

Vetting Code of Practice updated

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Our revised Code of Practice provides guidance on enhanced police vetting across England and Wales

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We've strengthened our **Code of Practice for police vetting practices**. The revised Code will support forces to identify and eliminate unacceptable behaviour from people before they enter policing and as they continue in service. It sets out the standards expected in vetting practices and decision-making.

Key changes include the following.

- Vetting will be repeated if there's a material change in a person's circumstances, including misconduct where an individual is not dismissed.
- If a person cannot pass vetting checks or maintain clearance, they should be dismissed from policing.
- Negative information or changes in circumstances that may impact on a person's vetting clearance must be assessed to mitigate risk.
- Vetting clearance will be rejected as a result of cautions and convictions – particularly if these relate to dishonesty, violence or targeting a vulnerable person because of protected characteristics – unless the person being vetted can prove otherwise.

The dreadful crimes committed by police officers and staff exposed over recent months are compounded by the fact some of them flew under the radar because opportunities to detect them were missed.

The Code provides chief officers with clear expectations on what action is required to improve standards and consistency in police vetting units. It is paramount that the public

have total confidence in our ability to find officers who do not belong in our ranks and the greater oversight being proposed by the College will help deliver that.

Vetting will only ever be one part of the jigsaw and we must redouble our efforts to improve police culture. There are thousands of hardworking, dedicated officers who put themselves in harm's way to protect the public. Our new leadership training, a refreshed Code of Ethics and our work with forces to improve the response to violence against women and girls will provide further help.

Chief Constable Andy Marsh, College of Policing CEO

As well as being used every day by vetting and professional standards teams, the Code is statutory guidance and provides chief constables with clear expectations of what's required to deliver consistent and high standards. As it will be admissible in a court of law and in disciplinary proceedings, the updated Code will also be of interest to force legal teams, staff associations and trade unions.

In addition to updating the Code of Practice we will also be:

- updating our Vetting authorised professional practice (APP)
- introducing an accreditation system which will mean forces require a licence to carry out vetting
- establishing a new unit to support forces to implement our policies and procedures

These are measures that – alongside our new leadership training, refreshed Code of Ethics, and work with forces to improve the response to violence against women and girls – aim to establish a positive culture in which the public has confidence.

Read the Vetting Code of Practice

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