



Repeat Victim, Repeat Caller and Hoax Caller Procedure

This procedure is part of North Yorkshire Police policy to which all Chief Constable personnel and the functions provided by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner are required to adhere.

Procedure Statement

North Yorkshire Police (NYP) recognises the impact repeat victimisation has on the confidence, quality of life and resilience of individuals within our communities.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that repeat or likely repeat victims are identified, and that action is taken to reduce the risk of threat and harm.

Prompt measured and focused intervention by Police can reduce incidents of repeat victimisation and as such provide appropriate levels of reassurance and support, not only to victims but to the wider community and lead to increased public confidence in NYP.

The procedure will also recognise that not all callers require Police intervention and as such may be considered as 'nuisance' or 'hoax' callers and guidance will be offered for dealing with such incidents.

Overarching Policies:

Mental Health

Procedures:

Call handling
Domestic Abuse Procedure
Hate Occurrence and Crime Procedure
Incident Management and Deployment
National Standard for Incident Recording

Process

Identifying Repeat Victims

Our commitment to reducing incidents of repeat victimisation begins at the point of first contact, irrespective of how that contact is made (e.g. via Force Control Room (FCR), Front Counter etc). The person recording the initial report must interrogate force systems for previous incidents and cross reference these on the current report. Any relevant Aspire notes must also be considered.

If an individual is identified as a repeat victim this information must then be passed on to the allocated officer.

Effectively dealing with Repeat Victims

The incident will be assessed and graded in line with force policy by FCR staff. The most appropriate resource (Response, NPT etc) will then be allocated under a suitable grading (appointment, scheduled, priority, immediate).

Key activities at this stage will include:

- Supporting the victim and ensuring safeguarding is addressed
- Fast track actions to gather evidence
- Identification of and arrest of (if appropriate) the offender
- Oversight of investigation by supervision to ensure the response is proportionate to any threat, risk and harm identified.

At this point a decision will be made as to whether the incident is investigated by the original officer or is allocated to a Neighbourhood resource. The decision will be based on who is most suitably placed to provide the best response to the victim. This will be passed to NPT via supervision as required.

Identifying Repeat Callers

When classing an individual as a repeat caller this must not automatically be assumed to have a negative connotation as there could be a genuine, but not initially apparent, reason behind the persistent contact.

Each month the FCR will produce a list of the top twenty repeat callers from Power BI (REPEAT_CALLERS - Power BI Report Server) grouped into County, York and Coast Commands. The list will then be sent to the head of each command (or allocated representative) to allocate their repeat callers to an appropriate resource that will work to tackle the demand they create.

Effectively dealing with Repeat Callers

Once an OIC has been allocated to a repeat caller they must create a PSP on Niche. The OIC will be supported in this by the Problem-Solving Team who can be contacted at problemsolving@northyorkshire.police.uk

When looking to understand and resolve the issue(s) that underpin why the individual is repeatedly calling NYP the OIC should consider:

- Why do we keep dealing with this person?
- Why do we keep attending this location?
- Why do we keep dealing with this issue?

Answering the above will assist the OIC in establishing where and how to focus their intervention.

Adequate support must be provided to those who are identified as requiring it and it is at this point that Officers should link in with their Community Safety Hub to provide a more holistic approach. Any necessary police or partnership action should be undertaken to prevent or reduce any further victimisation.

The allocated Officer has the responsibility of regularly updating Niche.

To provide scrutiny and oversight, repeat callers are to be created as a standing agenda item for each command's TTCG and likewise for Force Tasking.

In addition to the above, Repeat Victims and Repeat Callers can be identified through interrogation by Safer Neighbourhood Team officers of the Neighbourhood Policing Information page on Sharepoint: Neighbourhood-policing-information

Hoax Callers

Hoax calls can be defined as "calls that convey information that is false and is known or believed to be false for the purpose of causing distress, anxiety or the wasteful misdirection of emergency services".

Under this umbrella term there are also persistent and malicious callers.

Persistent: Callers who contact us repeatedly and place greatest demand on our phonelines and time, which in turn prevents genuine callers from contacting us. They may also be abusive and/or offensive.

Malicious: These can be considered as 'nasty' calls whereby the caller makes indecent (i.e. sexual), threatening (i.e. violent) or **grossly** offensive comments.

Tackling Hoax Callers

The following escalation process can be used, although depending on circumstances there is nothing to prevent moving straight from point 1 to 6.

- 1) A log must be created on each occasion such a call is received; this is to provide an evidential trail should matters be escalated criminally.
- 2) An initial proportionate response, depending on the circumstances, can include signposting to a more appropriate agency.
- 3) If practical, the caller should be advised that the nature of their call is not a Police matter and informed their behaviour may constitute a criminal offence for which they could be arrested and prosecuted.
- 4) The caller's phone can be blocked from contacting the Police for a set period of time, this is done by BT via FCR supervision.
- 5) If the caller is indecent, threatening or grossly offensive the call should be ended as soon as possible (once it has been established that there is not a genuine need for Police assistance) and a crime recorded and investigated.
- 6) The caller is arrested, and a crime recorded. Statements will be required from those who received the calls and copies of the calls will be provided to the investigating officer.

Relevant Legislation:

Communications Act 2003 (legislation.gov.uk)

Malicious Communications Act 1988 (legislation.gov.uk)

Responsibilities

FCR SMT are responsible for:

- Ensuring that a SPOC is appointed to manage the requirements of this Procedure in the FCR
- Retaining oversight of progress, ensuring Procedure is followed
- Flagging any issues with oversight to Force TTCG

FCR Supervision are responsible for:

- Sending Monthly data to the Area Commanders (or representative)
- Supporting OICs with Information and Guidance including access to relevant evidence
- Arranging Statements from FCR Staff where relevant

Customer Contact Staff are responsible for:

- Identifying Repeat Callers, Victims and Hoax Callers at the first point of Contact
- Ensuring all initial checks are carried out
- Correctly recording and linking new and existing incident reports

Area Commanders are responsible for:

- Ensuring that they retain oversight of Repeat Callers, Victims and Hoax Callers through Area TTCG
- Ensuring that Resources are allocated to Problem Solve

NPT Inspectors are responsible for:

- Managing investigations of Repeat Callers, Victims and Hoax Callers on their areas
- OICs are appointed and supported to Problem Solve

Officer in the Case is responsible for:

- Drafting Problem Solving Plans
- Investigation / Dealing with Cases
- Updating Victims and Records on Niche
- Liaising with Problem Solving Team and wider Partners as required

Business Insight are responsible for:

- Maintaining the availability of Data through an appropriate Dashboard

Definition of Special Terms

Repeat Victim: Any person who has reported three or more incidents of crime, Anti-Social Behaviour or a combination of both within a 12 month period.

Repeat Caller: Any person who has called NYP 10 or more times, requesting service, in a six month period.

Repeat Victim of Hate Crime: "Where a person or immediate family member suffers more than one Hate Incident in a 12 month period following the date the first crime was reported". (ACPO/PSU)

Action in relation to repeat victims of Hate Crime is covered in the existing Hate Occurrence and Crime Procedure.

Repeat Victim of Domestic Violence: Any person who has reported 2 or more incidents of domestic violence in a 12 month period. Please note that repeat Victims of Domestic Violence are dealt with in line with the Domestic Abuse Procedure.

Vulnerability: A person is vulnerable if as a result of their situation or circumstances, they are unable to take care of or protect themselves or others from harm or exploitation.