

insideinformation – fact sheet

MAPPA

Information courtesy of Parlby Solicitors Plymouth

Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) is the name given to the 'responsible authorities' in England and Wales who are required to assess and manage the most serious sexual and violent offenders and offenders who pose a serious risk of harm to the public.

These responsible authorities, or agencies as they are also known, include the Probation Service, Police Force and the Prison Service and collectively they are known as the 'MAPPA Responsible Authority'. Other agencies are under a duty to cooperate with the Responsible Authority, including social care, health, housing and education services. The aim of bringing together such Authorities is to ensure that a risk management plan is drawn up for the most serious offenders which will have the benefits of the information, skills and resources provided by the individual agencies being co-coordinated as a whole through MAPPA. Following the Criminal Justice Act 2003, Lay Advisors have been introduced to sit on Strategic Management Boards (SMBs) who have the strategic oversight of MAPPA. These are members of the public who have been selected to help with the development and monitoring of MAPPA and it is hoped that they will boost public confidence in the arrangements.

These persons will be tasked to oversee the four key features within MAPPA. The first is to identifying offenders to be supervised under MAPPA. This is generally determined by the offender's offence and sentence, but is also by assessed risk. They can be categorised from one to three.

The second feature is to share information about offenders, the third is to assess the risks posed by offenders and lastly, to manage the risk posed by individual offenders. Categorisation of offenders to be supervised under MAPPA, these are as follows:

- Category 1: Registered Sex Offenders.
- Category 2: All offenders who have received a custodial sentence of 12 months or more in prison for a violent offence and whilst they remain under Probation supervision.
- Category 3: Anyone else who poses a "risk of serious harm to the public", who has received a conviction and whose risk would be better managed in a multi-agency setting.

The legislation then requires that the agencies conduct a formal risk assessment of each offender and allocate them to a tier of multi-agency management - known as level one, two or three.

- Level One represents the normal inter-agency management of the offender in the community by one agency, with some liaison between other agencies.
- Level Two means that Multi Agency Public Protection meetings (MAPP's) will be held where the offender's management will be discussed between various parties involved in their case.
- Level Three is essentially the same as Level Two, except that senior management representatives will be in attendance and greater resources are expected to be used in the management of the offender.

MAPPA

An offender cannot be in more than one MAPPA Category, and if multiple offences are committed, they will default to the lowest number category. For instance, if an offender committed an attempted murder, but also committed a sexual assault, they would be a Category 1 offender rather than a Category 2 for the duration of their Sex Offender Registration. Once the offender has been categorised, and their level of supervision decided, it will then be necessary for a management plan to be formulated. This will be specific to each offender and their offending history, but might include any of the following:

- Accommodation at an Approved Premise (AP) where the offender can be monitored.
- A set of licence conditions such as having contact with children, or going within an exclusion zone in a town/city.
- A Civil Order such as a Sex Offender Order to prevent the offender doing certain activities, such as not entering a town where a victim resides, not to have unsupervised contact with children.
- A duty to report to an Offender Manager every week to undertake offending reduction counselling and work as part of their licence.
- In some very extreme cases there maybe covert monitoring of offenders to protect the public.
- A disclosure of information to a member of the public for their protection.

The MAPPA system cannot guarantee the protection of the public as such, but can only "manage" the risks through the limited powers of each agency as effectively as possible. MAPPA restrictions will be considered on an individual basis and will tailored to specific individuals, therefore, more guidance should be sought from the Probation Service on the likely restrictions that will be placed upon individual persons. Furthermore, applications to vary a person's categorisation or to oppose MAPPA conditions can be made to the relevant Probation Officer and where necessary, legal advice can be sought for assistance with this.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Information is given on a strictly 'without-liability' basis, and should be considered for use as guidance only. If you propose taking further action based upon this information you are strongly advised to take further and more specific legal advice before doing so.

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