STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

2026 No. 609 (C. 49)

CRIMINAL LAW, ENGLAND AND WALES

The Sentencing Act 2026 (Commencement No. 4) Regulations 2026

Made - - - - *8th June 2026*

The Secretary of State makes these Regulations in exercise of the powers conferred by section 49(1) and (2) of the Sentencing Act 2026(**a**).

Citation, extent and interpretation

1.—(1) These Regulations may be cited as the Sentencing Act 2026 (Commencement No. 4) Regulations 2026.

(2) These Regulations extend to England and Wales.

(3) In these Regulations, "the Act" means the Sentencing Act 2026.

Provisions coming into force on 2nd September 2026

2. The following provisions of the Act come into force on 2nd September 2026—

(a) section 23(1), (2), (6), (8), (11)(b) and (c) and (12) to (15) (release);

(b) section 24(1)(a)(ii), (2) and (6) (release: consequential amendments relating to driving disqualification);

(c) save as set out in regulations 3 to 5—

(i) section 23(3) to (5), (7), (10) and (11)(a) and (d) (release);

(ii) section 24(1)(a)(i) and (iii), (3)(a) and (5)(a) (release: consequential amendments relating to driving disqualification).

Provisions coming into force between 2nd September 2026 and 8th June 2027

3.—(1) In relation to a person who is serving a sentence of imprisonment or detention imposed before 2nd September 2026 and who, immediately before that date, is in custody or detention pursuant to the sentence, the provisions in regulation 2(c) come into force on the relevant day.

(2) In this regulation, "the relevant day" means—

(a) 2nd September 2026, where the relevant sentence is less than 575 days;

(b) 13th October 2026, where the relevant sentence is greater than 574 days and less than 883 days;

(**a**) 2026 c. 2.

(c) 10th November 2026, where the relevant sentence is greater than 882 days and less than 1163 days;

(d) 8th December 2026, where the relevant sentence is greater than 1162 days and less than 1562 days;

(e) 12th January 2027, where the relevant sentence is greater than 1561 days and less than 2122 days;

(f) 9th February 2027, where the relevant sentence is greater than 2121 days and less than 2759 days;

(g) 9th March 2027, where the relevant sentence is greater than 2758 days and less than 3284 days;

(h) 13th April 2027, where the relevant sentence is greater than 3283 days and less than 3655 days;

(i) 11th May 2027, where the relevant sentence is greater than 3654 days and less than 4397 days;

(j) 8th June 2027, where the relevant sentence is greater than 4396 days.

(3) In this regulation, "relevant sentence", in relation to a person who falls within paragraph (1), means—

(a) where the person is serving two or more concurrent sentences of imprisonment or detention immediately before 2nd September 2026, the longest of those sentences at that time;

(b) in all other cases, the sentence of imprisonment or detention which the person is serving immediately before 2nd September 2026.

(4) For the purposes of paragraph (2), the length of the relevant sentence is the length calculated immediately before 2nd September 2026.

Provisions coming into force on 12th October 2027

4. In relation to a person who is serving a sentence of imprisonment or detention imposed before 2nd September 2026 and who, immediately before that date, is on licence subject to a curfew condition within the meaning of section 253 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003(**a**), the provisions in regulation 2(c) come into force on 12th October 2027.

Further provision regarding section 23(10)

5. Section 23(10) of the Act (release) does not come into force in relation to a sentence under section 91 of the Powers of Criminal Courts (Sentencing) Act 2000(**b**) or section 250 of the Sentencing Code.

Timpson
Signed by authority of the Secretary of State
Ministry of Justice

8th June 2026

(**a**) 2003 c. 44.
(**b**) 2000 c. 6.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Regulations)

These Regulations bring into force specified provisions of the Sentencing Act 2026 ("the 2026 Act") (c. 2).

Regulation 2 brings into force sections 23(1)-(15) and 24 of the 2026 Act. Section 23 amends the provisions of the Criminal Justice Act 2003 ("the 2003 Act") (c. 44) which set out the requisite custodial periods for those serving adult standard determinate sentences. The requisite custodial period for those serving these sentences who are released under section 244 of the 2003 Act is 40% or 50% of the sentence (depending on the offence). Section 23 reduces this period to the one-third point of the sentence. For those who are released under section 244ZA of the 2003 Act, the period is reduced from the two-thirds point of the sentence to the halfway point. Section 24 makes amendments to the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988 (c. 53) which are consequential to the changes to the requisite custodial period. The amendments ensure that any period of driving disqualification is extended in accordance with the requisite custodial period of the sentence.

Regulation 3 provides for the changes to the requisite custodial periods to come into force in relation to existing prisoners who are in custody serving an adult standard determinate sentence immediately before 2nd September 2026. It does so by using a series of commencement dates. The commencement date is determined by the length of sentence that the prisoner is serving.

Regulation 4 provides a commencement date for the changes to apply in relation to existing offenders who have been released early under section 246 of the 2003 Act and who are in the community under Home Detention Curfew immediately before 2nd September 2026.

Regulation 5 provides that section 23(10) of the 2026 Act does not come into force in relation to those serving youth sentences under section 250 of the Sentencing Code, or (historically) under section 91 of the Powers of Criminal Courts (Sentencing) Act 2000 (c. 6). Section 23(10) revokes the Criminal Justice Act 2003 (Requisite and Minimum Custodial Periods) Order 2024 (S.I. 2024/844).

A full impact assessment has not been produced for this instrument as no, or no significant, impact on the private, voluntary or public sector is foreseen.

NOTE AS TO EARLIER COMMENCEMENT REGULATIONS

(This note is not part of the Regulations)

The following provisions of the Sentencing Act 2026 have been brought into force by commencement regulations made before the date of these Regulations.

Provision	*Date of Commencement*	*S.I. No.*
Section 21	11.05.2026	S.I. 2026/402
Sections 30 and 31	Various dates	S.I. 2026/86
Section 32(1) to (3)	Various dates	S.I. 2026/86
Section 32(4)	31.3.2026	S.I. 2026/86
Section 33	Various dates	S.I. 2026/86
Section 34	11.05.2026	S.I. 2026/402
Section 36	11.05.2026	S.I. 2026/402
Section 38	11.05.2026	S.I. 2026/402
Section 39	11.05.2026	S.I. 2026/402
Section 42	01.06.2026	S.I. 2026/402
Section 44	22.3.2026	S.I. 2026/86
Section 45	22.3.2026	S.I. 2026/217
Schedule 4	Various dates	S.I. 2026/86
Schedule 5	11.05.2026	S.I. 2026/402

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