

Inspection visit to the detention facilities of the Police Stations of Valga and Võru

On 17 March 2016, the advisers of the Chancellor of Justice made an unannounced inspection of the detention facilities of the Valga and Võru Police Stations of the Police Prefecture of the Police and Border Guard Board (hereinafter the Valga and Võru Detention Facility, respectively).

As a result of the inspection, the Chancellor of Justice made the following findings and recommendations:

- the absence of a courtyard in the Detention Facilities of Valga and Võru for taking a walk outdoors is against the law in force and does not grant detainees the statutory right to stay outdoors. Both buildings have a cell with a window that can be opened and detainees are allowed to stay in the cell for one hour every day. According to the Chancellor of Justice, the detainee's right to stay outdoors is not granted if the detainee is placed in a cell that has an open window for the period designated for an outdoor walk;
- the conditions in the Valga Detention Facility are poor in comparison with the conditions available in numerous new or redecorated police buildings. The interior decoration of the cells needs to be refreshed and new and modified furniture is required;
- in the Võru Detention Facility, there is 24/7 video surveillance in many cells. The use of video surveillance in the cell of a person must be a weighted decision in every single instance. The need for and scope of video surveillance over persons detained in the Võru Detention Facility must be decided separately with regard to every individual and video surveillance must be applied only if it is indispensably required (e.g. due to the health condition of the person);
- there were various expired OTC medicinal products in the Valga Detention Facility during the visit. These must be destroyed in accordance with the requirements;
- no major or fundamental irregularities were detected in examining the personal files of detainees. Nevertheless, the Chancellor of Justice drew the attention of the Valga Detention Facility to the fact that the material describing the rights and duties of detained persons must be with the detained person in the cell, not in the personal file of the detainee.