

Significant Risk of Serious Harm to Others Policy

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Alternative Formats

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1. Rationale

Many offenders have the potential to harm others; and probation officers assess and manage such risks every day. However, managing *risk of harm* requires PBNI to target the most intensive use of resources at those offenders considered to pose a Significant Risk of Serious Harm to Others. This policy is in place to ensure that risk of harm is managed effectively and appropriate resources are in place to manage it.

2. Policy Aim

The aim of this policy is to contribute to public protection by reducing offenders' likelihood to harm others through ensuring there is effective assessment and management of significant risk of serious harm posed by offenders.

3. Objectives

- To have clear processes in place to identify those offenders who pose a Significant Risk of Serious Harm to others.
- To have clear processes in place which address the risks posed in a way which is lawful, necessary, defensible and proportionate.
- To ensure that the appropriate resources are available for cases assessed as posing a Significant Risk of Harm to Others.
- To ensure there is appropriate supervision, training and support provided to all employees in assessing and managing Significant Risk of Serious Harm to Others cases.
- To ensure that all staff are aware that accountability for decision making in the assessment and management of Significant Risk of Serious Harm is an agency responsibility, and not solely that of an individual employee.

4. Programmes and Projects

Significant Risk of Serious Harm procedures are in place.

5. Definitions

The Criminal Justice (NI) Order 2008 defines 'serious harm', and makes provision for public protection sentences for offenders assessed by courts as being dangerous. Release into the community, in such cases will be dependent on evidenced risk reduction while in custody: the timing of release will be decided upon by Parole Commissioners.

“Serious Harm”: Death or serious personal injury, whether physical or psychological.

“Significant”: The likelihood that an act, the impact of which would be serious harm, will occur i.e there is a high probability of the offence recurring

“Significant Risk of Serious Harm”: PBNi assesses an offender as a Significant Risk of Serious Harm if there is a high likelihood that an offender will commit a further offence, causing serious harm.

The Criminal Justice (NI) Order 2008 sets out a list of serious offences in Schedule 1 and a list of specified sexual and violent offences in Schedule 2. An offender who commits a specified offence and whom the court assesses as dangerous will meet the criteria for a public protection sentence. As a further guideline, the following offences are considered to involve serious harm (includes inchoate offences such as attempts, conspiracy, aid/abet):

Murder	GBH with intent to endanger life
Abduction/Kidnapping	Unlawful imprisonment
Manslaughter	Malicious wounding
Serious sexual or violent offences against adults or children	Use of weapons
Serious/repeat driving offences	
Arson / criminal damage endangering life	Threats to kill

6. Resources

There are no significant additional costs involved.

7. Communications and Training

There will be training in relation to the Significant Risk of Serious Harm to Others Policy and Procedures delivered to all frontline staff in March 2017. Ongoing training will be delivered through the team meeting structure with the Area Manager taking the lead. The Assistant Director, Risk will forward communication to all relevant staff advising of the updated Policy and Procedures.

8. Review

A review of this policy will take place in three years after Board approval. In the interim period, any changes will be addressed through the circulation of Practice Notes.

9. Non compliance

Breach of the Board's Policy and Procedures by employees may merit consideration under the Board's Disciplinary Policy.