

Ground-breaking Employability Scheme at HMP Leyhill celebrated as “resounding success”

4 months ago



[Gov Facility Services Limited](#) (GFSL) and HMP Leyhill have announced the outstanding success of their ROTL employment scheme.

This marks a significant step forward in the national effort to reduce reoffending and support prisoner rehabilitation by demonstrating the positive impact of employment opportunities for serving prisoners.

Now nine months into operation, the initiative allows suitably qualified prisoners to be employed on Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) within HMP Leyhill, working directly in fully paid trade positions with GFSL who provide facilities services on the site. Through this innovative partnership, individuals have gained hands-on work experience while directly contributing to the maintenance and improvement of the prison environment.

Currently, two serving prisoners at HMP Leyhill are employed with the GFSL team earning a full-time wage, in Painter & Decorator and Mechanical Engineer roles respectively. Although some amendments to the roles are necessary while still serving a sentence, for the most part the employment is equal to that of a standard employee.

A Transformational Approach to Rehabilitation

The scheme has delivered tangible benefits to both the participants and the wider prison community:

Invaluable Work Experience

Prisoners have developed practical, industry-relevant skills through real employment, enhancing their prospects of securing meaningful work upon release. They keep existing skills in use and gain confidence in a real workplace environment.

Equal Treatment and Pay

Efforts have been made to onboard, treat and pay ROTL employments in the same way as GFSL employees, with the important exception of the prisoners' pay act victim levy reductions. This ensures equality and the pay the prisoners receive prepares them to resettle successfully on release.

Commitment to Reducing Reoffending

This collaboration provides prisoners with valued, paid work in custody. This investment not only builds confidence and capability but also demonstrates a model which can be replicated elsewhere in the prison estate.

The Governor of HMP Leyhill, Steve Cross, expressed pride in the partnership, stating:

The scheme has been in place for six months and has proven to be a resounding success and as Governor of HMP Leyhill, I am privileged that our prison has been able to benefit from GFSL's commitment to reducing reoffending. This is already being shared through the GFSL strategy of working with prisoners in our feeder prisons to ensure they have the skills and capabilities to compete for future roles within HMPS Leyhill/GFSL.

The partnership between HMP Leyhill and GFSL underscores a shared vision of rehabilitation and the belief that every individual has the potential for positive transformation. Together, we are paving the way for a safer and more supportive environment for all.

Feedback from one of the ROTL employees participating:

I find working alongside GFSL staff within the prison environment really good for my mental health and wellbeing. I am grateful that I have been given this opportunity to work whilst serving my sentence and I think it is a great programme that is providing a positive outcome for prisoners whilst serving time as well as those that would be coming up for release. To be able to attend work on a daily basis in what is to all intents and purposes a real workplace and interact with normal everyday people has to date stood me in good stead and will do so upon release. The programme gives you an idea of what life is and could be like in the outside world with staff laughing and joking both amongst themselves and us as prisoners.

Looking Ahead

The success of the employability scheme at HMP Leyhill sets a powerful precedent for similar programmes across the prison estate. By continuing to break down barriers to employment and focusing on skills development, GFSL and HMP Leyhill are helping individuals turn their lives around and take positive steps toward a better future.

Together, they are building a pathway from custody to community.

To find out more about rehabilitative programmes please get in touch with GFSL_PPW@govfsl.com