

# INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES

## Sending money via the FCO

Prisoners Abroad, 89 – 93 Fonthill Road  
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Charity Number 1093710



The most convenient way to send money to somebody in a foreign prison is through the “Prison Comforts” system operated by the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). Contributions must not collectively exceed £200 per month.

Payments can be made by Postal Order, Bankers Draft, or Building Society cheque or by a bank/chaps transfer direct to the FCO. As of November 2006, the FCO are no longer accepting prison comforts in the form of cash.

- To send a **Postal Order**, please go to your local Post Office and ask them to write out a Postal Order for the agreed amount to the ‘*Foreign and Commonwealth Office*’.
- To send a **Bankers Draft**, or a **Building Society Cheque** you need to ask your local bank/building society to issue a draft/cheque for the agreed amount made payable to the ‘*Foreign and Commonwealth Office*’.
- **Personal cheques** can be accepted but be advised that they will take 6 weeks to clear. Ensure that the cheque guarantee card number and expiry date are written on the back of the cheque. The FCO will not be able to process your payment without these details. The cheque should be made payable to the ‘*Foreign and Commonwealth Office*’.

If you are sending a postal order or a draft/cheque, send it to the following address:

FAO (Name of desk officer and/or relevant desk, e.g. John Smith, France desk)  
Consular Directorate  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
Old Admiralty Building  
LONDON  
SW1A 2PA

If you are sending a postal order or a draft/cheque, send it with a note briefly explaining:

- who the money is from;
- how much is enclosed;
- who it is going to; and
- where they are being held

If possible you should find out the way the prisoner's name is recorded in the prison as this may differ from the correct spelling or order. This will help ensure the prisoner receives the money promptly.

Enclose a stamped addressed envelope if you would like a receipt.

- To arrange for a **Chaps transfer** (received within 12 –24 Hours), simply ask your bank to give you an appropriate application form to fill with the FCO's account details which are as follows:

Bank:	Paymaster General
Account name:	FCO Multivote Account
Sort code:	16-53-60
Account #:	07250000
Address:	NatWest Bank, 6 Coldharbour Lane Hayes, Middlesex, UB3 3EL

- To arrange for a **BACS transfer** (takes 3 – 5 days to clear), simply ask your bank to transfer funds to the FCO's account, details which are as follows:

Bank:	Paymaster General
Account Name:	FCO Multivote Account
Sort code:	10-14-99
Account #:	07250000

If you arrange a chaps transfer then please ask your bank to send a copy of the chaps form to the relevant desk officer by fax. You can obtain the fax number from the desk officer themselves or from Prisoners Abroad. Once the FCO's bank has confirmed the funds have reached their account they will release the funds.

The money is sent weekly (every Thursday) to the British Consul nearest to the prison where the person is held, and takes 7-10 days to clear into a prisoner's account. If the prisoner is then moved to another prison, the money is forwarded with the relevant files.

Cash should never be sent through the mail direct to the prison.

If you require this leaflet in a large print format, please contact us. Our details are below.

Tel: 0808 172 0098 (free from within the UK)  
+44 20 7561 6820 from outside the UK

Email: [info@PrisonersAbroad.org.uk](mailto:info@PrisonersAbroad.org.uk)

Mail: Prisoners Abroad, 89-93 Fonthill Road, London  
N4 3JH, United Kingdom