



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
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Career Breaks Procedure
Police Staff

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PS 145 Career Breaks Policy for
Police Officer and Police Staff
Career Break Application form for Police
Staff - Form G2007 B
PD 575 Business Interest and Additional
Occupation for Police Officers and Staff
PS 122 Management of Change Policy

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1. VSESSION CONTROL

Version No	Date	Post Holder/Author/Reviewer	Post	Reason For issue
2.0	Dec 2007	Lisa Poole	Principal Personnel Officer	Review and update
3.0	July 2012	Sue Peckham	Senior HR Partner	Complete review and update
4.0	July 2021	Jasvir Ginda	Policy and Wellbeing Partner	Changes regarding reasons for career break

				and length of timescale
4.1	July 2022	Jasvir Ginda	Policy and Wellbeing Partner	Addition of People Services Business Partner involvement and Office of the Police Crime Commissioner (OPCC)

2. BACKGROUND

Nottinghamshire Police and 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 and 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 document sets out the Force's and OPCC's procedure in relation to career breaks.

3. AIMS / OBJECTIVES

The objective of the procedure is to enable the Nottinghamshire Police Career Break Policy. The procedure provides a process to guide individuals and managers. The aims of the procedure are to:

- Provide the relevant information to individuals regarding the career break scheme.
- Provide managers and supervisors with the relevant information to manage a career break from Nottinghamshire Police or the OPCC.

4. ELIGIBILITY FOR A CAREER BREAK

4.1.1 This procedure applies only to police staff employees and staff of the OPCC. It does not apply to agency workers, consultants, contractors, volunteers, interns, or casual workers.

4.1.2 Career breaks are granted at the absolute discretion of the Force and the OPCC the Force's/OPCC's decision is final.

4.1.3 Individuals have successfully completed their probationary period.

4.1 Duration of Career Break

A career break can be requested for between 6 months and up to 5 years.

Due to the different terms and conditions for officers and staff, the decision has been taken to produce a separate procedure detailing the considerations for staff and officers.

For Police officers see PD 069 Police Officers Career Break Procedure.

The reason individuals wish to undertake a career break will determine the options available. (See section 5 for option 1 and section 6 for option 2)

4.2 Applying for a Career Break

Police staff and staff of the OPCC considering applying for a career break should first familiarise themselves with the contents of the policy and the procedure. Police staff and staff of the OPCC are required to discuss fully the proposed career break with their relevant line manager before making a formal application.

Police staff and staff of the OPCC wishing to apply for a career break must submit their application form G2007 B via their line manager, not less than twelve weeks before they wish to commence a career break.

The line manager should discuss the application with the individual and make a recommendation to the Chief Superintendent /Head of Department as to whether they support the application or do not support the application. The line manager will be responsible for discussing each case with the relevant People Services Advisor. The line manager will review the application and make recommendations via the form regarding the person's eligibility to take a career break.

The relevant People Services Business Partner has the authority to approve or refuse an application for career break. This should also be signed off by the Chief Superintendent/Head of Department or designated deputy.

The factors which will be taken into account in deciding whether a career break can be granted, and if so for how long includes:

- the operational needs of the business and the department/team in which the individual works, including the need to retain particular skills, knowledge, and experience.
- our ability to manage the individual's workload in their absence, including whether it can be managed by colleagues or whether additional temporary staff will need to be employed.

- the length of the career break requested.
- whether any other staff are expected to be absent on a career break or otherwise at the same time.
- whether the individual has taken a career break previously.
- the individual's length of service.
- the likelihood that the individual's job (or a similar post) will be available on the date they would like to return; and
- the purpose of the break and any benefits for the Force that may arise as a result.

This list is non-exhaustive, and other considerations may be relevant depending on the circumstances.

The line manager should forward the form to the People Services Business Partner for their area. The relevant People Services Business Partner has the authority to approve or refuse an application for career break. This should also be signed off by the Chief Superintendent /Head of Department or designated deputy

The Chief Superintendent /Head of Department should ensure that the individual fully understands the effects of the career break on their employment status.

The decision as to whether to accept or reject the individual's application should usually be notified within 28 days of receipt of the application. Where the application is rejected, the decision should be documented on the application form and written reasons for the rejection should be provided.

4.3 Appeals

Individuals should try to resolve any issues with their line manager as early as possible and informally.

There is no right of appeal and the Chief Superintendent/Head of Departments decision is final.

5. OPTION 1- CAREER BREAK FOR DOMESTIC/DEPENDANT CARE REASONS

5.1 Terms of a Career Break

For domestic/dependant care reasons, there are two timeframes.

A. 6 months to 2 years

To support police staff and, and staff of the OPCC to retain their skills and expertise a career break for the purposes of domestic /dependant care may be undertaken for a minimum of 6 months up to a maximum of 2 years, whilst retaining the right to return to the substantive contractual role.

Individuals will not be required to resign from Nottinghamshire Police or the OPCC.

The career break agreement will vary the terms of individuals individual's contract of employment/written statement of particulars for the duration of their career break where individuals have not been required to resign.

On return, subject to compliance with the Police Staff Handbook 2020 their employment will be treated as continuous with the period of employment before the career break.

B. 2 years to 5 years

Individuals can extend their career break beyond the maximum of 2 years up to a maximum of a further 3 years for the purposes of domestic/dependant care. However, for any duration after the initial 2-year period, police staff and staff of the OPCC will be required to resign their substantive contracted role. This will mean that they resign their employment and terminate their contract of employment/written statement of particulars with Nottinghamshire Police. Where the individual is returning, we will endeavour to find individuals the same or a similar role to the post they left; however, there is no guarantee.

Prior to the extended career break, individuals will be contacted by the organisation and offered the opportunity to return to Nottinghamshire Police or the OPCC by joining the redeployment pool.

5.2 Maintaining Contact with the Force during Career Break

The responsibility for maintaining contact during a career break will rest as much with the individual as with the Force. All police staff must provide a current point of contact (phone number and/or email address) and postal address whilst on a career break. Police staff are responsible for providing an update to their line manager and the People Services Department within 28 days of any changes to the contact details during their period of career break.

Keeping in touch is an important element of the Career Break Scheme and helps ease any return-to-work process. The individual must also notify the organisation of any changes that may arise that have implications for any potential return to work, such as any changes to personal circumstances and any criminal offences

It is incumbent upon the individual to keep abreast of current developments through accessing the Force external website at Nottinghamshire Police on a regular basis.

5.3 Conditions of a Career Break/Review

At the commencement of a career break, the Chief Superintendent/Head of Department or designated deputy and the individual will sign an agreement, as part of the application form which will clearly define the obligations and expectations of both the force and the individual. This agreement may be reviewed at any time during the career break by agreement between the line manager and the individual.

Individuals who are accepted for a career break regardless of purpose will be asked to sign an agreement, which will apply for the duration of the career break. The agreement will set out the obligations of the individual and the expectations of the force and will detail:

- Commencement and end date of the career break
- Reason for the career break
- Status during the break
- Requirement to stay in contact
- Individuals must be aware that this is an 'agreement' not a 'contractual right'.
- Vetting Responsibilities
- Medical assessment

Where there are reasonable grounds for believing that the agreed objectives and timescales of a career break may no longer be achievable, the individual may be required to attend a review meeting with their line manager and People Services Advisor.

It is anticipated that any review would usually be instigated by the individual but could be at the request of the organisation.

5.4 Pay and Pensions

Police staff and staff of the OPCC will have their grade, pay scale protected and on return will be on the same basis as before, subject to any changes to National, and Local Police Staff Conditions of Service where individuals have taken a career break for up to 6 months and up to 2 years for domestic/dependant care reasons.

In accordance with the Pension Regulations, there is a requirement to pay pension contributions for the first thirty days of absence. The contributions will automatically be deducted from pay following the return to work. If the membership is to count for pension purposes, then there is also an option to pay contributions for the remainder of the unpaid leave up to a maximum of three years. The decision whether to pay contributions for the rest of the period of absence and count as membership must be made within thirty days of the end of the leave of absence period.

If the option is not taken up, then the rest of the period of absence will not count for pension purposes.

Where individuals have resigned and return to Nottinghamshire Police or the OPCC for domestic/dependant care reasons they will be able to top up their pension either through in-house Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVC's) or Additional Pension Contributions (APC's), lost pension or extra pension.

5.5 Substantive Position

For individuals taking career break of up to 2 years for domestic/dependant care reasons, posts should be backfilled temporarily as fixed term contracts either for 6 months or up to 2 years. Where individuals have taken a career break for domestic/dependant care reasons of over 2 years, posts should be filled on a permanent basis and not be backfilled temporarily.

Where police staff and staff of the OPCC have resigned, their substantive position will be backfilled on a permanent position.

In the event of a redundancy situation arising (0-2 years' service) during an employee's absence on a career break, the provisions of the force's Management of Change Policy and Procedure will apply in the normal way.

In the event of a redundancy situation, occurring after return to work then the qualifying service shall be aggregated service, excluding career breaks. Police staff and staff of the OPCC may, therefore, be eligible for a redundancy payment providing they have attained the minimum qualifying periods of reckonable service.

Nottinghamshire Police will contact the individual prior to the end of the career break to ascertain an individual's intention to return to work. It will be the responsibility of the individual to respond to this letter/email within 14 days for consideration of redeployment opportunities. If the individual does not respond, there will be no further contact from the organisation and the resignation will be progressed on the date the career break is due to cease.

5.6 Police Equipment

Warrant/Identity cards, uniforms and equipment will be returned to the Supplies, Distribution Department, and IT equipment to Information Services prior to the commencement of the career break.

5.7 Secondary Employment /Business Interests

The purpose of a career break is to enable a break in the individual's career and is **NOT** intended to enable staff to undertake alternative paid employment.

However, if they need to obtain secondary employment for the purpose of financially supporting their career break, prior approval must be obtained by the Head of PS & OD. Any anticipated conflict between the needs of Nottinghamshire Police or the OPCC and the individual may lead to the request being refused. If alternative employment is sought during the period of the career break, then authority will similarly be required.

Individuals should be aware that if they take up full time paid employment following resignation this will constitute a break in service, as referred to in the Police Staff Handbook 2020.

Any Business Interests must be declared to Professional Standards Department in accordance with the existing policy

5.8 Recall to Duty

Unless required to attend court, police staff and staff of the OPCC will not normally be recalled to duty during a career break. However, in conditions of extreme emergency, (major disasters and the implementation of business continuity plans), you must be prepared to return to duty at short notice, where you have not resigned from the organisation

5.9 Leave

Annual leave and public holiday leave will **not** be accrued, nor will there be payment in lieu during the career break. Any outstanding annual leave, days in lieu and/or re-rostered rest day entitlement must be taken before the commencement of the career break.

Upon return to work following career break subject to the conditions of the Police Staff Handbook 2020 previous service for annual leave will be re-commence.

5.10 Maternity/Paternity Leave

Police staff and staff of the OPCC whilst on career break are entitled to occupational maternity pay if they meet the criteria. However, they may not be entitled to statutory maternity pay if they have not fulfilled the criteria. Please see <https://www.gov.uk/maternity-pay-leave/eligibility>.

A woman on a career break who becomes pregnant should give notice as soon as reasonably practicable of the expected date of confinement. The provisions of the maternity scheme will then take effect and the career break will be suspended. Resumption of the career break in due course shall be subject to a further agreement between the Head of PS & OD and the member of staff. Similarly, staff who qualify for Paternity Leave should give notice as soon as reasonably practicable. Please see <https://www.gov.uk/paternity-pay-leave/eligibility>

5.11 Membership of Trade Union

Police and staff of the OPCC staff are responsible for making their own arrangements regarding membership during the period of the career break and should consult with the appropriate office.

5.12 Extension of a Career Break

Where individuals wish to extend their career break within the 6 months to 2-year timeframe, they will be required to complete a new G2007 B Career Break Application form. Police staff must submit this form not less than twelve weeks before they wish to extend a career break.

5.13 Return to work

Subject to the provisions below, police staff will return to work on the date agreed between the individual and the People Services Department and/or line manager

Consideration will be given to requests from police staff who wish to return to work from a career break earlier than the agreed date. Where appropriate notice is given, the individual will commence on the redeployment pool.

In normal circumstances, an individual police staff member and staff of the OPCC should not be required to return to work from a career break before the agreed date without the consent of the People Services Department /line manager.

Police staff and staff of the OPCC returning to work following a career break for up to 2 years for domestic/dependant care reasons will have a right to return to the substantive post that they held before the start of their career break.

Police staff and staff of the OPCC who have resigned their employment, are not guaranteed that they will return to the post they held before the start of their career break.

Prior to return, police staff and staff of the OPCC will be subject to pre-employment checks, including vetting and medical checks and an assessment of induction/training needs based on the requirements of the role. Whilst undertaking training, normal payment only will be made.

6. OPTION 2 – CAREER BREAK FOR REASONS OTHER THAN DOMESTIC/DEPENDANT CARE.

6.1 Terms of a Career Break

Individuals can apply for a career break of between 6 months and up to 5 years in duration for reasons **other than** domestic/dependant care. If an application is accepted, they will be required to resign from their substantive contracted role. This will mean that they resign their employment and terminate their contract of employment/written statement of particulars with Nottinghamshire Police/OPCC. The individual's substantive contracted role will be filled on a permanent basis.

6.2 Police/OPCC Equipment

Identity cards, uniforms and equipment will be returned to the Supplies, Distribution Department, and IT equipment to Information Services prior to the commencement of the career break.

6.3 Secondary Employment- Alternative Employment

The purpose of a career break is to enable a break in the individual's career and is **NOT** intended to enable staff to undertake alternative paid employment. Individuals should be aware that if they take up full time paid employment following resignation this will constitute a break in service, as referred to in the Police Staff Handbook 2020.

6.4 Membership of Trade Union

Police staff and staff of the OPCC are responsible for making their own arrangements regarding membership during the period of the career break and should consult with the appropriate office.

6.5 Pay and Pensions

Pay will cease, as individuals will have resigned from Nottinghamshire Police.

Where individuals have resigned and return to Nottinghamshire Police for domestic/dependant care reasons they will be able to top up their pension either through in-house Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVC's) or Additional Pension Contributions (APC's), lost pension or extra pension. For further information refer to the Local Government Pensions Scheme directly.

6.6 Return to work

Prior to the end of the career break period, individuals will be contacted by a People Services representative and offered the opportunity to return to Nottinghamshire Police by joining the redeployment pool. It will be the responsibility of the individual to respond to this letter/email within 14 days for consideration of redeployment opportunities. If the individual does not respond, there will be no further contact from the organisation. Where the individual returns to work the Management of Change Procedure will be followed, and individuals will be expected to work with the organisation to secure a role at the same substantive contractual grade they were on prior to the career break, although this cannot be guaranteed.

On return, subject to compliance with the Police Staff Handbook 2020 their employment will be treated as continuous with the period of employment before the career break.

7. Legislative Compliance

This document has been drafted to comply with the general and specific duties in the Equality Act 2010; GDPR, Freedom of Information Act; European Convention of Human Rights; Employment Act 2002; Health and Safety at Work Act 1974; Employment Relations Act 1999, and other legislation relevant to policing