

## The probation of the sentenced as a new challenge for the prison system, for social work and for educational sciences in Russia

### La libertad condicional de los sentenciados como un nuevo desafío para el sistema penitenciario, para el trabajo social y para las ciencias de la educación en Rusia

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**Abstract:** This article discusses the importance of ongoing training of specialists in the field of social work with inmates within structures of the Federal Penitentiary Service, specifically in the context of the organization of the probationary period. The importance of the probation for social adaptation, rehabilitation and resocialization of inmates is emphasized. The text also highlights the need for an interdisciplinary approach to both the study and practical organization of the probation.

**Keywords:** probation, social adaptation, social rehabilitation, resocialization, social work with inmates.

**Resumen:** Este artículo aborda la importancia de la formación continua de especialistas en el campo del trabajo social con reclusos dentro de las estructuras del Servicio Penitenciario Federal, específicamente en el contexto de la organización del período de prueba. Se enfatiza la importancia de la libertad condicional para la adaptación social, la rehabilitación y la resocialización de los reclusos. El texto también destaca la necesidad de un enfoque interdisciplinario tanto en el estudio como en la organización práctica de la libertad condicional.

**Palabras clave:** libertad condicional, adaptación social, rehabilitación social, resocialización, trabajo social con reclusos.

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## Introduction

The population of the Russian Federation is 143,4 million people. According to the Legal Portal of the General Prosecutor's Office of the Russian Federation there were 818.986 persons who committed crimes of varying severity in December 2022, which corresponds 0,6% of Russian population. 433.006 persons are serving sentences in places of deprivation of liberty, it corresponds to 53% of the total number of persons who have committed crimes. 483.683 recidivists are also registered (59% of the total number of persons who have committed crimes). In order to reduce the number of persons serving sentences in places of deprivation of liberty and persons who commit crimes repeatedly (recidivists), The Federal Penitentiary Service (FPS) of the Russian Federation took the initiative to establish a probation institute. The probation law was passed in 2023. In addition, a special personnel unit will be created in the FPS system, which specialists will supervise the service's activities during the probationary period of inmates.

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## The probation in Russia

The probation is a new challenge for the Russian reality. The probation in a general sense is understood as a system of conditions created for the convicted person for the purpose of his social adaptation, rehabilitation, and resocialization. The probationary period must become a "bridge" that will connect the social conditions of the place where the sentence was served with the conditions of our society, after passing through it, they will be able to adapt to ordinary life in society, resocialize, reintegrate and rehabilitate themselves socially. In criminal law, concepts that have a meaning close to the concept of the "trial period" are fixed. Article 73 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation enshrines the concept of "conditional punishment", and Article 79 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation enshrines the concept of "conditional release" (Russian Criminal Code, 1996). A conditional punishment means serving a sentence to the convicted person without actual deprivation of liberty. Conditional release implies the termination of the effective imprisonment of a person in places of deprivation of liberty, subject to the conditions regulated by criminal procedure legislation. However, the law does not pay due attention to the conditions and procedure for social adaptation and social rehabilitation. At the same time, society is interested in law-abiding, and socially adjusted and socialized members, which, after serving their sentences, ex-convicts must become. That is why it is planned to create a "probation" service in the structure of the Federal Penitentiary Service, and the corresponding law regulating the activities of the probationary period is approved. In this sense, the problem of finding specialists who can organize the processes of social adaptation, resocialization, and social rehabilitation of inmates is relevant.

In our opinion, the creation of a probation service and the consolidation of the concept of "probation", and the regulation of its mechanisms at the legislative level configure a social order for the professional training of specialists in the field of social work with prisoners (or in the law enforcement system). A social work specialist is a logical and mental category that unites social work specialists with a specialized education that meets the requirements of the Federal State Educational Standards, and specialists who do not have specialized education in accordance with the requirements of the Federal State Educational Standards (undergraduate and postgraduate), but who are performing social work in their organizations.

In the structures of the Federal Penitentiary Service, social work can be carried out both by people who have specialized training in the field of social work, and by those who do not have such training. If we consider the first category of specialists, it should be noted that professional training in secondary vocational or higher educational institutions in the direction of "Social Work" is not enough to organize activities with inmates. Federal state educational standards do not reflect the details of the professional training of a specialist in social work with prisoners or in the law enforcement system or, specifically, in the Federal Penitentiary Service (Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, 2014, 2018a, 2018b). In addition, there is no professional standard defining the job functions and tasks of a specialist in social work with convicts or in the system of law enforcement agencies, in the Russian Federation. It should be noted that the professional training of social work specialists, in institutions of secondary vocational education, bachelor's and master's degrees in social work, in higher education institutions, is primarily focused on solving social problems and meeting the special needs of representatives of such categories of the population such as people with disabilities, orphans, retirees, families in a situation of social danger, etc. Consequently, in order to carry out social work with inmates, specialists with specialized education require additional professional competencies that reflect the specifics of the activities of a social work specialist in the law enforcement system.

People who carry out social work with inmates in the structures of the Federal Penitentiary Service, as a rule, have a legal, psychological or other education. However, the basic knowledge about the technologies of social adaptation and resocialization, as well as the social rehabilitation of inmates, the competences associated with their design and implementation, are the content of professional training in the field of social work.

Therefore, for us, the need for professional training in the field of social work by specialists of the Federal Penitentiary Service is evident. It is important to note that a convicted person is a person who is not only serving a sentence for a committed crime, but also a person who has their own special needs or problems and who sooner or later will have to return to normal life in society. Therefore, to meet the needs and solve the problems of inmates, their integration into society, the prevention of their relapses and marginalization, the specialists of the Federal Penitentiary Service must master the technologies of social work and use them to adapt, resocialize and rehabilitate the representatives of this social group.

Therefore, given the limitation of the educational standards of the federal state of secondary vocational and higher education of professional training of specialists in the field of social work and the need for them to obtain additional professional knowledge, develop competencies that are important for working with inmates, and also taking into account the need to master modern technologies of specialists in social work of social adaptation, social rehabilitation, resocialization of prisoners in the conditions of transition to the period of probation of convicts, in this article we update the problem of the continuing professional education of specialists in the field of social work.

Continuing education is one of the central problems of pedagogical science in the last decade. Scientists believe that the continuing education process integrates formal, non-formal, and informal education (Gorshkova, 2014; Chekaleva et al., 2012; Churbanova & Churbanov, 2015). Formal education refers to the process of intentional mastery of educational programs by an individual at an educational institution, followed by certification and obtaining a document on the level of education. Non-formal education in pedagogical sciences is considered additional, general, or professional. Non-formal vocational education implies the development by an individual of additional competencies, "flexible skills" necessary for the implementation of professional activities, but which do not constitute the content of formal vocational education. By informal education, scientists understand the process of free education, the trajectory of which is determined by the individual himself, considering his interests and educational needs. Given that specialists in the field of social work with inmates have basic professional training (such are the requirements that the Federal Penitentiary Service imposes on applicants), the importance of non-formal and informal education to train specialists in the field of social work is evident and undeniable for us. In this regard, we consider it appropriate to develop additional professional education programs, both professional development programs and professional retraining programs, in the direction of Social work with convicts or Social work in the law enforcement system, for example, the advanced training course "Activity of a specialist in the field of social work with convicts on probation" , professional development course "Technologies of social work with convicts on probation", professional development course "Technologies of social adaptation, social rehabilitation and resocialization of convicts on probation" , etc.

Focusing on the importance and significance of the continuing professional training of specialists in the field of social work with inmates, we highlight the need to coordinate the efforts of specialists from the Federal Penitentiary Service, practitioners in the field of social work, theorists, and social work representatives of educational science. We believe that the transition to probation in prison structures is a common challenge for the prison system, social work, and pedagogy. Therefore, for an adequate response to the emerging challenge, for the study of the probationary period and its organization, for the professional training of specialists in the field of social work with convicts in probationary conditions, an integrated and inclusive approach is needed interdisciplinary. It is obvious that there is a need to build a system of social work as a professional and educational community, pedagogical science, specialist in the field of social work involved in the process of probation of prisoners, the core of which will be to be a specialist in the field of social work with convicts who need additional vocational education in the context of the transition to probation, and the interaction of pedagogical science and social work should provide additional education for a specialist with a certain content (knowledge about the technologies of social adaptation, rehabilitation and resocialization),

learning technologies and a scientific and theoretical foundation, relevant pedagogical knowledge necessary to build the process of continuous professional training of specialists in the field of social work.

### Closing Remarks

Therefore, for an adequate response to the emerging challenge, for the study of the probationary period and its organization, for the professional training of specialists in the field of social work with convicts in probationary conditions, an integrated and inclusive interdisciplinary approach is needed. It is obvious that there is a need to build a system "social work (as a professional and educational community) - pedagogical science - specialist in the field of social work involved in the process of probation of prisoners." The core of which will be to be a specialist in the field of social work with convicts who require additional vocational education in the context of the transition to probation. The interaction of pedagogical science and social work must provide additional education for a specialist with specific content, including knowledge about the technologies of social adaptation, rehabilitation and resocialization, learning technologies and A scientific and theoretical foundation. This structure is essential for building the process of continuous professional training of specialists in the field of social work.

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