

Independent Custody Visiting



Information Pack

Welcome Letter

Dear Applicant,

APPLICATION TO BECOME AN INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITOR

Thank you for your interest in becoming an Independent Custody Visitor.

This pack provides further information about the role of a custody visitor and the application process. Please complete the accompanying application form and monitoring questionnaire to indicate your interest in taking on this voluntary role. CVs are not accepted.

Please ensure that you complete the monitoring questionnaire and return it with your application. The information provided on the questionnaire is for statistical monitoring purposes only and will not form part of the selection process.

If there are any aspects of the application that you would like to discuss, please get in touch with me via the details below. I look forward to receiving your application.

Yours sincerely,

Tina James-McGrath
ICV Scheme Administrator
Office of Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner North Yorkshire
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Role Description

To arrange custody visits with fellow visitors in line with agreed schedules.

- To keep the ICV Co-ordinator and fellow custody visitors informed of any problems with scheduled custody visits.
- To carry out custody visits to designated police stations in the area where you live (Harrogate, Scarborough or York) in line with scheme guidelines and training.
- To check on the conditions in which a detainee is kept, their health and wellbeing and their legal rights and entitlements, with reference to PACE Code C.
- Where appropriate consult the detainee's custody record to clarify and check any concerns raised by the detainee.
- To discuss with the custody officer any concerns and requests arising from the custody visit and bring to the custody officer's attention any issue that needs to be dealt with.
- To complete the Independent Custody Visitor Report Form ensuring that all relevant information is recorded correctly, clearly and concisely.
- To distribute copies of the Independent Custody Visitor Report Form to the appropriate people and leave the station.
- To complete and submit expense claims in line with the scheme guidelines.
- To attend enhancement training sessions as appropriate (minimum of one each year).
- To attend quarterly meetings of Independent Custody Visitors.
- To carry out the duties of an Independent Custody Visitor with regard to the Health and Safety requirements of the Custody Visiting Scheme.
- To carry out the duties of an Independent Custody Visitor as set out in the scheme's guidelines and Memorandum of Understanding/Volunteer Agreement.

Person Specification

Essential Qualities

- Effective Communication** – communicates ideas and information effectively, both verbally and in writing. Uses language and a style of communication that is appropriate to the situation and people being addressed. Ensures others understand what is going on.
- Respect for Race and Diversity** – considers and shows respect for the opinions, circumstances and feelings of colleagues and members of the public, no matter what their race, religion, position, background, circumstances, status or appearance.
- Team Working** – develops strong relationships and works effectively as a team member. Actively supports others to achieve team goals.

- D. **Planning and Organising** – plans and carries out activities in a methodical and well-structured way. Prioritises tasks, uses time in the best possible way, and works within appropriate policy and procedures.
- E. **Resilience** – shows resilience, even in difficult circumstances. Acts in a confident way when challenged, controls emotions and does not get emotionally involved in disputes.
- F. **Personal Responsibility** – the appointed person must be able to follow procedures and be adaptable should procedures change. They must also be fully committed and available to complete visits as outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding.

Application Guidance

Why it is important to follow these guidance notes:

Reading these guidance notes will help you complete our application form correctly. The following points are particularly important:

- We do not accept CVs and we will not consider any we receive.
- In completing your application you will need to think very carefully about how you complete the selection criteria section which requires you to give examples to show how you feel you meet each quality separately. We explain more about this on the next page under Section 2 'Relevant Skills and Experience'.
- Please complete all sections of the form in typed format or normal handwriting. Applications can be downloaded from our website and completed electronically. Applications by e-mail are acceptable, but any such application must be confirmed with a signed hard copy sent by post to the Office of the Police, fire and crime commissioner.

Each section of the application form should be completed as follows:

1. PERSONAL DETAILS

Please complete all the details in this section.

2. RELEVANT SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

This is an extremely important section. Please observe the following instructions very carefully. Failure on your part to do so may result in the rejection of your application.

The person specification gives a list of qualities that are essential for the role as well as a further desirable quality.

You will need to give practical examples to show how you meet each of the given qualities. Please note that your response to each quality area must not exceed 100 words.

It would be prudent to word your answers using the acronym STAR. STAR stands for Situation, Task, Actions and Results. We only need one example to be used to show how you match the competency. For example:

You can draw on skills/experience that you have gained as a result of doing voluntary work, work in your own home, or work at school/college/university, as well as in paid work, to show how you meet the qualities required. You may well find that you repeat information when saying how you meet the different qualities. This does not matter. It is important that you show how you meet each quality separately, regardless of what you may have said elsewhere on the form, to enable the shortlisting panel to score each section separately based on the examples you have given. Supporting documents will not be forwarded to the shortlisting panel and must not be attached to your application.

3. EMPLOYMENT

In this section you should detail your current or last employer. This includes the nature of their business e.g. retail, policing. You should also provide a brief outline of the duties you perform or performed whilst employed in that post.

4. VOLUNTEERING

In this section you should detail your volunteering experience. This includes the organisation you volunteered for. You should also provide a brief outline of the role you performed whilst in that post.

5. DISCLOSURE OF CONVICTIONS/CAUTIONS OR BIND-OVERS

The declaration should be read very carefully. Additionally, if you have been convicted or cautioned for an offence in any country, please ensure you attach any relevant background information. Please note disclosure under this section is not an automatic bar to appointment and each case is assessed on an individual basis. If in doubt, declare.

6. HEALTH

Please complete all the details in this section.

7. REFERENCES

Please give details (including title, initials and current address) of two referees who are NOT related to you who have agreed to support your application. Referees will be asked to provide an insight into your character and commitment and to comment on your suitability for the role as an Independent Custody Visitor.

Disability

The Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner welcomes applications from disabled people and guarantees to interview disabled applicants who meet the essential qualities of

the appointment applied for. For this purpose 'disability' means any physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term (over 12 months) adverse effect on your ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

Adjustments for Applicants

Applicants who experience problems in completing the application form due to a disability are encouraged to contact the Scheme Administrator to discuss other methods of completion. Additionally, applicants who may require adjustments to the interview or interview location, again due to a disability, should also contact the Scheme Administrator as soon as possible.

Additional Information

All applicants are subject to vetting. In particular, any offer of appointment will be subject to the satisfactory completion of vetting procedures, including local and national security checks (if relevant international), identity validation and confirmation of medical suitability. Supplementary vetting checks will also be carried out on applicants' partners, family, associates etc. if appropriate. You must therefore advise them that these enquiries will be made. However, results of all vetting enquiries will not be disclosed.

Data Protection Act 1998

The information you provide in your application form will be entered into a manual filing system and onto a computerised recruitment system and as such is covered by the rules set out by the Data Protection Act 1998. The data, including that contained in associated documents, e.g. Health, Supplementary Vetting/Financial forms, etc., will be used to assess your suitability for appointment with the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and may also involve checks against personal data held on Police Systems from other forces in the United Kingdom and possibly overseas.

Memorandum of Understanding/Volunteer Agreement

On appointment, or reappointment, all Independent Custody Visitors are required to sign the Memorandum of Understanding/Volunteer Agreement which summarises their agreed responsibilities and the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's expectations of each Custody Visitor. The Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (OPFCC) may revise the Memorandum of Understanding from time to time as required.

Independent Custody Visitors are supplied with the full guidelines for the Independent Custody Visiting Scheme and there is an expectation that these guidelines will be fully complied with at all times. You should particularly note the following points which highlight what the OPFCC requires from each individual Custody Visitor.

APPOINTMENTS

Appointments are for an initial term of three years which is subject to a probationary trial period (which may be extended if required). Subject to continuing satisfactory performance and suitability, the OPFCC may re-appoint an Independent Custody Visitor for a subsequent term of three years, up to a maximum of three terms.

ANNUAL REVIEWS

All Independent Custody Visitors are required to participate in the Annual Performance Review process undertaken by the Chair or Scheme Administrator. The annual reviews are held to review the performance of each Independent Custody Visitor and to determine their willingness and ability to continue.

CHANGE OF CIRCUMSTANCES

You are required to notify the Scheme Administrator of any change in circumstances which will affect your position as an Independent Custody Visitor, e.g. if you are arrested and charged with a criminal offence, or become a magistrate, special constable, or police officer, or undertake any other work which may present you with a conflict of interest.

EXPENSES

Your work as an Independent Custody Visitor is entirely voluntary but certain reasonably incurred expenses, including travel, may be claimed. Expense claims made on the appropriate form should be submitted monthly with necessary supporting receipts.

MISCONDUCT

By signing this Memorandum of Understanding/Volunteer Agreement, you are agreeing to have regard to and, so far as possible, abide by the standards and policies of the OPFCC's Independent Custody Visiting Scheme and to adhere to the Code of Practice and National Standards for the duration of your appointment(s) as an Independent Custody Visitor. The procedures for dealing with misconduct are set out in the Scheme Guidelines which include an appeal process.

IDENTITY CARD

Your identity card should only be used for the purpose of making custody visits. If it is used for any other purpose, it will be withdrawn and your appointment as an Independent Custody Visitor will be terminated.

VISITING IN PAIRS

You can only make a custody visit when accompanied by another accredited Independent Custody Visitor. There are no exceptions to this requirement, and Police custody staff are advised they should not allow anyone who is unaccompanied to make a custody visit. No more than two people should make a custody visit together unless part of the probationary training period.

NUMBER OF VISITS

You will be expected to make a minimum of eight and a maximum of sixteen visits per year. Visits will be allocated to you on a quarterly basis, to be carried out within a one week time frame for urban stations and a one month time frame for rural stations. It is up to each pair

to arrange between themselves a mutually convenient time to visit. If you are unable to carry out any visits assigned to you, you should ensure that the Scheme administrator and Panel Co-ordinator are notified as soon as possible.

MEETINGS AND TRAINING

The Independent Custody Visiting Panel meets four times a year to discuss visits made. In addition, training exercises are arranged, normally twice a year. Independent Custody Visitors are expected to attend at least one training exercise and at least three of the Panel meetings per year.

IMPARTIALITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

You must not involve yourself in individual cases, or give advice to detainees. You must maintain the confidentiality and/or any personal details of both detainees and other Independent Custody Visitors.

DOCUMENTATION

You are required to complete a report form for every custody visit made (even when there is nobody in custody) and submit the top copy promptly to the Scheme administrator.

PERSONAL DETAILS

You are required to inform the Scheme Administrator promptly of any change of address or telephone number.