



# HM Prison & Probation Service

## Roll checks

The purpose of a roll check is to establish that all prisoners are present and correctly accounted for.

When carrying out a roll check, you must:

- Count the prisoners in their cells
- Get a positive response from each one

During the roll check it is important that you consider your safety, so:

- Stand back from the door and open the observation port cover
- Check that the window insert is in place and not damaged
- Place the palm of your hand, with fingers spread, over the observation port
- Carefully look through your fingers and check where the prisoner is in the cell
- Count the prisoners in the cell and get a response from each one
- Close the observation port cover and 'prove' the door

On completion of the roll check:

- To ensure that your roll is correct, check the wing roll board and sign to confirm your roll

**Staff must physically check the presence of the occupants in every cell**

You **must** get a positive response from all prisoners occupying the cell; a gesture of acknowledgement. If a prisoner fails to respond during any roll check then the members of

staff concerned should seek assistance from another member of staff before entering the cell to get a response.

If you need to enter the cell, you **must not** be alone. Call for another member of staff and wait until they arrive. You should inform control over the radio which cell it is before unlocking the door.

The purpose of this check is to confirm that the prisoner has not escaped, and is not ill or deceased.

Checking cells that are occupied by more than one prisoner can be difficult. You must take the same care to check that all occupants, as shown on the roll, are present.

If the observation port is damaged it may be difficult to see the prisoner. Although you may get a response, you must also be able to see the prisoner. You will need to seek assistance from another member of staff, and follow the same process as above, before unlocking the door. You need to consider your own safety at all times.

If the observation port is covered you must ask the prisoner to remove the obstruction. If they refuse, summon assistance.

During the roll check, you may encounter prisoners who make it difficult to achieve this physical check. Ensure that you use appropriate inter-personal skills (IPS) whilst managing challenging prisoners. Getting to know the prisoners in your care plays an important part in managing challenging prisoners. Your communication skills and knowledge can help you to manage their needs and de-escalate potential conflict.