

**Independent Custody Visiting Association**  
**Basic Checklist for Independent Custody Visitors**  
**June 2022**



The below represents a basic checklist for ICVs when carrying out visits to detainees. This checklist is not exhaustive by any means and should be considered only as a basis of a visit. ICVA has produced a series of more specific checklists for varying detainee groups which you can access [here](#).

**When you arrive in custody**

- Prioritise visits to children or vulnerable adults (for the purposes of visit prioritization women should be considered as vulnerable adults).
- Once visits have been made to these groups, other detainees should be visited as time/risk allows.

**Detainee Rights – all detainees**

- Check the detainee has had their rights:
  - Does the detainee know why they are in police custody?
  - Have they been asked if they want a solicitor and informed of their right to free legal advice?
  - Has someone been informed of where they are?
  - If applicable, has the detainee been offered an interpreter/interpretation services?
- Has the detainee been given a written notice of their rights and entitlements in a format that they are easily able to understand (easy read/language/large print etc)?

**Detainee Entitlements**

- Has the detainee been proactively offered:
  - Food and drinks suitable for their dietary needs and religious requirements at regular intervals.
  - Access to toilets and washing facilities and exercise where practicable.
  - Access to medical attention for physical or mental health needs.

**Detainee Wellbeing**

- Are staff engaging well with detainees? Are they speaking to detainees regularly and respectfully in person with cell doors open?
- Has the detainee been proactively offered:
  - Blankets if cells are cold.
  - Distraction items such as magazines, books, puzzles, foam footballs and so on.

### **Detainee Rights and Entitlements – Female Detainees**

- If female, has the detainee been given a female officer to discuss their needs with?
- Menstrual care if applicable (detainees should be able to speak to a female officer about these needs in private).

### **Detainee Rights and Entitlements – Children**

- Was the child prioritised for booking in and not kept in a holding cell with adults?
- Is the child being held in a cell specifically for children/away from adult detainees?
- Have adjustments been made due to the detainee being a child? This may be things such as AA being allowed in cell, distraction items, time out of cell, varying food available, family visit and so on.

### **Appropriate Adults for Children and Vulnerable Adults**

- Check to see if an AA was requested for all children and vulnerable adults.
- If you think a detainee is a vulnerable adult, raise this with the custody staff and see if they have considered an AA for that detainee.
- If an AA has not been requested for an adult who could be considered vulnerable, check that the rationale for custody staff not requesting an AA is fully recorded.
- If an AA was requested:
  - Check what time an AA was requested.
  - Check what time the AA arrived in custody.

### **Custody Environment**

- Please comment on whether the suite is clean, well lit and well managed.
- This may include the kitchen area as well as commenting on cells/showers etc.
- ICVs are able to check on CCTV only to note whether it is working.

### **Custody Record**

If you have had access to the custody record (with consent or if the detainee is incapable of consenting, check your arrangements for incapacity with your scheme manager):

- Note the quality of entries, do they show individualised care for detainees?
- Do the entries show the proactive offering of rights and entitlements throughout the detainees time in custody?

### **When completing your report**

- Report on rights, entitlements, and wellbeing for detainees as outlined above.
- Include areas of concern and areas of good practice.
- Please do not simply record no issues. If all is well with the detainee, use the space to make a note on the general running of the suite.