

Cautions, Convictions and Vetting

Police officers are subject to Standards of Professional Behaviour which set out clearly what communities can expect from them.

The public expects that all police forces will recruit officers with proven integrity. Therefore, before recruiting anyone to work in a police force, thorough checks must be undertaken to ascertain whether anything is known to the detriment of the candidate, his or her spouse or partner, close relatives, in-laws, or those residing or associating with the candidate.

Checks will be carried out on anything self-declared by the candidate as well as making sure nothing else is discovered which could heighten vulnerability, bring discredit upon or otherwise cause embarrassment to the police service. Checks also extend to social media accounts.

When applying for the Police Now Programme you **must declare**:

- all convictions for past offences (including traffic convictions and spent convictions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974)
- any formal cautions (including those as a juvenile)
- any reprimands, warnings and penalty notices
- any bind-over imposed by the courts
- being the subject of an Anti-Social Behaviour Order, Football Spectator Banning Order, Risk of Sexual Harm Order, or Harassment Order
- traffic offences (including fixed penalty notices but excluding parking)
- any previous charges or summonses
- any currently outstanding charges, summons or pending prosecutions
- any investigations, arrests or involvement whatsoever with any Police Service, Statutory or Prosecuting Authority
- any involvement with the military authorities on disciplinary matters and any appearance before a court martial regardless of the outcome

Any failure to declare any record of information as required will result in the termination of your application on the grounds of honesty and integrity.

Careful consideration will be given to any candidate who is confirmed as having been convicted of any criminal offence. Convictions, cautions and fixed penalty notices (road traffic and recordable offences, such as disorder and alcohol related offences) will not necessarily preclude anyone from appointment with Police Now and one of its partner forces but this will depend on the nature and circumstance(s) of the offence.

Factors that are taken into consideration before a decision is made include but are not limited to:

- The nature and number of offences
- The age of the applicant at the time of the offence(s)
- The number of years that have elapsed since the offence(s) was/were committed
- Any potential risks to Police Now and partner forces related to the offence(s)

In considering an application, the overriding rule is that no one will be eligible for appointment if they have been convicted of a criminal offence which if committed by a serving officer would:

- Result in their dismissal
- Cause embarrassment to the Service
- Create difficulties to the individual in carrying out his or her duties

Mandatory Rejection

There are some offences that will lead to mandatory rejection due to their very nature. Under normal circumstances, if an applicant declares any of the following convictions or security vetting checks reveal any of the following, the application will be rejected:

- Any offence committed as an adult (i.e. aged 17 years and over) which involves elements of dishonesty, corruption, serious violence or injury, serious involvement with drugs or abuse of children, substantial financial gain or serious loss to anyone
- Any offence that has resulted in a prison sentence (including suspended or deferred sentences and those served at a young offender's institution)
- Any of the following offences no matter when they were committed: treason, murder, manslaughter, kidnap, firearms offences, grievous bodily harm (GBH), actual bodily harm (ABH), indecent assault, rape, burglary, theft, fraud, deception, possession of a class A drug or more than one class B drug, supplying drugs of any class, abuse or neglect of children

Motoring Offences

Convictions or offences dealt by the way of fixed penalties for minor motoring offences should not in themselves be a barrier to recruitment unless the applicant is a persistent offender but each case will be considered on its merits.

However, any of the following motoring offences will lead to mandatory rejection:

- Reckless, dangerous or careless driving causing death including fail to stop
- Reckless or dangerous driving within the last 10 years (the 10 years' time calculation will commence after the expiration of any period of driving disqualification imposed by a court)
- One offence of drink driving or drunk in charge of a motor vehicle within the last 10 years
- More than one offence of drink driving or drunk in charge of a motor vehicle
- Other serious motoring offences within the last 5 years (e.g. driving without insurance, driving without a driving licence, driving whilst disqualified, failing to stop after an accident)
- More than three endorsable traffic convictions (including fixed penalties) and/or six penalty points, within the last 5 years (for offences on different dates)
- One or more convictions for regulatory offences such as failure to renew a vehicle excise licence and MOT within the last 5 years.

Outstanding Charges and Summonses

Where an applicant discloses any outstanding charge, or summons that may result in a conviction for a recordable offence, the application will have to be put on hold until the outcome is known, at which point it will be considered with the standard operating procedures set out in this document.

Relatives and Associates with Convictions or Cautions

Where relatives or the associates of a candidate are found to have convictions, or cautions for recordable offences, or if they are reasonably suspected of being actively involved in criminal activity, the following should be considered:

- The nature of the relationship e.g. whether the applicant resides with or has regular contact with the offender
- The likelihood that the applicant's role will be adversely affected e.g. through adverse pressure or a conflict of interest
- The number and severity of the offences or involvement in criminal activity
- Whether embarrassment will be caused to the Police Service
- Whether the credibility of the applicant will be affected
- Whether the credibility of the Police Service will be affected
- The potential for information leakage

HM Forces

Convictions whilst serving in the HM Forces will be treated like any other centrally recorded information and similar weight given to any finding of guilt. Serving members of the Armed Forces who are convicted of any criminal offence by a military tribunal will have any such offence recorded on the Police National Computer.

Residency

For vetting purposes, there is a requirement that an applicant should have been a resident in the UK (including Northern Ireland but not the Republic of Ireland) for three years prior to submitting an application. If you have been outside of the UK for less than 6 months there should be no reason for your application not to proceed. However, if you have been out of the UK for more than this time it is likely insufficient vetting can be undertaken to ensure your suitability for the position and your application may be rejected. Members of the Armed Forces and those who have been working for the UK Government abroad are exempt to these conditions and a decision will be made according to individual circumstances of posting.

Changes in Circumstances

If any of your circumstances change during the application or vetting process you must advise the Recruitment Team as soon as possible. All candidates have an individual responsibility to report any changes which may be of relevance to their clearance. Notifiable changes may include, but are not limited to:

- Change of name
- Getting married or entering into a Civil Partnership

- Arrest for any criminal offence or involvement in a criminal investigation as a suspect
- Caution or conviction for a criminal offence
- Bankruptcy
- Adverse County Court Judgement
- Entry into an Individual Voluntary Arrangement (IVA)
- Known or suspected criminal associations

N.B. Please note that we're unable to state whether a conviction record of you or anyone associated with you will affect your application before you apply. We'll base our decision on the full and confidential information you provide during the recruitment and selection process as well as vetting and security checks.