best to visit you, to check on your welfare, discuss the allegations, and inform you of any local complaints procedures and supportive organisations that you may wish to consider. With your permission, and where appropriate, we will consider approaching the local authorities if you have not been treated in line with internationally-accepted standards. If you have been mistreated, please try to see a doctor, obtain a medical report and if possible photos of the injuries you received.

You can file a complaint with the Board of Visiting Justices and the Board of Visitors. These board members are civilians who conduct surprise visits and inspections of the prison institutions. For more information, see [Section 79 of the Prisons Act](#).

You can also approach the superintendent of your institution or any prison officer.

Chapter 3: the Singapore judicial system

Overview and first steps

Is the system the same as the UK?

Some important things to note:

1. Corporal and capital punishment are recognised as forms of punishment under Singapore law for males aged 16 to 50 years of age.

Corporal punishment is carried out by caning. This involves the use of a rattan cane to strike a prisoner in the buttocks. The maximum number of strokes allowed is 24. Offences such as drug trafficking, outrage of modesty (i.e. molestation), rape, or assaulting a public servant can lead to corporal punishment, as can some non-violent offences such as vandalism (graffiti) and immigration offences. The High Court can impose caning of up to ten strokes, with a smaller cane, on juvenile male offenders.

Capital punishment involves hanging. Offences such as drug trafficking and murder can lead to a death sentence.

If you are sentenced to receive corporal or capital punishment as part of your sentence, you can seek help from the Death Penalty Project, a UK-based NGO. They are a panel of solicitors who can work with your local lawyer on your defence. They won't be the lead counsel, so it's important to appoint a local lawyer first.

For a list of lawyers in Singapore: www.gov.uk/government/publications/singapore-list-of-lawyers

For more on the Death Penalty Project: www.deathpenaltyproject.org/who-we-are/

2. A person under arrest can be detained for up to 48 hours without access to a lawyer. The Singapore constitution allows for access to legal counsel following one's arrest – however, *immediate* access is not guaranteed if it impacts on public safety and on the investigation process.

A foreigner under arrest can ask for their embassy/high commission to be notified; however, there is no obligation for the police to do this while they are detained.

3. Cases are tried by a judge – there is no jury system in Singapore.

4. A person who is to be charged in court can either plead guilty or claim trial (i.e. not guilty)

5. Timelines vary depending on the complexity of the case and whether you plead guilty or not.

- **The FCDO cannot interfere with the judicial system. We cannot ask for your case to be judged more quickly just because you are British, or ask the authorities to waive any penalties.**

What should happen when I am arrested?

The police can inform you of the reason and grounds for arrest, but they are under no obligation to go into detail.

While in detention, you may ask to speak with your family or a lawyer; however, this request may be refused if the police think it will affect their investigation.

You may request that the British High Commission be informed of your arrest. This request may be refused if any external contact will affect their investigation. We are usually notified after the detainee is released on police bail.

Depending on the nature of the offence, you could be detained at a police station, the immigration head office, or the Police Cantonment Complex. The cells have no beds and usually have an Asian-style toilet. You should be given access to food and water.

The arresting officer will seek to take a 'long statement' from you, then a 'cautioned statement' if you are to be charged. A lawyer is not allowed to be with you when giving these statements.

In most cases, a long statement is taken shortly after arrest – you wouldn't have had the chance to speak with a lawyer at that point. Try to remember as much as you can of what you said in that statement, then contact a lawyer immediately.

The police can keep you in detention up to 48 hours – beyond that point, they should seek a court order if they'd like to hold you for a longer period.

English is the official language in Singapore, so all official documents are in English.

- **Should you have any questions concerning the legal aspects of your arrest, contact your lawyer. A list of local English-speaking lawyers is provided at the end of this pack.**

For how long can I be remanded in custody?

If you're in custody due to a bailable offence, you can be released on bail once the required amount and an appropriate bailor/surety are identified.

If you're in custody due to a non-bailable offence, you shall be on remand for the duration of the trial. Time served may be counted towards the total sentence.

In general, those on remand are allowed 4 visits a week, maximum of 2 face-to-face visits per week.

Those who are serving sentence are allowed 2 visits per month, maximum of 1 face-to-face visit per month.

There are two types of visits: face-to-face which allows the inmate and their family to be in the same room, with a glass partition between them; the other is a tele-visit, similar to a video-teleconference like Skype or Zoom, available only at Prison Link Centres in Singapore. This is not available to family members residing overseas.

What happens when I am charged?

You will be brought before a Mention Court for the charges to be laid against you. A case number will be assigned.

The case could be adjourned (if the prosecution needs more time to investigate), or you could plead guilty or claim trial (i.e. not guilty).

What provision is there for bail?

Certain offences are bailable; others are not. Ultimately, however, it is up to the courts to determine whether to grant bail or not.

Once you are out on bail, you cannot leave Singapore without the approval of the court or police officer. The bailor/surety must also agree to this.

In most cases, your passport shall be kept by the police from the time of arrest – including while you're on bail – until the time when charges are dropped or you have served your sentence.

Any decisions to grant bail is based on the offence, not the nationality of the offender. Foreigners can be released on bail as long as they meet the requirements set for bail.

- **The FCDO is not able to facilitate the transfer of bail funds.**

Trial and legal assistance

What kind of legal assistance is available?

If you wish to hire a private lawyer, a list of English-speaking lawyers is provided at the end of this pack. Prisoners Abroad can also supply information on legal aid, court proceedings and can advise on appointing a lawyer.

Legal aid from the Law Society of Singapore is available only to Singapore citizens and foreigners who are permanent residents (PRs).

Some firms on our list of lawyers offer legal aid or pro bono service, although this is not common.

What happens at the trial?

1. Charge must be read and explained to the accused and plea taken.
2. If the accused pleads guilty, follow procedure in *Section 227 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CPC)*.
3. If the accused refuses to plead, or does not plead, and claim trial, court to hear case.
4. Prosecution opens case and shortly states the nature of the offence and evidence to prove case.
5. Prosecution then examines the witness, defence can cross-examine, and prosecution may re-examine.
6. Defence may invite court to dismiss case on grounds of *no case to answer*, and prosecution can reply.
7. Court can alter charge, frame a new charge, following procedure in *Sections 128 – 131 of the CPC*.
8. If the accused pleads guilty to the altered/new charge, follow procedure in *Section 227 of the CPC*.
9. If the accused refuses to plead, or does not plead, and claim trial, court to continue hearing.
10. If charge seemingly satisfied with evidence, court must call on accused to give defence.
11. If no such evidence, court must order discharge amounting to acquittal.
12. If the charge is groundless, court can also order discharge amounting to acquittal.

13. Court must inform the accused that they will be called upon to give evidence in their own defence, and the consequences if they refuses to.
14. If the defence is called and the accused person elects not to take the witness stand and be sworn/affirmed, or if, after having taken the stand, the accused person remains silent and decides not to give evidence, the court may then draw such inferences from the refusal as appear proper, including adverse inferences (*Section 291(3) of the CPC*).
15. Accused can choose to give defence, following procedure in 16-18 below.
16. Accused sums up case.
17. Prosecution has final right of reply on the whole case.
18. If court finds accused not guilty, court must order discharge amounting to acquittal.
19. If court finds accused guilty, court must record conviction and comply with procedure in *Section 228 of the CPC*, and then pass sentence.

Consular staff are not legally-trained; for any questions on the judicial process, speak to your lawyer.

Sentences

Here are sentencing options usually handed out to foreigners in Singapore:

1. Fines
2. Imprisonment

At the end of their sentence, foreigner inmates will be repatriated. The Singapore government does not pay for flights; it is up to the inmate or their family to do this.

The repatriation division of Immigration & Checkpoints Authority will liaise with the family on flight arrangements.

3. Caning

The maximum number of strokes is 24. The following are exempt from caning: women, men over 50 years old, and men who have been sentenced to death.

A medical officer will be present and will certify that the person is fit enough to undergo caning. If caning has to be stopped due to medical reasons, the sentence may be amended according to section 332 of the Criminal Procedure Code.

4. Death by hanging

How can appeals be made?

An appeal can be made within 14 days of the judgement, sentence, or order.

An appeal on a judgement, sentence, or order made by the District or Magistrate's Court in any criminal case can be made with the High Court.

An appeal on a judgement, sentence, or order made by the High Court can be made with the Court of Appeal.

The prosecution can also appeal against an acquittal, a sentence, or an order.

Reaching the end of your sentence

What provision is there for reduction of sentence (remission) e.g. for good behaviour?

There's no provision for remission; however, you are only expected to serve 2/3 of your sentence. So if you are sentenced to 9 years in prison, you will only serve 6 years.

Your sentence can be extended by a few days at a time if you violate prison rules, get into fights, etc.

What provision is there for early release e.g. on parole?

Release on parole is not available to foreigners in Singapore.

What provision is there for clemency or pardon?

A prisoner can write to the President of Singapore to appeal for clemency on any part of their sentence. Clemency requests are decided by the Cabinet of Singapore. Appeals for clemency are made by the individual concerned, but a lawyer or others could assist with suggestions for the content. In Singapore, clemency requests are almost never approved.

What about any financial penalties?

There are no fines/financial penalties while in prison in Singapore.

Is transfer to another prison within Singapore possible?

There is only one prison complex in Singapore: Changi Prison. We have known inmates to have requested transfers from one block to another, subject to prison authorities' approval. The British High Commission is not usually involved in these requests unless mistreatment is involved.

Is transfer to the UK a possibility?

No – there is no prisoner transfer agreement between the UK and Singapore.

What are the procedures for release and deportation?

A month before your release, officers from the repatriation department of Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA) will visit you to go over some pre-departure reminders.

They will seek your consent to contact a family member who can book your outbound flight. ICA does not pay for flights, and neither does the British High Commission.

ICA will coordinate with your family on flights and any pre-departure Covid-19 tests. They can also assist you with completing any pre-arrival Covid-19 requirements set by the UK.

On your day of release, you will leave prison around midday, then turned over to ICA. You will be in immigration detention until shortly before your flight leaves. You will be escorted by ICA to the airport until check in.

If your passport has expired during your incarceration, we will assist with your passport application. Once the passport is issued, we will hand this over to ICA. They will give it to you on the day you leave Singapore.

The consular team will be in touch a month or so before your release to go over Prisoners Abroad pre-release paperwork if you have signed up as their client.

Sometimes people find that they face difficulties adjusting to life in the UK once they have left prison. You may find yourself ready for life on the outside but not prepared for living in the UK. Possibly you have never lived in the UK and have no connections there, or perhaps you have lost touch with friends and family. You may simply want to talk to another person who understands what you have been through, to help you consider what to do next.

If you are registered with Prisoners Abroad you can visit Prisoners Abroad when you first arrive back in UK for advice, to take a shower, use their temporary luggage store, make essential phone calls or use a computer. If you have no belongings Prisoners Abroad may be able to help with basic toiletries and finding suitable clothing. If you know your release date in advance it is best to write and tell your caseworker when you are likely to arrive and what help you think you might need. If you have no money and nowhere to go, Prisoners Abroad's Aftercare Service can help with:

- advice on finding emergency accommodation in the London area

- claiming welfare benefits, including emergency benefit payments if you are destitute
- making appointments with doctors and dentists
- putting you in touch with local agencies if you are not returning to the London area.

Later on you may want advice on housing, looking for work, applying for training or getting counselling. Prisoners Abroad can refer you to the right agency.

Other sources of practical help back in the UK are The Salvation Army – UK Helpline 020 7367 4888, Monday to Friday 8 AM to 4 PM, or contact your local Salvation Army branch – and The Prison Fellowship, UK Helpline 020 7799 2500, Monday to Friday 9 AM to 5 PM.

Would I have a criminal record in the UK?

We will not normally pass on information about your case to a third party without your consent. However, if you're arrested for certain serious offences, such as child sex abuse or drugs crimes, our staff must tell other relevant UK authorities. It is therefore possible that information about this may appear if a Criminal Records Bureau check were carried out by a prospective employer.

Chapter 4: Additional Information

Prisoners Abroad

Since 1978 the charity Prisoners Abroad has offered practical support and advice to British citizens imprisoned overseas. It is the only UK charity providing this service and it is available to all, whether guilty or innocent, convicted or awaiting charge or trial. Prisoners Abroad is concerned with your health and welfare, both during your imprisonment and also on your return to the UK, through their resettlement service (if you have registered whilst in prison). They can also provide support and advice to your family during your imprisonment. In order to access any services, prisoners must first register with Prisoners Abroad by signing and returning their authorisation form.

Once you seek help from Prisoners Abroad, the Prisoner & Family Support Service will be your point of contact for advice and information. The type of assistance they can offer will vary from country to country, but generally they can provide you with information, in English, on:

- your rights as a prisoner and issues that may affect you such as health or transfer to the UK
- obtaining magazines, newspapers, books and the regular Prisoners Abroad newsletter
- learning the language of your country of imprisonment; translating documents
- grants for food if you are in a developing country and don't have funds from other sources
- grants for essential medicines and toiletries if you don't have funds from other sources
- preparing for release
- help for your loved ones, including information, family support groups and, in a few cases, assistance with the cost of visiting

Prisoners Abroad
89 – 93 Fonthill Road
London N4 3JH
UK

Telephone: 00 44 (0)20 7561 6820 or, for your relatives in the UK, Freephone: 0808 172 0098 (Mondays and Tuesdays 9.30 am to 6pm, and Wednesdays to Fridays 9.30 am to 4.30 pm, UK time)

Email: info@prisonersabroad.org.uk

Website: www.prisonersabroad.org.uk

Annexes

- A FCDO [Support for British Nationals Abroad](#)
- B FCDO letter: How to send money to the FCDO – to be handed by consular staff as needed; funds in prison accepted for spectacles only
- C [List of English-speaking lawyers](#)
- D [Prisoners Abroad Authorisation Form](#)
- E [Prisoners Abroad Family Contact Form](#)