



**POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER**
for Leicester,
Leicestershire & Rutland
Your Communities - Your Commissioner

POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

Independent Custody Volunteer Policy
2021

Volunteer Policy

Policy Owner:

Chief Executive

Role Responsible:

Volunteers Manager

Protective Marking:

GSC Marking

Date of next review:

01/08/2024

Review log

Date	Minor / Significant / No change	Section	Author
23/11/2021	Updated policy	Support and supervision	D Dave

Police and Crime Commissioner's Foreward



I welcome volunteer involvement and recognise the valuable support they provide to the work of my team and Leicestershire Police. This has been recognised within my [Police and Crime Plan 2021-2024](#).

Those who volunteer care about where we live and the communities we belong to and volunteer to help improve the quality of life for others.

I recognise that people from all walks of life volunteer for many different reasons and for the benefit of others. Volunteering is a great way to share your enthusiasm, skills and ideas whilst meeting like-minded people. By volunteering for the Independent Custody Visiting Scheme (ICVS) you will be making a positive contribution to community development in our area. Volunteers are vital to our work.

I encourage volunteer involvement equally across all sections of the community and aim to ensure that the groups reflect the diverse strands of our society.

Continuous training is provided for all our volunteers and I strive to ensure that the environment in which our volunteers operate is safe, secure and healthy and free from harassment, intimidation, bullying, violence and discrimination.

I also ensure that volunteers are paid out-of-pocket expenses

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'P. O. Hall', written over a horizontal line.

Police and Crime Commissioner for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland

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1. Introduction

This is the Independent Custody Volunteer policy for the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC). The volunteer policy has been created to show our volunteers and potential volunteers that we have spent time and care in planning how volunteers will be welcomed into the Independent Custody Visiting Scheme we have in place. It also outlines that all volunteers will be treated in a fair and consistent way. It should also help our volunteers understand what support is available to them and what they can expect from the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC).

2. Summary of Independent Custody Visiting Scheme

- 2.1 The Independent Custody Visiting Scheme was established in 1984 on a non-statutory basis to provide assurance to local communities about how those in the custody of the police are being treated. In 2003 custody visiting became statutory and the Home Office issued [National Standards](#) and a [Code of Practice](#).
- 2.2 Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs) are a team made up of volunteers from the local community. ICVs come from a variety of backgrounds and sections from the community and must be able to interact with others from a variety of different backgrounds. ICV's must be over 18 but there is no upper age limit. For more information about the criteria and application process please see ['Becoming an ICV'](#).
- 2.3 ICVs undertake visits in pairs to one of the 3 Custody Suites in Leicester.
- 2.4 ICVs speak with the detainees providing an independent check on the welfare of detainees in custody, and the conditions in which they are being held.
- 2.5 The work of custody visitors offers protection to detainees and transparency of the detention processes. The work also provides the Commissioner assurances of the treatment of detainees by Leicestershire Police.

3. Recruitment and Applications

- 3.1 All PCC volunteering opportunities will be widely advertised and promoted to ensure that they are accessible to all members of the community and that fair process are followed.
- 3.2 The PCC is firmly committed to equality and diversity in all areas of the PCC's work and recognises that equality and diversity extends beyond ethnicity and covers a wide range of differences that enrich our communities, and includes age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, and sexual orientation. The PCC values the differing ideas, abilities and backgrounds as this enriches the work of the PCC and Leicestershire Police.
- 3.3 Advertisements are placed in a variety of local media outlets as well as libraries, universities, community centres, public buildings, supermarkets, places of religious worship, schools and volunteering websites.
- 3.4 Interested persons can apply via the Leicestershire Police HR e-recruitment portal. The e-recruitment portal will consist of an application form, role description, person specification and information about the schemes. A link to the portal can also be found on the [PCC's Website](#).
- 3.5 The candidate application forms will be assessed against an essential criterion to determine if they are successful at shortlist or not.

- 3.6 Each shortlisted applicant will be interviewed and all applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome of the interview. Appointments will be made solely on merit, subject to the outcome of vetting. Successful candidates will be provided with an appointment letter informing them of a commencement date and details of induction training. Included with the appointment letter will be a written memorandum of understanding summarising the agreed responsibilities and the legitimate expectations of the volunteers and that of the OPCC.
- 3.7 Feedback will be provided to unsuccessful applications, on request.
- 3.8 Further details on the process can be found on the PCCs' website.

4. Vetting

- 4.1 Appointments are subject to vetting or security clearance to an appropriate level as determined by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) Vetting Policy which will be at NPPV Level 2 Abbreviated. Past offending is not an automatic barrier to acceptance and each case will be considered on its specific circumstances. Any failure to disclose convictions will be treated very seriously and lead to exclusion. For those undertaking custody visiting persons detained under the Terrorism Acts vetting will be undertaken at NPPV Level 3.
- 4.2 Vetting renewal will be undertaken for all volunteers as part of the three-year reappointment process.
- 4.3 It is a requirement that volunteers inform the Volunteer Manager immediately if there are any changes in personal circumstances during their appointment. Changes to personal circumstances include the following:
- Any new persons residing in same household
 - Change in step parents and step siblings
 - Arrest, police caution, civil or criminal proceedings brought against you
 - Any new criminal associations through close relatives (brought about by marriage, civil partnership, friendship, residence, overseas etc.)
 - Involvement in, or approaches by, any political, religious or protest group of an extreme nature
 - Association with any individual involved in criminal activity or any person who associates with others involved in criminal activity

5. Volunteer Commitment Requirement

- 5.1 The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) sets out the minimum commitment requirement and can be found on the [PCCs' website](#).
- 5.2 Volunteers must be committed to undertaking their voluntary duties. It is understood that volunteers will have other external commitments, and the PCC is mindful of this. However, where a volunteer fails to commit sufficiently to the scheme, an explanation will be requested. In the absence of a good reason for the lack of commitment, consideration will be given as to whether that person should continue in the role.
- 5.3 Volunteers will need to keep the OPCC informed of any issues relating to their own ability to meet the requirements of the scheme, for example, changes in personal circumstances, or periods where they are unavailable to undertake their duties.

6. Probationary Periods and Reviews

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- 6.1 Once training is complete, volunteers will be required to complete a probationary period of six months. Successful appointments will then be confirmed subject to satisfactory adherence to the schemes' provisions, and will be set for an initial term of three years. There is no maximum stated length of appointment for volunteers unless stated.
- 6.2 All new volunteers will be required to complete a six month probationary period during which initial training must be completed. Appointments will be confirmed following the successful completion of the six month probationary period.
- 6.3 Appointments will subsequently be reviewed, and volunteers may be appointed for a further term of three years. Re-vetting will also be undertaken at this time.
- 6.4 The key factors which will be considered in each review are the continuing ability and willingness of volunteers to carry out their role effectively, whilst demonstrating impartiality and objectivity at all times.

7. Support and supervision

- 7.1 Formal supervision takes place during the three year review process for experienced custody visitors and 6 months to one year for newly recruited custody visitors. The Volunteer Manager is available for informal support at any time during the working week by email or telephone, a face to face meeting can also be arranged. The Co-ordinator team are available by email and telephone to provide informal support and assist with queries. ICVs must inform the Volunteer Manager of any medical conditions that could affect their ability to carry out the role, this will enable the Volunteer Manager to put reasonable adjustments in place to support them.

7.2 Wellbeing Support Provider – Health Assured

Our Wellbeing Support Provider, Health Assured, offers a comprehensive support service for any concerns that independent custody visitors may have at any time and is available to all independent custody visitors, on a 24/7 basis. The service includes a 24-hour helpline, counselling, online therapy, legal, financial and medical advice, a wellbeing portal that contains information, programmes and advice on making the most of personal wellbeing. Health Assured have also developed a mobile app so that volunteers can access all the information, programmes and features on their personal device.

8. Recognition and Awards

- 8.1 The recognition for the immense time given by the volunteers and the contribution to the OPCC and Leicestershire Police is recognised.
- 8.2 Informal thanks will be given regularly to show how valued and appreciated part of the team they are.
- 8.3 Volunteers will receive long service certificates 6,12,18 years' service with the scheme. These will be presented by the PCC.
- 8.4 Volunteers will be invited to an annual recognition and awards night with the PCC and Senior Officers from Leicestershire Police.
- 8.5 The Volunteer Manager will nominate volunteers for the Lord Ferrers Award annually for their outstanding contributions to volunteering.

9. Training

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- 9.1 It is expected that all volunteers will undertake an initial training prior to commencing their role, which includes training on their role, health and safety, data protection and equality and diversity. Training strategy details are provided in the ICV Scheme Handbook.

10. Expenses

- 10.1 Travelling expenses, including car park charges where appropriate, can be claimed by volunteers for all visits and attendance at team meetings and training sessions. The allowances are aligned to HM Revenue and Customs rates. Claims should be submitted on form E18 on a monthly basis, or within a 2 month period of the expense being incurred, direct to the OPCC. Claims submitted outside of this timescale may not be reimbursed. Allowances paid are as follows:-

- Car/Van 45p per mile
- Motorcycle 24p per mile
- Bicycle 20p per mile
- Carrying extra passenger 5p per mile

- 10.2 Reimbursement of taxi fares will be paid for certain justifiable circumstances e.g. volunteers requiring particular accessible transport or when limited public transport is available to them when attending meetings/training during unsocial hours.

- 10.3 If volunteers require train tickets to attend a course / conference linked to their role, their tickets will be arranged and paid for by the OPCC.

- 10.4 All expenses must be submitted on the expense claim forms provided by the OPCC. When completing the expense claim, volunteers must be specific with mileage claims.

- 10.5 Volunteers who receive state benefits of any kind should notify the Department of Work and Pensions, or other relevant authority, of their role as a volunteer for the PCC.

11. Insurance

- 11.1 The PCC holds the appropriate liability insurance for volunteers, to cover them whilst undertaking their volunteer duties. This does not extend to motor insurance cover.

- 11.2 Volunteers making use of their own private vehicles when undertaking their role are strongly advised to check with their own insurers that they are covered for this purpose.

- 11.3 The PCC will not be liable for individuals' insufficient level of motor insurance.

12. Health and Safety

- 12.1 Volunteers will receive health and safety advice, relevant to their role, as part of their training.

- 12.2 Volunteers will be asked to complete a medical questionnaire, relevant to their role, and are advised to keep the OPCC informed of any changes to their health which would impact upon their ability to undertake their volunteering role.

- 12.3 The scheme has a Risk Assessment detailing all the possible risks. All volunteers will be asked to familiarise themselves with the content of the relevant Risk Assessment, and comply with the control measures set out.

13. Safeguarding

- 13.1 The OPCC has appointed a Safeguarding Officer to manage any safeguarding issues raised by volunteers.
- 13.2 Any immediate safeguarding issues identified at the time of the custody visits are immediately raised with the Custody Sergeant.
- 13.2 Safeguarding Policy can be provided on request.
- 13.3 Safeguarding Training is provided to all volunteers.

14. Complaints and Appeals

Procedures are in place for complaints. These are broken down as follows:

- Complaints Received Against Volunteers
- Complaints Received Against Police Personnel
- Complaints Received Against OPCC Staff

Detailed procedures for the above complaints and the appeals process are located within the ICV Scheme Manual.

15. Termination of appointment

- 15.1 The PCC has the right to terminate the appointment of any volunteer whose conduct is not felt to be of the expected standard. Full details of the procedure can be found in the handbook.
- 15.2 Volunteers will sign a Memorandum of Understanding on joining the scheme. Volunteers will be expected to abide by the standards set out in this document. If conduct falls below that standard, the PCC will consider whether that person should continue in the role.

16. Confidentiality

- 16.1 During the course of their duties, volunteers will acquire confidential information about policing issues. Volunteers need to be aware that the unauthorised disclosure of facts concerning police operations or the security of police stations may constitute an offence under Section 5 of the Official Secrets Act 1989.
- 16.2 Volunteers will receive training on data protection, and confidentiality, and will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement on joining the volunteer scheme.

17. Disposing of Documentation

- 17.1 Volunteers leaving the scheme must ensure that all documentation relating to their role is appropriately disposed of or returned to the OPCC.
- 17.2 Where volunteers meet to review specific documents, these documents must not be taken away from the meeting or off police premises.
- 17.3 Any identification badges must be returned to the OPCC when a volunteer leaves the scheme.

18. Equality and Diversity

- 18.1 The PCC is firmly committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all local people and communities. It aims to ensure that in its organisational structures, decision-making processes, ways of working, communicating and managing, diversity is welcomed and embraced.
- 18.2 The OPCC shall treat all individuals, regardless of age, colour, disability, ethnic or national origin, gender, gender reassignment, marital status, nationality, race, religion and belief and sexual orientation with dignity and respect. It shall provide a working environment which is free from harassment, bullying, victimisation or discrimination and in all our contacts with members of the community the principles of respect, dignity and fairness will be upheld.
- 18.3 Staff and volunteers of the OPCC will demonstrate their commitment to this statement by ensuring that all policies and procedures reflect these aims and by challenging any behaviour which fails to uphold these principles.
- 18.4 The OPCC extends this commitment to cover all aspects of diversity.

19. Data Protection Act 2018, General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

- 19.1 The Data Protection Act 2018 – General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), replaces current data privacy legislation. This law gives more rights to you as an individual and more obligations to organisations holding your personal data. Volunteers will be provided with a consent form for completion when appointed.
- 19.2 One of the key rights enshrined in the new legislation is a right to be informed, which means that the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) must give you detailed information about the ways in which we use, share and store your personal information.
- 19.3 The PCC has published a Privacy Notice which is documented on the PCC's website. The PCC may need to make changes to the Privacy Notice from time to time, so please continue to check our websites for updates. If there are important changes that affect the way we handle your personal data we will contact you directly where instructed to do so by the new legislation.

20. Publicity Guidelines

- 20.1 The PCC encourages and promotes the independent custody visiting scheme.
- 20.2 When volunteers are involved in any form of publicity, they are asked to remember that the purpose of this publicity is to inform the public of the schemes, and not to discuss or draw attention to any information acquired whilst undertaking their duties.
- 20.3 All requests made to the volunteer from the press, or local groups/organisations regarding the volunteer scheme should be directed to the Volunteer Manager in the first instance.
- 20.4 Volunteers are requested to remember that they are accountable to the PCC, and not the members of the press or the individual members of the public.

Volunteer Policy

This is the Independent Custody Volunteer Policy of The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. It will be reviewed every 3 years

Date of next review: 1st August 2024

Signed  _____

Position Lizzie Starr, Interim Chief Executive Officer



Signed _____

Position Rupert Matthews, Police and Crime Commissioner