



PS 145 Career Breaks Policy, Police Officer and Police Staff

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Linked Documents: PD 780 Career Breaks Procedure Police staff
PD 039 Career Breaks Procedure Police Officers
Career Break Application Form for Police Officers G 2007A
Career Break Application Form for Police Staff G 2007B

Functional owner

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Statement of legislative compliance

This document has been drafted to comply with the general and specific duties in the Equality Act 2010; Data Protection Act; Freedom of Information Act; European Convention of Human Rights; Employment Act 2002; Employment Relations Act 1999, and other legislation relevant to policing.

1. Version Control

Version No	Date	Post holder	Post	Reason for Issue
V1.0	July 2021	Jasvir Ginda	Policy and Wellbeing Partner	Requirement for police staff to resign.
V1.1	July 2022	Jasvir Ginda	Policy and Wellbeing Partner	Police officer appeal to be heard by Chief Constable or an acting Chief Officer. Inclusion of the Office of the Police Crime Commissioner (OPCC)

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2. Aims and objectives of the policy

Nottinghamshire Police and the Office of the Police Crime Commissioner (OPCC) is committed to delivering the highest standards of policing to the communities of Nottinghamshire through the utilisation of a highly trained, skilled and motivated workforce.

Fundamental to that commitment is the development of work-life balance initiatives that will enhance the maintenance of an efficient, effective and diverse workforce, in addition to be an employer of choice. Nottinghamshire Police and the OPCC acknowledges that changes in people's circumstances may lead to those who have joined the service to take a break from their chosen career, with a view to a return to the organisation. This career break scheme offers this facility, subject to meeting certain provisions and conditions.

The overall aim of this policy is to enable police officers to take an unpaid break from their chosen career. For police staff and the staff of the OPCC it is an opportunity for individuals to interrupt their careers to concentrate on something else and take an unpaid break. When individuals are ready to return to work, we will try our best to find them another position, but do not guarantee that we will find a suitable position but, we will do our best.

3. Policy statement

3.1 Eligibility

Police officers, police staff and staff of the OPCC are eligible to apply for a career break provided the following conditions are satisfied:

- Have successfully completed their probationary period. This would include, for instance, newly promoted Sergeants and Inspectors who would need to complete their work-based assessment and be signed off as substantive in that rank.
- Consent to resume a career with the Force (only applicable to police officers).

Applicants will not normally be permitted to commence a career break if they are subject to an outstanding complaint, misconduct or gross misconduct disciplinary, Unsatisfactory Performance Procedure or attendance management process.

Each application for a career break will be judged on its individual merit taking account of the exigencies of the service.

What is a Career Break?

A career break is a break in employment for a specific reason, which is unpaid and unpensionable.

A career break may be taken for a variety of reasons, which may include (this list is not exhaustive)

- Domestic/Dependant Care
- Education
- Travel
- Voluntary work
- Undertake religious or belief observance or pilgrimage

There is no entitlement to a career break and the Chief Constable reserves the right to refuse an application in the interest of the operational effectiveness of the service. Such factors may include levels of service e.g., staff approaching retirement, current position or other needs of the organisation.

3.2 Length of Career Break

Police Officers

Police officers who fulfil the criteria can apply for a career break for a period of not less than six months and up to a maximum of five years.

The period of the career break for police officers should not extend beyond their compulsory retirement age.

Police Staff

Police staff and staff of the OPCC who fulfil the criteria can apply for a career break for a period of not less than 6 months and up to 2 years, without the need to resign from Nottinghamshire Police/OPCC for the purposes of domestic/dependant care. This can be extended up to 5 years where the police staff member or staff of the OPCC will be required to resign from Nottinghamshire Police/OPCC.

Police staff and staff of the OPCC who fulfil the criteria can also apply for a career break for a period of not less than 6 months up to 5 years for reasons other non-domestic/dependant care. However, police staff and staff of the OPCC will be required to resign their employment and terminate their contract of employment/written statement of particulars with Nottinghamshire Police/OPCC.

The Head of People Services and Organisational Development has the discretion to extend the period of career break beyond the prescribed maximum period in exceptional circumstances.

3.3 Applying for a Career Break

Police officers, police staff and staff of the OPCC wishing to apply for a career break must submit their application form via their line manager, not less than twelve weeks before they wish to commence a career break.

The Chief Superintendent/Head of Department or designated deputy has the authority to approve or refuse an application for career break. The decision as to whether to accept or reject the individual's application should be notified within 28 days of receipt of the application.

Police Officers

Police officers will be under a general duty to inform their line manager of any circumstances, which may affect the agreed objectives, or timescales of a career break.

Police officers will continue to be regarded as engaged under the direction of the Chief Constable of Nottinghamshire Police, will therefore remain subject to Police Regulations and Codes of Conduct as per Police (Conduct) Regulations 2008. Acts of misconduct committed whilst on a career break will be dealt with in the usual manner.

Prior to commencement of the career break, the individual will be asked to sign a formal agreement, which will apply for the duration of the career break.

Police Staff

Police staff and staff of the OPCC will be required to resign their position following acceptance of their application and terminate their contract of employment/written statement of particulars with Nottinghamshire Police/OPCC prior to commencing a career break for over 2 years and for reasons other than domestic/dependant care.

4. Appeals

Police Officers

The applicant may submit notice of appeal to the Chief Constable or an acting Chief Officer within 28 days of receipt of the written notification of refusal.

The person conducting the appeal will independently view all the information provided by the applicant, line manager and Chief Superintendent/Head of Department or designated deputy.

The Chief Constable or an acting Chief Officer will communicate the decision in writing, within 14 days of receipt of the appeal.

Police staff/staff of the OPCC

There is no right to appeal, and the Chief Superintendent /Head of Department`s decision is final. Individuals should try to resolve any issues with their line manager as early as possible and informally.

5. Return to work

Police Officers

There is no guarantee that the police officer will return to their original post/area/department following a career break. The People Services Department will be responsible for identifying an alternative suitable post in line with the current posting procedure.

Police staff/staff of the OPCC

For police staff and staff of the OPCC a career break is an opportunity for individuals to interrupt their careers to concentrate on something else. This allows individuals to give up work temporarily, without giving up a career.

Police staff and staff of the OPCC returning to work following a career break for up to 2 years for domestic/dependant care will have a right to the substantive post they left. However, there is no guarantee that the police staff or member staff of the OPCC will return to the original post they have left after 2 years where they have undertaken a career break for domestic/dependant care or any other reason, as they will have been required to resign.

By granting a career break, we promise to do our best to find individuals another position, when they are ready to return. Of course, it is not always easy to find a suitable position for people who have been away from work for a long time. This is why we do not guarantee to find individuals a suitable position when they return to work.

- **Vetting and medical**

All police officers, police staff and staff of the OPCC will be subject to a level of vetting and medical appropriate to the post/position to which they are returning to, as outlined in the Force Vetting policy.