



## Police Support Volunteer Policy (Surrey and Sussex) (997/2025)

### Abstract

This policy describes how Police Support Volunteers are engaged and deployed across Surrey Police and Sussex Police.

### Policy

#### 1. Introduction

1.1 Surrey Police and Sussex Police (hereafter referred to as the Forces) support and encourage the engagement of Police Support Volunteers (PSVs) across policing, recognising that their contribution helps to achieve an engaged and effective police service.

1.2 The Forces recognise the benefit of a diverse and representative volunteering programme and are committed to recruitment and engagement of volunteers from across communities in accordance with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy (Surrey and Sussex) (193).

1.3 PSVs play an important part in meeting the complexities and demands faced by both the Forces through the value-adding activities that they carry out.

#### 2. Scope

2.1 The policy provides a clear structure for the recruitment and management of PSVs that reflects the unique nature of volunteering relationships.

2.2 The policy applies to police officers and police staff who are involved in any part of the PSV process, particularly line managers.

#### 3. Policy Statement

3.1 PSVs undertake a variety of roles to support and enhance the day-to-day work carried out by police officers and police staff. PSVs offer their time, dedication, skills and experience in these roles on a voluntary basis. PSVs are recruited, vetted, trained, supported and directed by the Forces. The volunteering undertaken by PSVs complements, supports and enhances the service delivered to communities across Surrey and Sussex.

### Procedure

#### 1. Development of PSV Roles

1.1 PSV roles must be Force led to enhance, support and complement the roles of paid police officers and/or police staff. PSVs will not replace employees or cover staff vacancies and shortages.

1.2 The integration of PSVs into the Forces works best where suitable tasks are identified before any recruitment takes place and that these tasks are clearly documented.

1.3 In order to recruit a PSV, the first step is to create or update an existing PSV role profile using the current Force template. The most up to date role profile template for Sussex can be accessed here and for Surrey can be obtained from the Volunteering Team.

1.4 All PSV roles must have a dedicated line manager and their job title should be included within the PSV role profile. The role of the line manager is to recruit, supervise and provide ongoing support to the PSV throughout their volunteering journey.

1.5 Once the PSV role profile has been drafted, it must be submitted to the Force Volunteer Lead for approval; this approval process will include consultation with Unison.

1.6 During the development of the role profile, any risks associated with the volunteering activity must be considered; there may be certain tasks which are not suitable for PSVs to undertake such as those involving exposure to distressing material.

## **2. Line Manager Responsibilities**

2.1 In addition to recruitment and selection responsibilities outlined below, the line manager is responsible for:

- Providing their PSV with an induction to the role and the location of volunteering.
- Assisting their PSV in accessing Force systems and authorising a 365 Teams licence if required.
- Providing initial / ongoing training, advice, wellbeing support and guidance.
- Ensuring their PSVs records their volunteering hours on the relevant system (DutySheet in Surrey and SAP in Sussex) for health and safety and insurance purposes.
- Supervising and reviewing PSV output.
- Conducting regular reviews and providing constructive feedback.
- Monitoring compliance of College Learn completion.
- Authorising expenses.
- Recognising PSV contribution – (e.g. nominating their PSV for internal and external awards).

- Resolving any problems that arise (with the support of the Force Volunteering Lead if required).
- Completion of annual vetting appraisals.

2.2 If a line manager changes, the management of the volunteer must be passed to the new line manager in the same team / Department and the Force Volunteer Lead informed.

### **3. Recruitment and Selection**

3.1 Once the Force Volunteer Lead has confirmed the role has been approved by Unison, the line manager should use all stages of e-recruitment (Talentlink) from advertising to hiring. Guidance for the use of Talentlink can be found on the intranet and support can be provided by the Force Volunteer Lead.

3.2 Line managers will shortlist the applications received for the role. Any applicants that have requested their application is considered under the terms of the Guarantee Interview Scheme (GIS) should be invited to an informal interview if they have evidenced the knowledge, skills and experience required for the role (as outlined within the advert and role profile).

3.3 Shortlisted applicants will be invited to attend an informal interview in the format of a professional discussion. This will include a Code of Ethics (Code of Ethics | College of Policing) question and may be structured around the Competency values Framework (Competency and values framework (CVF) | College of Policing).

Line managers can refer to the Force Interview Question Bank for appropriate questions.

For further guidance, please contact the Volunteer Lead for the Force.

3.4 All applicants should be informed of the outcome of their informal interview / professional discussion. The line manager should maintain contact with the successful candidates throughout the recruitment process.

3.5 As part of the recruitment process, PSVs will undergo pre-volunteering checks including a medical questionnaire, references and vetting. The level of vetting will be determined by the task that the volunteer will be performing for the Force(s). Advice on the appropriate level of vetting can be obtained from the Joint Force Vetting Unit (JFVU). Please refer to the Joint Force Vetting Policy (Surrey and Sussex) (592) for further information.

3.6 Any adjustments identified by Occupational Health during the medical clearance process must be considered by the line manager.

3.7 When all aspects of the pre-volunteering clearance process have been completed, the line manager will be notified by the People Resolution Centre (Sussex) or the Recruitment Team (Surrey). At this point, a start date can be agreed between the PSV and the line manager.

3.8 Once all pre-volunteering clearances have been completed, the volunteer will be added to the Force's Human Resources Management System and issued with a Force Identification Number. A PSV identity / access card will then be issued.

3.9 Prior to starting their volunteering or on their first day of voluntary service, PSVs will be required to read and sign all relevant Force documents including the Police Support Volunteer Agreement (Surrey and Sussex) and Official Secrets Act 1989 (Sussex only).

3.10 All PSVs will be issued with a volunteer identity card and be asked to sign a number of documents including the Police Support Volunteer Agreement. (Official Secrets Act 1989 - Sussex only).

#### **4. Eligibility**

4.1 To become a PSV, an individual must be 18 years old at the point of application (there is no upper age limit).

4.2 Applicants must have a minimum of three years residency in the UK.

4.3 Further information regarding eligibility can be obtained from the Force's Recruitment Teams.

#### **5. Induction**

5.1 All PSVs will be offered an induction to the relevant Force(s) which will include an input on professional standards and the Policing Code of Ethics.

5.2 PSVs will be provided with a local induction which includes an introduction to their role, their team, and the relevant facilities.

5.3 Volunteers will be provided with a College Learn login and must complete all mandatory packages (and any other packages that are relevant to their role) as soon as possible after their start date.

#### **6. Voluntary Hours**

6.1 The number of hours a PSV contributes will vary depending on the role and the individual volunteer.

6.2 As a guide, PSVs will volunteer for a minimum of two hours and a maximum of 16 hours per week.

6.3 During the development of a PSV role profile, Unison will be consulted and will consider the number of hours proposed for the role.

6.4 All PSVs must log on and off the relevant system (DutySheet in Surrey and SAP in Sussex) for health and safety and insurance purposes. It is the responsibility of the line manager to ensure that their PSV complies with this requirement (refer to section 2.1 above).

6.5 PSVs are not subject to the provisions of the Working Time Regulations 1998. However, where a PSV also has a paid role, these regulations provide guidance to ensure that the number of voluntary hours committed is not excessive and/or potentially detrimental to their health and wellbeing.

## **7. Legal Framework**

7.1 PSVs are not employees or workers within the meaning of employment legislation and have no employment status. There is no contract of service or contract for services.

7.2 Terms which are indicative of an employment relationship should not be used in relation to PSVs (e.g., 'employer', 'employee', 'employment', 'contract', 'staff', 'workers' etc.)

7.3 The Forces do not enter into any form of legally binding agreement or contract with a PSV, either in writing or verbally, that suggests the presence of an employment relationship.

## **8. Risk Assessment**

8.1 The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 protects employees and others who may be affected by our work activities. This includes those volunteering for, or on behalf of the Forces (e.g., PSVs).

8.2 It is the personal responsibility and duty of all PSVs to conduct themselves in such a way so as not put themselves or others at foreseeable risk of harm.

## **9. Training**

9.1 PSVs perform many diverse tasks. The training they receive should be appropriate to the complexity and demands of their volunteer role.

9.2 All PSVs are required to complete all mandatory College Learn packages (e-learning) and compliance should be monitored by the line manager.

## **10. Changes in Volunteer Status**

10.1 PSVs who volunteer to undertake additional roles or responsibilities must inform the relevant Force Volunteer Lead and the JFVU by the completion of a change of circumstances form. Approval must be obtained before any additional volunteering commences.

10.2 PSVs must notify the JFVU of any personal change of circumstances.

These changes include:

- Job role
- Address

- Co-residents
- Partner / relationship
- Social media, email accounts and contact numbers
- Business interests, additional work and contact numbers
- Financial circumstances
- Involvement with the police
- Notifiable associates
- Any updates that the PSV / line manager feels is pertinent to make vetting aware of.

All change of circumstances notifications will be handled confidentially by the JFVU.

10.3 Circumstances may arise which lead to a volunteer role ceasing within Force or a PSV may wish to leave their current PSV role. In these situations, PSV's will be supported to find an alternative role. If an alternative PSV position does become available within four months the PSV will be resigned but will be encouraged to apply for future PSV roles.

## **11. Wellbeing**

11.1 The Forces aspire to provide healthy and professional workplaces, delivering evidence-based wellbeing support to all colleagues to deliver the best policing service to our communities.

11.2 All PSVs can access the Employee and Volunteer Assistance Programme (EVAP). This is a free benefit service to all police officers, police staff, special constables and PSVs and is funded by Surrey and Sussex Police. This confidential service offers short term counselling and professional support services by qualified and experienced counsellors.

11.3 A key factor of positive wellbeing is personal responsibility. Therefore, PSVs should be supported to maintain and improve their wellbeing. Further information about wellbeing can be found on the intranet.

11.4 Surrey Police and Sussex Police have a number of support groups relevant to protected characteristics. The role of the support groups is to fully represent the view and the needs of their members, ensuring that these are appropriately addressed and actioned.

Staff networks provide specialist support, advice and guidance services to police officers, police staff and volunteers, promote equality of opportunity and good relations between the organisation and people who identify with a protected characteristic. More information can be found via staff networks.

11.5 PSVs can access Multifaith rooms which are located within Wellbeing rooms across the Forces.

11.6 PSVs who experience difficulties or problems with their physical or mental health as a direct result of their volunteering activity should discuss their concerns with their line manager who may signpost them to appropriate services such as wellbeing hub or refer the volunteer to occupational health for an assessment.

11.7 If a line manager has concerns regarding a PSVs capacity for their volunteering role, this should be discussed with the volunteer an Occupational Health referral made at the earliest opportunity.

## **12. Leave of Absence**

12.1 To support the retention of a PSV, it may be necessary to allow individuals to take a leave of absence (LOA) from their voluntary role.

12.2 If a line manager is unable to keep a role open whilst a volunteer is on a LOA, the PSV may need to seek an alternative role when they return.

12.3 If a PSV requires a break from their role, the PSV can request a LOA for up to six months, providing they meet the following criteria:

- Performance, conduct and attendance is regarded as satisfactory by their line manager.
- There are no discipline or complaint enquiries being conducted.

12.4 A LOA of up to six months can be authorised by the line manager. LOAs of over six months should be referred to the relevant Force Volunteer Lead for consideration.

12.5 During a LOA, the PSV's identification card will be deactivated and retained by the line manager.

12.6 Whilst on a LOA, PSVs must not act in such a way that would suggest they are still an active PSV.

12.7 Any conduct during the LOA which calls into question the individual's suitability to volunteer as a PSV may result in action being taken by Professional Standards and/or the JFVU.

12.8 Prior to returning from a LOA, the PSV will be required to complete a change of circumstance form and submit this to the JFVU.

12.9 If a PSV decides not to return after a LOA, they should inform their line manager at the earliest opportunity.

## **13. Parental Leave**

13.1 PSVs can request parental leave via their line manager; all requests will be considered in accordance with the Parenting Leave Policy (Surrey and Sussex) (913)

## **14. Unauthorised Absence**

14.1 Where a PSV has not volunteered for a period of three months or more, and all efforts to re-engage with the individual have been unsuccessful, the PSV will be resigned by the Force Lead.

## **15. Conduct**

15.1 All PSVs are representatives of the Forces and as such, conduct of the highest standard is expected.

15.2 PSVs must comply with the Code of Ethics and all relevant Force policies and procedures.

15.3 PSVs must ensure that activities undertaken in their private lives do not affect the integrity of the Forces or compromise the PSV programme. If anything occurs which may compromise their position, the PSV must advise their nominated line manager immediately.

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## **16. Reporting Concerns and Whistleblowing**

16.1 If a PSV wishes to raise a concern regarding a colleague, officer or member of police staff, they should speak to their line manager in the first instance, who will address the concern. Should the matter relate to the line manager, then the PSV should contact the Volunteer lead for the Force.

16.2 If the PSV feels they are unable to speak to their line manager or Volunteer Lead, regarding a concern about an officer / police staff or volunteer, they can:

- Make a report on the Complaints | Sussex Police or Complaints | Surrey Police.
- Ring 101

It is not necessary to provide a name, but this is encouraged. A contact telephone number or email address will be required so that further contact can be made. Refer to Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy (Surrey and Sussex) (612) for further information.

16.3 Anonymous reports can be made via Break the Silence - Anonymous Reporting (Sussex) and Anonymous Reporting (Surrey)

This link is to make a secure report relating to integrity, corruption, or serious misconduct- based concerns direct to the Force Anti-Corruption Unit (ACU), where individuals feel they cannot report their concerns via other means.

## **17. Identification**

17.1 PSVs are required to wear their identification pass at all times whilst they are on volunteering duty. Identification passes should only be worn whilst volunteering and not at any other time.

17.2 PSVs should not wear their identification pass or behave in a manner which would give any members of the public (or the police) the impression that they are police officers or police staff.

If a PSV is requested by a member of the public to act as a police officer or police staff, the PSV must make their status clear and state that they do not have the authority to act in this manner.

17.3 PSV identification passes must be returned when they leave the Force.

## **18. Dress Code and Uniform**

18.1 Clothing worn by PSVs should be appropriate to the tasks the volunteer is performing.

18.2 Some PSV roles require the issue of uniform; when a PSV is issued with a uniform they will be required to sign a uniform agreement.

18.3 PSVs must only wear their uniform whilst they are volunteering for their Force and not at any other time.

When travelling to and from the volunteering location, uniform must be covered by non-uniform clothing and the Surrey / Sussex Police branding should not be visible. This is for the personal safety of the volunteer.

18.4 Faith based clothing can be provided by Uniform Services upon request.

18.5 Uniform must be worn in accordance with the Force's Uniform Policy (Surrey and Sussex) (1219)

18.6 Uniform remains the property of the relevant Force and must be returned on request or when the PSV leaves the Force.

## **19. Insurance**

19.1 The Forces liability insurance policies will extend to indemnify PSVs, whilst they are conducting volunteer activities for the Forces, subject to the usual terms, conditions and excesses.

19.2 There is no upper age limit in respect of general cover and no distinction is made between volunteers of different ages.

## **20. Travel and Expenses**

20.1 Care must be taken not to confuse a PSV with a worker under the legal definition, which would give the PSV employment status. If a PSV were to receive payments or non-cash benefits, other than those for out of pocket expenses or subsistence, this would jeopardise the legal status of a PSV as a volunteer.

20.2 Individuals should not be financially disadvantaged by their volunteering tasks and are entitled to claim for pre-determined out of pocket expenses incurred whilst undertaking activities on behalf of the Forces.

20.3 Expenses incurred by PSVs will be paid on production of VAT receipts. Reasonable travel expenses can only be claimed for travel undertaken to or from the place of volunteering (or training), or while volunteering. Travel expenses must be authorised by the nominated line manager.

20.4 PSVs living outside of their Force will only be entitled to claim travel expenses from the relevant Force border.

20.5 If using their own vehicle, it is the PSVs responsibility to ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy and appropriately insured and that they have informed their insurer that they are using their own vehicle for the purposes of volunteering. PSVs must have business insurance on their own vehicle in order to claim expenses from the Force.

Refer to

Sussex: Business Travel & Subsistence Policy (917)

Surrey: Business Travel and Subsistence Guidance

20.6 PSVs that use a personal vehicle to travel to and from their normal place of volunteering and are unable to park at the police premises, may be able to claim car parking charges subject to the agreement of their line manager. Parking expenses will require a receipt and a ticket which must be shared with the line manager authorising the expenses.

20.7 Any fines incurred whilst volunteering (e.g. for speeding or parking) will not be paid by the Forces.

20.8 Train and bus fares may be claimed when submitted with a VAT receipt. Taxi fares will not usually be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances.

20.9 All claims must be submitted in a timely manner, ideally monthly. Claims which are not submitted within three months or within the current financial year will not be authorised.

20.10 Police staff who are also PSVs who travel to their place of employment and then perform a PSV duty at the same location, may only claim additional mileage expenses beyond their normal commute to / from their workplace.

20.11 All expenses will be attributed to Divisional or Department budget codes in Sussex and to the volunteering budget in Surrey.

## **21. Performance Management**

21.1 PSVs are not required to have a formal performance review, but it is good practice for line managers to hold regular informal discussions with their volunteer(s) to check on their wellbeing, provide feedback, identify any other opportunities, and talk through any issues.

## **22. Reward and Recognition**

22.1 The contribution of PSVs can be recognised in the same way as police officers and police staff. Further information about this can be on the intranet.

Recognition for Surrey

Sussex Recognition

## **23. Resolution of Issues and Complaints**

23.1 All complaints relating to PSVs must be treated sensitively and in a confidential manner.

23.2 If a PSV is unhappy with any aspect of their volunteering, they should be given the opportunity to discuss the matter with their nominated line manager and/or the Force Volunteer Lead.

23.3 Wherever possible, any issues should be resolved informally at the lowest level of management.

23.4 Where no satisfactory resolution is agreed by the involved parties, the Force Volunteer Lead should in all cases try to resolve the matter in the most appropriate way with support from the line manager.

23.5 If the complaint remains unresolved or further action is required following discussion with the Force Volunteer Lead, the matter should be referred to the Divisional / Department Head.

23.6 A PSV may be asked to stop volunteering for the Force for operational or organisational reasons, or due to a potential breach in the required standards of behaviour. In these circumstances there are no grounds for appeal.

23.7 There is a Force duty to record public facing complaints involving any PSV within a specific time period so these should always be directed to PSD. PSD, in consultation with the Force Volunteer Lead will determine the outcome, with the involvement of the Divisional / Department Head if necessary.

## **24. Leaving the Volunteer Programme**

24.1 PSVs may resign from their role at any time and inevitably volunteers will leave as a result of changes in their personal circumstances, or if the task for which they were volunteering has ended.

24.2 No notice is required from the police to terminate volunteering services; however, the termination of these services must be handled sensitively. Should such a situation arise, and the PSV is not responsive to guidance and help offered by their line manager, the matter should be referred to the Force Volunteer Lead in the first instance.

24.3 Whenever a PSV leaves, they should be reminded of their continuing obligations with regard to the Official Secrets Act 1989 and the Data Protection Act 2018.

24.4 All uniform and/or equipment issued by the Force, including the PSV's identification pass, must be returned to the line manager when the PSV leaves. There are a limited number of PSV roles in Surrey which require equipment such as a police phone and/or laptop. When a PSV leaves their volunteering role, all equipment issued to them must be returned on their last day of service; failure to do so may result in an investigation taking place.

24.5 PSVs will be offered the opportunity to complete an exit survey and/or interview when they leave the Force.

**Team:** Volunteer