



Ministry
of Justice

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Transparency Data

Releases in Error, England and Wales

Releases in Error from 1 April 2025 to 31 October 2025

Policy Background

A prisoner is released in error if they are released when they should otherwise have remained in HMPPS custody¹ and the prisoner or third party has not deliberately played a part in the error.

Number of Releases in Error

The number of releases in error from 1 April 2025 to 31 October 2025 was 91.

Data on releases in error are regularly published in the HMPPS Annual Digest (latest data to year-ending March 2025): [HMPPS Annual Digest, April 2024 to March 2025 - GOV.UK](#)

Further Information

This publication of transparency data presents the number of releases in error from 1 April 2025 to 31 October 2025. These are counts of all recorded releases in error occurring from HMPPS custody during this time period. Data on releases is based on the information available at the time. It may be the case in some circumstances that information on a case is brought to light that either confirms or disproves a release in error. Consequently, figures for recent months may change over time, as there has been less time for such cases to be detected. In the past, these revisions have tended to be upwards.

Examples of releases in error may include misplaced warrants for imprisonment or remand, recall notices not acted upon or sentence miscalculation, where a prisoner is released earlier than their correct release date, or where there is an error at the

¹ This is inclusive of releases in error from HMPPS establishments and Prisoner Escort Custody Services

point of final discharge. Releases in error from HMPPS could also be a result of errors by the court or other authorities.

If the person released is not aware of the error and makes no attempt to evade arrest, then they have committed no additional offence and in that sense, they may not be at fault. If it is believed that the situation was manipulated by the prisoner, for example by taking the identity of another person, then this will be classified as an escape, and not a release in error.

This data has been extracted from a live operational reporting system, with some additional manual reconciliation. As with any data extracted from administrative systems, it is subject to possible errors with data entry and processing and may be subject to revision if the underlying data changes.

Please note that this data is not directly comparable to releases in error volumes published in the HMPPS Annual Digest (latest publication: year-ending March 2025) due to the manual reconciliation of records conducted for this ad-hoc publication; possible effects of seasonality on release volumes; and the possibility of late recordings.

Due to the relatively low numbers of release in error, changes over time should be interpreted with caution and considered in the context of the number of releases in the same time period and changes in the operational environment.

Accompanying files

- None

Contact

Press enquiries should be directed to the Ministry of Justice press office:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-justice/about/media-enquiries>

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