



Sentencing Act 2020

2020 CHAPTER 17

THIRD GROUP OF PARTS Disposals

PART 10

CUSTODIAL SENTENCES

CHAPTER 1

CUSTODY: GENERAL PROVISIONS

General limits on powers to impose custodial sentences

226 Custodial sentence: restrictions in certain cases where offender not legally represented

- (1) This section applies where—
- (a) a magistrates' court is dealing with an offender on summary conviction, or
 - (b) the Crown Court is dealing with an offender—
 - (i) on committal for sentence, or
 - (ii) on conviction on indictment.

Offenders aged under 21

- (2) The court may not—
- (a) make a detention and training order,
 - (b) pass a sentence of detention under section 250 (or 254) ^[F1], under section 252A] or under section 259 (offenders under 18),
 - (c) pass a sentence of detention in a young offender institution, or
 - (d) pass a sentence of custody for life (see sections 272 and 275),
- unless the offender is legally represented in that court, or has failed, or is ineligible on financial grounds, to benefit from relevant representation (see subsections (7) and (8)).

Changes to legislation: Sentencing Act 2020, Section 226 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 09 May 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes

Offenders aged 21 or over

- (3) The court may not pass a sentence of imprisonment unless—
- (a) the offender—
 - (i) is legally represented in that court, or
 - (ii) has failed, or is ineligible on financial grounds, to benefit from relevant representation (see subsections (7) and (8)), or
 - (b) the offender has previously been sentenced to imprisonment by a court in any part of the United Kingdom.
- (4) For the purposes of subsection (3) a previous sentence of imprisonment which has been suspended and which has not taken effect under—
- (a) paragraph 8 of Schedule 16,
 - (b) paragraph 8 of Schedule 12 to the Criminal Justice Act 2003,
 - (c) section 119 of the Powers of Criminal Courts (Sentencing) Act 2000, or
 - (d) section 19 of the Treatment of Offenders Act (Northern Ireland) 1968,
- is to be disregarded.
- (5) For those purposes, “sentence of imprisonment” does not include a committal for contempt of court or any kindred offence (and “sentenced to imprisonment” is to be read accordingly).

When a person is legally represented

- (6) For the purposes of this section an offender is legally represented in a court if the offender has the assistance of counsel or a solicitor to represent him or her in the proceedings in that court at some time after being found guilty and before being sentenced.

Relevant representation: failure or ineligibility to benefit

- (7) For the purposes of subsections (2) and (3), “relevant representation”, in relation to proceedings in a court, means representation under Part 1 of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 (legal aid) for the purposes of the proceedings.
- (8) For those purposes, an offender has failed, or is ineligible on financial grounds, to benefit from relevant representation if—
- (a) the offender has refused or failed to apply for relevant representation, having—
 - (i) been informed of the right to apply for it, and
 - (ii) had the opportunity to do so,
 - (b) the offender's application for relevant representation was refused on financial grounds, or
 - (c) relevant representation was made available to the offender but withdrawn—
 - (i) because of the offender's conduct, or
 - (ii) on financial grounds.

Relevant representation is refused or withdrawn on financial grounds if it appears that the offender's financial resources are such that the offender is not eligible for such representation.

Changes to legislation: Sentencing Act 2020, Section 226 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 09 May 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) [View outstanding changes](#)

Textual Amendments

- F1** Words in s. 226(2)(b) inserted (30.4.2021) by [Counter-Terrorism and Sentencing Act 2021 \(c. 11\)](#), s. 50(1)(i), [Sch. 13 para. 26\(9\)](#)
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Commencement Information

- I1** S. 226 in force at 1.12.2020 by [S.I. 2020/1236](#), [reg. 2](#)

Changes to legislation:

Sentencing Act 2020, Section 226 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 09 May 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations.

View outstanding changes

Changes and effects yet to be applied to :

- s. 226(2) amendment to earlier affecting provision 2020 c. 17, Sch. 22 para. 43 by [2022 c. 32 Sch. 21 para. 10\(4\)\(a\)](#)
- s. 226(3) words inserted by 2020 c. 17, Sch. 22 para. 43(b) (as inserted) by [2022 c. 32 Sch. 21 para. 10\(4\)\(b\)](#)

Changes and effects yet to be applied to the whole Act associated Parts and Chapters:

Whole provisions yet to be inserted into this Act (including any effects on those provisions):

- s. 34A and cross-heading inserted by [2020 c. 17 Sch. 22 para. 1](#)
- s. 80(3)(f) inserted by [2021 c. 17 s. 54\(2\)](#)
- s. 179(4A) inserted by [2020 c. 17 Sch. 22 para. 11\(1\)](#)
- s. 179A inserted by [2020 c. 17 Sch. 22 para. 12\(2\)](#)
- s. 179A(1)(b)(i)(ii) substituted for words by [2020 c. 17 Sch. 22 para. 16\(2\)](#)
- s. 180(5) inserted by [2020 c. 17 Sch. 22 para. 11\(2\)](#)
- s. 186(8A) inserted by [2020 c. 17 Sch. 22 para. 11\(3\)](#)
- s. 202(1A)(1B) inserted by [2020 c. 17 Sch. 22 para. 13\(b\)](#)
- s. 202(1A)(b)(i)(ii) substituted for words by [2020 c. 17 Sch. 22 para. 17\(2\)](#)
- s. 204A inserted by [2020 c. 17 Sch. 22 para. 14\(2\)](#)
- s. 204A(3)(c)(i)(ii) substituted for words by [2020 c. 17 Sch. 22 para. 18\(2\)](#)
- s. 215(1A)(1B) inserted by [2022 c. 32 s. 149\(2\)\(a\)](#)
- s. 215(2A) inserted by [2022 c. 32 s. 149\(2\)\(c\)](#)
- s. 226(2)(ba) and word substituted for s. 226(2)(c)(d) by [2020 c. 17 Sch. 22 para. 43](#)
- s. 230(3A) and words inserted by [2020 c. 17 Sch. 22 para. 2](#)
- s. 234(1)(aa) inserted by [2020 c. 17 Sch. 22 para. 27\(1\)\(b\)](#)
- s. 234(1)(aa) omitted by [2020 c. 17 Sch. 22 para. 28\(1\)](#)
- s. 235(3A) inserted by [2020 c. 17 Sch. 22 para. 27\(2\)](#)
- s. 236(2A) inserted by [2020 c. 17 Sch. 22 para. 29\(3\)](#)
- s. 236(2A)(b) word substituted by [2020 c. 17 Sch. 22 para. 47\(b\)](#)
- s. 301(1A)(1B) inserted by [2022 c. 32 s. 149\(3\)\(a\)](#)
- s. 301(2A) inserted by [2022 c. 32 s. 149\(3\)\(c\)](#)
- s. 323(2A)-(2C) inserted by [2020 c. 17 Sch. 22 para. 85\(3\)](#)
- s. 343(4) inserted by [2022 c. 32 s. 178\(2\)](#)
- s. 348A348B inserted by [2022 c. 32 s. 178\(4\)](#)
- s. 350(6C)(6D) inserted by [2022 c. 32 s. 178\(5\)](#)
- s. 387A inserted by [2021 c. 17 s. 54\(3\)](#)
- s. 397A inserted by [2020 c. 17 Sch. 22 para. 15](#)
- s. 397A(4)(a)(ia) inserted by [2020 c. 17 Sch. 22 para. 19\(2\)\(b\)](#)
- s. 397A(4)(a)(i) words omitted by [2020 c. 17 Sch. 22 para. 19\(2\)\(a\)](#)
- s. 397A(5) words inserted by [2020 c. 17 Sch. 22 para. 19\(3\)](#)
- s. 397A(6)(7) inserted by [2020 c. 17 Sch. 22 para. 19\(4\)](#)
- s. 418(2A) inserted by [2021 c. 11 Sch. 13 para. 43\(5\)](#)
- Sch. 1 para. 13A inserted by [2020 c. 17 Sch. 22 para. 4\(a\)](#)
- Sch. 10 para. 10(5)(d) inserted by [2020 c. 17 Sch. 22 para. 21\(2\)\(a\)](#)
- Sch. 10 para. 10(9A) inserted by [2020 c. 17 Sch. 22 para. 21\(2\)\(c\)](#)
- Sch. 10 para. 11(2)(d) inserted by [2020 c. 17 Sch. 22 para. 21\(3\)\(a\)](#)
- Sch. 10 para. 11(6A) inserted by [2020 c. 17 Sch. 22 para. 21\(3\)\(c\)](#)
- Sch. 10 para. 10(9A) omitted by [2020 c. 17 Sch. 22 para. 74\(1\)\(b\)](#)
- Sch. 10 para. 11(6A) omitted by [2020 c. 17 Sch. 22 para. 75\(1\)\(b\)](#)

- Sch. 10 para. 10(5)(d) words substituted by 2020 c. 17 Sch. 22 para. 25(a)
- Sch. 10 para. 10(5)(d) words substituted by 2020 c. 17 Sch. 22 para. 74(1)(a)
- Sch. 10 para. 11(2)(d) words substituted by 2020 c. 17 Sch. 22 para. 26(a)
- Sch. 10 para. 11(2)(d) words substituted by 2020 c. 17 Sch. 22 para. 75(1)(a)
- Sch. 17A para. 24A inserted by 2020 c. 17, Sch. 22 para. 79A (as inserted) by 2021 c. 11 Sch. 13 para. 11(20)(m)
- Sch. 18 para. 26A and cross-heading inserted by 2020 c. 17 Sch. 22 para. 80
- Sch. 19 para. 22A and cross-heading inserted by 2020 c. 17 Sch. 22 para. 84
- Sch. 26 para. 13A inserted by 2021 c. 11 Sch. 13 para. 43(7)(a)
- Sch. 26 para. 15(a)(iii) inserted by 2021 c. 11 Sch. 13 para. 43(7)(c)
- Sch. 26 para. 19(a)(ia) inserted by 2021 c. 11 Sch. 13 para. 43(7)(e)(i)
- Sch. 26 para. 20(c) inserted by 2021 c. 11 Sch. 13 para. 43(7)(f)
- Sch. 26 para. 20A inserted by 2021 c. 11 Sch. 13 para. 43(7)(g)
- Sch. 26 para. 24A inserted by 2021 c. 11 Sch. 13 para. 43(7)(i)
- Sch. 26 para. 20A(za) inserted by 2022 c. 32 s. 129(3)(d)
- Sch. 27 para. 16(2)(a)(b) substituted for words by 2021 c. 11 Sch. 13 para. 43(8)