



Ministry of  
**JUSTICE**

# **Our ideas for making community sentences work better**



**Community sentences are what some people who  
commit less serious crimes have to do instead of  
going to prison**

**Easy read**



## Who we are

We are the Government.

## What this document is about

This document is about **community sentences**.

Community sentences are when a person commits a crime but they do not go to prison.

The court says they must do other things instead like

- work for free in the local area, like picking up litter
- get help with drink or drugs problems
- learn more skills like reading or writing.





At the moment, too many people who get a community sentence do crime again.



We want this to stop.



This document talks about the changes we think need to happen to community sentences.

We want to know what you think of these changes.



You can find out how to tell us on page 14.

# Making community sentences work better

Community sentences have to work.

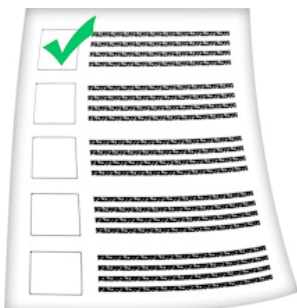
We want everyone who gets a community sentence to

- know they did something wrong
- help make up for what they did
- stop doing crime again.

## Making some people do more

We think some people who get a community sentence should do more than they do now.

For example, people who do a more serious crime.





We think some people should have to do a few things at once. For example

- work for free in the local area
- stay in at certain times
- pay some money
- stop driving
- other things the court thinks should happen like saying sorry to the person they hurt.



And we think **everyone** who gets a community sentence should do something like

- work for free in the local area
- pay some money
- or have to stay in at certain times.



The court should decide which of these things each person should do.

## Having to stay in at certain times



The court may decide someone who commits a crime has to stay in at certain times.



For example, they may have to stay in every night.

This stops the person going out and doing more crime.



Courts will soon be able to stop someone going out more if they need to.



Someone may have to stay in for up to 16 hours a day.



People who have to stay in like this may have to wear something around their ankle.

It is like a small machine.



It shows where the person is at that time.

It helps make sure they are in the right place.



We want to see if we can use things like this more to help stop people doing crime again.

## Taking people's things away from them if they commit a crime



We think a court should be able to ask for some of a person's things to be taken away from them.



This could be things like a TV or stereo or other things the person has.

We are looking at ways this could happen.



For example, if someone does a more serious crime the court could decide to

- take away some of their things
- give them a community sentence as well.



## Making sure people do what the community sentence says



We want there to be better ways to make sure people do what the community sentence says.



For example, we think someone should pay some money if they break the rules.



They would not have to go back to court for this.



But they would go back to court if they did not pay the money.

# Paying money



Sometimes courts make people pay money if they commit a crime.

This can work well.



We think courts could do this more.



We also need to make sure people pay the right amount of money.



We want courts to have better information about

- when they could make someone pay money
- how much the person should pay.

We are also looking at better ways to make sure people pay this money.

# Helping to make things better



We want people who commit crimes to do more to make things right and help the people they hurt.



This could be things like

- paying money to the person they hurt
- saying sorry to them.



This can help the person change and stop doing crime again.

We are working to make this happen much more.

# Helping people change their lives



Some people who commit crime have problems with things like

- drugs
- alcohol
- their mental health.



We want people to get help that works so they don't do crime again.

We want there to be more help early on to stop problems getting worse.



We want more local places for people to get help with problems instead of going to prison.



We also want to see more help in local areas for women.

Women who do crimes often need support with many other things.

For example, their mental health or support to look after children.



We are also doing much more about people with drink problems.

For example, we want to see if it works to make people stop drinking for a certain amount of time.



People will have to go for tests to make sure there is no alcohol in their body.



We want to check how well all these things are working to stop people doing crime again.



# How to tell us what you think



Please tell us what you think of our ideas by  
**22 June 2012.**



By post to

Effective Community Sentences  
Ministry of Justice  
Post Point 8.22  
102 Petty France  
London SW1H 9AJ



By email to

[effectivecommunitysentences@justice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:effectivecommunitysentences@justice.gsi.gov.uk)



You can tell us what you think in the box on the next page if you want to.



**You can tell us what you think of our ideas here if you want to**