



Police Support Volunteer Procedure

This document is part of North Yorkshire Police policy to which all Chief Constable personnel and the functions provided by the Deputy Mayor for Policing as part of the York & North Yorkshire Combined Authority are required to adhere.

Procedure Statement

NYP is committed to achieving safe, secure, and confident communities in North Yorkshire and City of York. NYP will develop volunteering opportunities within the organisation to assist in achieving this vision, which will:

- Support police officers and police staff in engaging with the community where appropriate
- Encourage community participation in issues which directly affect them
- Access an extensive pool of skills, talents, experience, and local knowledge
- Help deliver an improved customer focused service which meets local needs
- Improve interaction between the police and local community
- Increase the scope and diversity of people who engage with us
- Enable the community to have a better understanding of what we do and how we do it
- Encourage Police Support Volunteers (PSVs) to be ambassadors of NYP in their communities to increase citizen satisfaction

NYP will consider the needs and expectations of all PSVs. We will:

- Make the process of volunteering as simple as possible
- Develop a range of PSVs tasks that take account of the skills or abilities people have and how much time they can commit to volunteering
- Provide recognition and support to PSVs and respect their status as volunteers
- Provide training where necessary
- Reimburse out of pocket expenses
- Provide equal opportunities for citizens from all groups in communities including those from minority groups to become PSVs

Purpose of Procedure

The purpose of this procedure is to provide consistency across North Yorkshire Police (NYP) in the development of the programme, the possible use of PSVs, recruitment and training of PSVs and recognition of the service they provide. It is necessary to ensure that a consistent approach is maintained so that in the interests of fairness and transparency any issues can be dealt with in accordance with this procedure.

This procedure also provides a commitment from NYP to PSVs to show that they are a valued part of the policing family and that in respect of their interests a fair and approved policy, procedure and guidance material are in place.

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NYP recognises that flexibility and innovation are key to the success of volunteering and the inclusion of PSVs within the service delivers a new challenge for officers, staff, supervisors and senior leaders. Some individuals within the service have specific responsibilities in relation to PSVs which are documented in this procedure for clarity and guidance. It is therefore paramount that both PSVs and the supervision receive sufficient and appropriate training with regard to their roles.

This procedure should be referred to in relation to all issues involving PSVs. This procedure provides guidance to officers, staff and PSVs in all aspects of volunteering within NYP.

Linkages

Overarching Policies:

[Health and Safety Policy](#)

Procedures:

[Notifiable Associations Procedure](#)

[Travel, Accommodation and Events Procedure](#)

[Grievance Procedure](#)

[Internet and E-mail Procedure](#)

[Use of Vehicles Procedure](#)

Other Documents:

[Vetting](#)

[College of Policing - Code of Ethics](#)

Process

1. The Legal Basis and Legitimate Aims

1.1 NYP does not provide a written contract with a PSVs when they begin the volunteering role with the organisation, however NYP does complete a Volunteer Agreement that sets out the expectations a volunteer can expect of NYP and NYP of the volunteer. Any other paperwork signed by a PSV is only to record actions taken by them or another member of NYP in relation to them or to accept responsibility for their actions or a piece of equipment.

1.2 PSVs do not receive payment for their time they provide to NYP but will be reimbursed for genuine out of pocket expenses which are to be countersigned by the NYP line manager or member of the Citizens in Policing (CiP) Team responsible for PSVs. PSVs are not expected to make a financial gain from their activities with NYP or receive any other consideration which may be construed as remuneration for services offered.

1.3 All terms that imply or are obviously used to refer to employment should not be used to describe PSV activity i.e., 'employer', 'employee', 'employment', 'contract', 'staff', 'workers', etc.

1.4 All new role profiles for PSVs, must be agreed by the relevant departmental lead and a Police Support Volunteer Role Development form completed. This form must be submitted to the CiP Coordination Manager, who will take to the CiP Steering group for approval.

1.5 PSVs will not wear uniform to undertake their duties, unless agreed for particular roles agreed by the CiP Steering group. All PSVs will be provided with identity badges which clearly state they are a volunteer with NYP.

2. PSV Framework, Organisation and Administration

2.1 Each person will be recruited to NYP for a specific role / task. However, each applicant may wish to offer more than one area of expertise and therefore can move between roles or be able to volunteer for more than one role.

2.2 It is important to this end that PSVs are given the chance at an early stage, and continually throughout their volunteering time with NYP, to show what their skills are and which they are willing to share with the organisation. Support and supervision should be undertaken by the supervisor to ensure PSVs are given the right support to develop in their role.

2.3 Each role has clearly defined parameters of tasks that are within the ability of the PSV to be completed. All role profiles are stored on the Q drive. It is the responsibility of the local department, supervisor and CiP Coordination manager to set tasks that fall within those parameters.

2.4 If a role is required and it does not fall within an already agreed profile, the NPT Inspector or departmental lead, in liaison with the CiP Coordination Manager, should complete the “PSV Role Development form” and submit to the CiP Steering Group who will, consult with Unison, Insurance, People Services and Health & Wellbeing for agreement to the changes.

2.5 NYP will not accept applications unless a role is advertised. However, people can register an interest, where they can specify their skills and will be contacted when recruitment opportunity is available.

2.6 All documentation referring to PSVs have electronic versions on the Source, NYP website and upon application to CiP Team. These can be made available in different formats upon request.

3. Recruitment

3.1 NYP will hold formal recruitment campaigns at predetermined points throughout the year, with agreement from all departments involved in the procedure. The campaigns will recruit for new roles dependent on the needs of the organisation.

3.2 NYP will also recruit to new roles as needed outside of formal recruitment campaigns.

3.3 No local or force recruitment campaign is to be undertaken without the knowledge and agreement of the CiP Steering Group.

3.4 All Volunteer recruitment literature, including material for the press, must reflect the expectations, benefits and demands of volunteering with NYP and must be approved by Corporate Communications to ensure a consistent approach is maintained.

3.5 Volunteers must be recruited in line with the principles of the Inclusion and Diversity Strategy. All recruitment materials, strategies and methods should reflect the principles within that strategy.

3.6 All volunteers will be vetted in line with [Vetting](#). The volunteer programme is inclusive, and the nature of any conviction will be considered as part of the selection process. The Vetting department will assess each case on an individual basis. Please refer to [Vetting](#) for information on refusals and appeals. The level of vetting will be determined by the role that the PSV will be performing for NYP.

3.7 The minimum age for a volunteer is 16 years; however, some roles may require a minimum age of 18 years or 21. Any applicant under 18 years of age must have their application form counter-signed by a parent or guardian. There is no upper age limit for a volunteer; however this will be assessed on the individual skills needed to carry out the role.

3.8 All volunteer applicants will be required to complete a PSV Application Form.

3.9 Two references are required for each PSV applicant. They must have known the applicant for a minimum of two years and not be relatives. References are requested by the People Services SPOC.

3.10 Volunteer applicants should not be accepted where there is a significant possibility that this could lead to a conflict of interest, for themselves or for others, between their obligations as a PSV and their effectiveness in their professional life or another PSV role.

3.11 To qualify for the vetting process there is a minimum requirement of three years residency in the UK prior to vetting. Any deviation from this rule is at the discretion of the Vetting department. It is only in exceptional circumstances that the Head of Professional Standards will allow deviations to this procedure.

3.12 All volunteer applicants that declare a health issue, disability or need for reasonable adjustments will be required to complete a Volunteer Pre-Employment Medical Questionnaire to enable them to be matched to suitable roles that will not negatively impact on their health or wellbeing. The information will inform any reasonable adjustments that can be made to ensure the volunteer can carry out the role. This information is confidential to the Health and Wellbeing Department and will only be passed onto volunteer supervisors on a need to know basis to ensure the reasonable adjustments are made.

3.13 All volunteer applicants will be required to attend an informal interview prior to acceptance into the PSV programme to ensure their suitability. The interview will take place on police premises unless inappropriate to do so, whereby it will take place in a mutually agreed public location. The interview must be led by the NYP staff supervisor or departmental lead.

3.14 NYP retains the right to refuse acceptance of those applicants who are not suitable and where appropriate reject an application without providing the reason for rejection. However, People Services must document the decisions for rejection to ensure accountability for non-discriminatory practice.

3.15 Formal acceptance of the volunteer should not take place until the selection process is complete and will be confirmed in writing by People Services.

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3.16 All PSVs will be required to sign the Official Secrets Act and abide by the Act throughout the course of their time with NYP.

4. Induction and Training

4.1 Investment in PSVs through training ensures that a volunteer can deliver the service enhancement required to ensure safe, secure, and confident communities. Through training and induction, the PSV gains an insight into NYP and what the force aims, and objectives are, and the part volunteers play in that. It also encourages the PSV to know that they are a valued part of the policing family and are given all the skills required to complete their tasks to the standard expected of everyone within NYP.

4.2 All PSVs receive an in-house induction in relation to their role. Each PSV is given a NYP Volunteers Handbook, Role Description, Volunteer Agreement, and a copy of this procedure to ensure they have the information to support them within their role. The handbook includes information about the force, aims and priorities, standards of dress and behaviour and other information required by a PSV.

Induction includes:

- Introduction to NYP
- Code of Ethics
- How Police Support Volunteers fit into the wider organisation
- Introduction to relevant policies and procedures
- Accepted standards of conduct (Including dress code)
- Security input
- Supervision and support structures
- Practicalities such as insurance, payment of expenses, etc.
- Health and Safety
- Availability of training
- Equal opportunities and diversity.

4.3 Local Supervisors will complete the [PSV Induction checklist](#). This will ensure the PSV has a good understanding of the department and the environment they will be volunteering within. Part of the induction will include information & training around their role.

4.4 PSVs may also require task-specific training, which will enable them to perform their tasks more effectively. Any training need, highlighted, is acted on by the CiP Coordination Manager in consultation with local supervisor and training services.

4.5 Training must be relevant to the tasks. Tasks requiring high levels of training and supervision may be inappropriate for PSVs to undertake unless a regular and sustained commitment is given.

4.6 A record of any formal training delivery will be kept on the PSVs personal record within People Services and recorded on DutySheet by the CiP Liaison Officer.

4.7 NYP ensures that PSVs are appropriately trained to carry out the tasks they have undertaken to perform.

4.8 Volunteers may come in to contact with confidential information, so its good practice that they are aware of NYP's confidentiality statement:

"Confidentiality - ensuring that information is accessible only to those authorised to have access, disclosed only to those authorised to receive it, and so disclosed only for police purposes". (Information Security Policy)

5. Managing and Supervising PSVs

5.1 Management and supervision are vital for PSVs integration and retention and ensuring that PSVs feel valued and part of the team. To be effective, supervision should provide guidance, support, feedback, and an opportunity for open discussion. It can be either formal or informal and should be dependent on the individual PSV and the tasks they are performing.

5.2 Supervision is usually conducted on a one-to-one basis so that sensitive issues can be discussed if necessary. Local supervision will normally be provided by a member of the team whose place of work is the same as the PSVs. It is recommended that the supervisor of PSVs is a police manager (officer or staff) to provide suitable support however this is not always practicable, and each case is assessed on its merits.

5.3 The departmental lead or local supervisor is responsible for ensuring that an appropriate level of supervision in terms of availability and competency is provided to a PSV. NYP Staff will be supported by PSV Area Support Coordinators, and the CiP Liaison Officer in managing their volunteers.

5.4 It is important that the PSV knows who the key CiP support is as well as who is responsible for providing local supervision. Members of staff must be made aware of their supervisory duties in respect of PSVs.

5.5 If a member of staff with a volunteer supervisory role moves on, that staff member with their line management must ensure appropriate handover of the volunteer management.

6. Support to PSVs

6.1 Support enables the objectives of the organisation to be met in relation to PSVs. It can be provided by the organisation to PSVs as a group, or from a member of staff or officer to an individual PSV.

6.2 On a basic level treating PSVs with dignity and respect is essential to good relations. PSVs are not paid or remunerated for their volunteering so expressing appreciation is vital in making a PSV feel valued.

6.3 Volunteers can give feedback through local Area 'Social Forums' and annual survey to assist in the continued review and development of PSVs within NYP.

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6.4 Support for PSVs includes taking account of their personal circumstances when arranging meetings or training: remember PSVs may be in full time employment and/or have family/caring commitments.

7. Conduct

7.1 PSVs are representatives of the police and, as such, conduct of the highest standard is paramount. All PSVs should comply with the policies and procedures of NYP and are responsible for maintaining confidentiality.

7.2 It should be emphasised that activities undertaken in their professional or private lives must not affect the integrity of NYP or compromise the PSV programmes. In particular PSVs should be aware of their responsibilities under the [Notifiable Associations Procedure](#) and [Code of Ethics](#).

7.3 PSVs must inform their local supervisor if they are aware of anything that may compromise their position.

7.4 NYP will not tolerate discrimination, harassment, or victimization of or by PSVs.

7.5 PSVs have a duty to take care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions.

7.6 These issues will be covered during induction to ensure PSVs are fully aware of their responsibilities and the outcomes should their conduct fall below the expected standard.

8. Volunteer Problem Solving

Complaint or concern about the volunteer

8.1 Where there is a perceived problem with the volunteer's conduct or where there has been a complaint against the volunteer, we will adopt the following procedure in all cases apart of those cases that need to be dealt with in line with all statutory procedures.

8.2 The supervisor will arrange a meeting with the volunteer to explain the concerns or outline the complaint and discuss them with the volunteer. The supervisor will identify goals that will help the volunteer to fulfil their role, and offer extra support, supervision, and training where necessary. A deadline for reviewing the situation with the volunteer will be agreed.

8.3 If the issue is not resolved by the discussion and review then a letter outlining the concerns or complaint will be given to the volunteer. A further meeting will be arranged to discuss actions and a decision will be made about the future of the volunteer with NYP. Either further goals will be set with the volunteer, or the volunteer will be asked to leave the organisation.

8.4 The Volunteer has the right to appeal to the CiP Board who will consider the situation and try to resolve it. Their decision will be final.

8.5 At all times the volunteer will be freely able to state their case and at all stages can have a friend, other volunteer or member of staff who is not a legal representative and not connected with the issues to accompany them.

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Concerns raised by the volunteer

8.6 We hope that at all times the volunteer will have an enjoyable and positive volunteering experience, however if a volunteer is dissatisfied with any aspect of their volunteering or wishes to make a complaint they should:

8.7 Initially explain their dissatisfaction or concerns to their supervisor. If they are not available or appropriate, a member of the CiP Liaison Officer should be contacted.

8.8 If the volunteer remains dissatisfied, they should put their concerns in writing to the CiP Coordination Manager who will investigate and initiate steps to address the matter within 10 working days. The volunteer will be informed in writing of the CiP Coordination Managers response.

8.9 If the volunteer is not satisfied with the response to their concern, they can appeal to the CiP Board who will consider the appeal and respond to the volunteer in writing within 10 working days. Their decision will be final.

8.10 At all times the volunteer will be freely able to state their case and at all stages can have a friend, other volunteer or member of staff who is not a legal representative and not connected with the issues to accompany them. NYP will always seek to reach some resolution to problems between the organisation and a volunteer, whatever the cause. With both parties' agreement resolution may be sought through requesting mediation through NYP.

9. Expenses

9.1 An expense is any cost a PSV has to pay that is reasonably, actually and necessarily incurred. All expenditure must be accounted for. Reimbursement of such out-of-pocket expenses is not considered to be payment (which would have legal and financial implications for the PSV and the Force). It is important to be able to show that any money paid to a PSV is a reimbursement, not a payment, so a receipt must be obtained, and exact payment made.

9.2 The following are legitimate expenses, which PSVs are entitled to claim:

9.2.1 HMRC rate of 45ppm or Public Transport Costs to and from the normal place of voluntary service on production of receipts. If a PSV is in possession of a Public Transport Pass, this should be used.

9.2.2 Public transport costs (on production of receipts) or mileage at HMRC rate of 45ppm if using private transport when travelling to and from events, training, and between police sites for voluntary service.

9.2.3 Car parking fees, on production of the ticket or receipt if there is no police or free car parking facilities within a reasonable distance of the place voluntary service is performed. Fines incurred will not be paid.

9.2.4 Reasonable telephone costs for volunteers working from home, if agreed in advance with the nominated supervisor.

9.3 Expenses can only be paid into a bank account in the PSV's name. On commencing voluntary service, the PSV will complete a Bank Details form which should be submitted to the Payroll Department.

9.4 If the PSV is not claiming expenses, then Payroll will set up a 'nil' payroll and will only activate the payroll when payment is claimed.

9.5 To claim expenses the PSV must complete a claim form in accordance with expenses procedure, including having business insurance for personal vehicle cover and ensuring the line manager have seen this document. NYP staff, officer or a member of the CiP team must ask to see the insurance and driving licence annually. This is recorded on Dutysheet and must be updated.

9.6 Receipts must be attached for all expenses except mileage, which is claimed at the HMRC rate of 45ppm.

9.7 Payment in advance should only be made in exceptional cases. It is important to maintain records and receipts, and the PSVs must account for payment and repay any money which was not spent.

9.8 Food expenses will be reimbursed up to £5, with a valid receipt if the volunteering activity is for the whole day or over 4 hours over the lunch/teatime period.

9.9 Expenses will only be paid if the PSV has recorded their volunteering activity on Dutysheet. Dutysheet provides an audit trail to ensure we are accountable for public finances.

9.10 The procedure to cover volunteer accommodation expenses are outlined in the Travel, Accommodation and Events Procedure.

9.11 Travel expenses for Special Constables travelling from outside the force area can only be claimed from the force boundary to/from the place of duty.

10. Insurance

10.1 The Force has employers and public liability insurance, which covers PSVs whilst they are undertaking their voluntary service. Should a volunteer be required to use their private vehicle in the course of their duties, the originals of the following documents should be inspected by their nominated supervisor prior to using the vehicle:

- Driving Licence
- Certificate of motor insurance which includes business use for the vehicle
- Where required under legislation, current MOT certificate.

10.2 Should a PSV be required to drive a vehicle provided by NYP then, prior to doing so, they must be authorised to do so and must undertake and pass the appropriate Driver Training Procedure. Please see the Use of Vehicles Procedure.

10.3 The Use of Vehicles Procedure outlines the issues both in respect of volunteers using private vehicles in connection with NYP business and driving NYP vehicles. All personnel including volunteers are required to adhere to this procedure.

11. Health & Safety

11.1 All tasks should be subject to a risk assessment and documented. NYP has the same duty of care towards PSVs as it does towards their staff. This means that they should avoid exposing PSVs to any situation that may be a risk to their health or safety.

11.2 Any tasks deemed to have a high level of risk may be inappropriate. The risk associated with a particular task will vary according to the capability of the individual to undertake it.

11.3 All police support PSVs should be made aware of the Health and Safety Policy, the procedures that are laid down within it and their obligations under it. This will form part of the induction process and updates should be provided by their supervision when required.

11.4 All role profiles are required to be submitted to Health and Safety prior to submission to the CiP Steering Group and relevant Risk Assessments attached.

11.5 If the PSV is between 16-18 years old then specific attention should be taken to whether or not the activity is suitably covered by the role related risk assessment. If a further Risk Assessment is required, this must be completed prior to the PSV starting in that role.

12 Lone Working

The safety of Volunteers is of paramount importance and NYP will ensure that:

Risk Assessments will be undertaken for each staff member and volunteer to identify:

- Whether they are likely to be lone working, either with clients or when carrying out other duties
- Whether there are suitable alternatives to lone working
- If lone working is unavoidable what systems or procedures should be in place. These may include:
 - Buddying system
 - Use of equipment such as mobile phone/personal alarms
 - Identifying useful contacts/car details etc.
 - Risk assessments will be reviewed as and when required and at least once annually
 - That individuals are involved and consulted on their own risk assessment
 - Procedures will be developed, and safe systems of work introduced – staff and volunteers will be advised of the systems and procedures. Procedures may include:
 - NYP Staff or Officers periodically visiting and observing people working alone;
 - Regular contact between the lone worker and NYP Staff & Officer.
 - Devices designed to raise the alarm in an emergency, these can be operated manually or automatically by the absence of activity;
 - Checks to ensure a lone worker has returned to their base or home once their work is completed.
 - Advice and guidance will be provided for all volunteers covering

13. Exit Interviews

13.1 In order to improve the PSV scheme feedback will be sought from the PSV upon cessation of their PSV agreement.

13.2 When a PSV leaves a voluntary exit interview may be conducted where appropriate. This should be undertaken by the supervisor, and should be carried out in a non-threatening, comfortable environment where the PSV can speak freely.

13.3 If the volunteer is inactive for a period of 6 months, then the most appropriate person (supervisor, PSV Area Support Coordinator or CiP Liaison Officer) will be responsible for contacting the volunteers and engaging with them to see if they wish to carry on volunteering. All efforts should be made by the Volunteer Supervisor to ascertain the reasons for not wanting to carry on volunteering for NYP and these acted upon if applicable.

13.4 It is important to take time to consider the issues raised and whether there are ways to improve the situation. While providing a solution to the problem may not prevent that individual PSV from leaving, prompt action will signify to the remaining PSVs that their concerns are taken seriously, which may prevent other PSVs from leaving.

13.5 Upon cessation of volunteering with NYP, PSVs will be required to return their identification badge and sign the Official Secrets Act and the ongoing restrictions explained to them.