

Press release

# Offenders to be banned from drinking to cut alcohol-fuelled crime

Offenders released from prison face being banned from drinking from today (17 November 2021) under world-first plans to curb alcohol-fuelled crime.

From:

[Ministry of Justice](#), [Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service](#), and [The Rt Hon Dominic Raab MP](#)

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- offenders known to reoffend after drinking will face alcohol bans
- sobriety will be enforced with alcohol monitoring tags worn for up to a year
- offenders with an alcohol ban on community sentences have stayed sober on 97 percent of the days they were tagged
- world-first move designed to cut booze-fuelled crime which costs society £21 billion a year

For the first time, serious and prolific offenders will be tagged with devices which monitor alcohol levels in sweat if their probation officer thinks they will be more likely to reoffend when drinking.

The tag will help probation officers keep a closer eye on offenders' behaviour and support them to turn their backs on crime. It will also provide offenders with the incentive to break bad habits as breaching the ban could see them back in prison.

Alcohol plays a part in 39 per cent of all violent crime in the UK and roughly 20 per cent of offenders supervised by the Probation Service are classed as having an alcohol problem. Around 12,000 offenders will wear such a tag over the next 3 years.

Offenders with an alcohol ban on community sentences have stayed sober on 97 percent of the days they were tagged and it is expected to have a significant impact on prison leavers' drinking habits.

Deputy Prime Minister, Justice Secretary and Lord Chancellor, Dominic Raab MP said:

This innovative technology has been successful in policing community sentences with offenders complying over 97 percent of the time.

Rolling the tags out further will help cut alcohol-fuelled crime, which causes untold misery for victims and lands society with a £21 billion bill each year.

Offenders now have a clear choice. If they don't work with probation staff to curb their drinking and change their ways, they face being sent back to jail.

From today, as part of a national roll-out, the tags will be used on offenders coming out of prison under Probation Service supervision in Wales, and the scheme will be applied in England next summer.

Offenders will either have a licence condition which requires them to go teetotal for up to a year or have their drinking levels monitored because their risk of reoffending increases after heavy consumption.

Alcohol tags have been available for judges and magistrates to hand down to offenders serving community sentences since last October.

The move is part of the government's plan to tackle and cut crime, expanding the use of innovative technology like tags to protect the public and drive down reoffending.

Earlier this year, the government launched another world-first, using GPS tags to track prolific robbers, thieves and burglars. Around 10,000 such offenders are expected to be tagged over the next 3 years to stop them reoffending and help police catch them if they carry on.

In total, an extra £183 million is being invested in the next 3 years to almost double the number of people tagged at any one time from around 13,500 this year to approximately 25,000 by 2025.