



College of  
Policing

[college.police.uk](https://college.police.uk)

# Police Rejoiners

Updated guidance in response to COVID-19

May 2020

Version 1.0

© College of Policing Limited (2020)

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, modified, amended, stored in any retrieval system or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without the prior written permission of the College or as expressly permitted by law.

Anyone wishing to copy or reuse all or part of this document for purposes other than expressly permitted by law will need a licence. Licence applications can be sent to the College of Policing lead for IPR/licensing.

This publication (excluding all images and logos) is licensed under the terms of the Non-Commercial College Licence v1.1 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence visit [college.police.uk/Legal/Documents/Non-Commercial%20College%20Licence%20v1-1.pdf](https://college.police.uk/Legal/Documents/Non-Commercial%20College%20Licence%20v1-1.pdf)

Where we have identified any third-party copyright material, you will need permission from the copyright holders concerned.

The College of Policing is committed to providing fair access to learning and development for all its learners and staff. To support this commitment, this document can be provided in alternative formats by emailing: [contactus@college.pnn.police.uk](mailto:contactus@college.pnn.police.uk)

For any other enquiries about the content of the document, please email: [contactus@college.pnn.police.uk](mailto:contactus@college.pnn.police.uk)

College of Policing Limited  
Leamington Road  
Ryton-on-Dunsmore  
Coventry  
CV8 3EN

# Contents

<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Further information</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Minimum standards for rejoiner recruitment</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Good practice recommendations</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>Learning requirements for rejoiners</b> .....	<b>11</b>
Learning requirements for officers rejoining the service within 0-12 months.....	11
Learning requirement for officers rejoining the service after more than 12 months' absence .....	11
<b>Rejoiner Essential Learning</b> .....	<b>13</b>
Personal Safety Training.....	13
Essential learning – COVID-19 .....	14
Delivery and assessment methodology.....	14
Accountability .....	14
<b>Frequently asked questions</b> .....	<b>15</b>
Eligibility .....	15
Terms and conditions.....	15
Support for rejoiner members .....	17
Assessment and probation .....	17
<b>Annex A – Coronavirus Police Retention Scheme</b> .....	<b>21</b>
Introduction & Background.....	21
The Coronavirus Police Retention Scheme (CPRS) .....	22
Frequently Asked Questions – Pay and pensions .....	23
CPRS Terms and Conditions .....	25
Frequently Asked Questions – CPRS Terms and Conditions Issues.....	26

## Introduction

This guidance provides information for rejoiners and forces looking to recruit them in light of the COVID-19 crisis. It aims to provide guidance for forces establishing or expanding their rejoiner provision at pace to increase capacity and capability at a time of national crisis. This document is intended as guidance only. The prevailing law will be authoritative. The guidance is a living document that will be updated dynamically in response to changing demands, regulations and provisions.

To provide more flexible re-entry to the service, in 2019 changes were made to police regulations that govern rejoiners. The changes removed the requirement that former officers must rejoin a police force within five years if they wish to retain their previous rank and introduced flexibility for chief officers to appoint to a higher, lower or the same rank.

This document provides minimum standards for those developing or broadening rejoiner programmes; details recommendations of good practice; provides advice regarding the emergency curriculum for rejoiners; and contains a section on frequently asked questions.

### Minimum standards for rejoiner recruitment

The 10 minimum standards detailed herein guide recruitment and assessment for those recruiting rejoiners. These standards should be complied with by recruiting forces. In all cases, rejoiner members are subject to the same regulations and determinations as any other police officer.

### Good practice recommendations

The nine recommendations of good practice provide guidance on how forces can maximise the potential of rejoiner pathways. These recommendations can be adopted by forces subject to local business need. While recruitment needs to be done at pace in response to the COVID-19 situation, there is evidence from both within and outside of policing that can help inform programme and process development.

### Learning requirements for rejoiners

The learning requirements for rejoiners section provides advice to forces regarding emergency curriculum in relation to the training/learning requirement for those rejoining the service in frontline policing roles under Coronavirus (COVID-19) emergency conditions should it be required. The advice covers the likely learning and assessment requirement of rejoining officers to the service, for them to add to the effective operational complement of the force during these emergency circumstances.

## Frequently asked questions (FAQS)

The document provides answers to the most frequently asked questions and details the most recent updates regarding pensions and police contracts.

## Further information

The changes to Regulation 10b have been made by The Police (Amendment) Regulations 2018. The text of the new Regulations can be found here:

[legislation.gov.uk/ukSI/2018/1191/contents/made](https://legislation.gov.uk/ukSI/2018/1191/contents/made)

In addition to the changes to Regulation 10b, amendments have also been made to Regulations 12, 13, 17 and 19a and associated Annexes (Annex C and Annex OO to Regulation 33) to provide further detail and clarity.

## Minimum standards for rejoiner recruitment

1. Selection, recruitment and appointment of rejoiner members must adhere to the College's **Code of Ethics** and the policing principles therein.
2. Recruiters should evidence a rejoiner member's suitability for appointment against the **Competency and Values Framework** at the appropriate level for the rank or role.
3. Selection, recruitment and appointment of rejoiner members should include a rigorous interview process and comprehensive evaluation of a rejoiner's professional development needs against the role profile for the vacancy. Rejoiner members will only pass probation upon successful completion of all identified training and assessment components within the probationary period specified in Annex C to Regulation 10b.
4. Recruiters should provide appropriate and adequate support and guidance to rejoiner members with regard to training, development and assessment. Those rejoining the service as part of the response to COVID-19 can utilise the advice regarding emergency curriculum (and other relevant national learning resources) as appropriate to their individual needs. This outlines the likely learning and assessment requirement of rejoiners to the service, for them to add to the effective operational complement of the force during these emergency circumstances.
5. Rejoiner members entering the service at any rank, including a higher or lower rank than that at which they last served, will hold that rank from point of re-entry.
6. The three new entry routes into policing at the rank of constable have been developed as part of the Policing Education Qualifications Framework (PEQF). New starters to policing will be required to attain specified educational qualifications prior to completion of probation when entering via these new regulated routes. Rejoiner members at any rank are not currently required to attain these educational qualifications, including those rejoining in response to COVID-19.
7. Rejoiner members returning at a rank that requires the **National Police Promotion Framework** (NPPF) legislative exam (sergeant or inspector) must sit the respective exam at the earliest opportunity. This applies to all rejoiner members who have not already successfully achieved a pass at the required level, or if the currency of such a pass has lapsed.
8. Rejoiner members returning to a role that requires the **National Investigators' Examination** (NIE) (any detective role) must sit the exam at the earliest opportunity. This applies to all rejoiner members who have not already successfully achieved a pass at the required level, or if the currency of such a pass has lapsed.

9. Rejoiner members must complete a period of work-based assessment (WBA) appropriate for the rank or role. Those rejoining at a higher rank than which they previously served must complete any **existing established WBA for that rank**. Those rejoining in a detective role must complete any **existing established WBA for that role** unless this is already completed and remains current.
10. Exit from the service as a result of failing to meet the required standard for any assessment component shall not preclude a rejoiner member from reapplying to rejoin the service at a later date. Upon re-entry, a rejoiner member, as with any other police officer, can seek to undertake promotion through the established promotion framework.

## Good practice recommendations

The nine principles are largely adapted from the guidance published by the Government Equalities Office (2018) [Returner Programmes: Best Practice Guidance for Employers](#). This guidance was based on experience of working with those returning to the labour market following a break to care for others, however the principles are relevant to broader rejoiner programmes in policing and have been applied in other sectors such as health, social work and teaching. Those responsible for establishing or developing returner programmes are encouraged to read the full published guidance. The implementation of these recommendations will depend on local need and may not be appropriate for all forces.

### 1. Organisational support

Senior buy-in is critical to the success of returner programmes and leaders should understand the business case so that they can champion the initiative. The support of those working with returners on a day-to-day basis is also vital and, as such, they need to understand the benefits of such programmes. Forces should encourage visible role models to act as positive examples of how the programmes can work to demonstrate the benefits and offer support to others. The use of a senior officer as a talking head and case studies of those that have successfully rejoined policing are options forces can consider. There is value in establishing a dedicated team with representation from HR, Recruitment, Training, and Marketing and Communications, along with training for line managers, mentors and coaches.

### 2. Understand the needs of rejoiners

While often not the key driver to return, returners want to be paid in line with their skills and experience. Returners are keen to return through a supportive programme and line management that supports their reintegration into the service. Although rejoiners bring with them a level of skills and experience gained inside policing, they will need enough time and support to bring them up to speed on their return and rebuild their confidence in the role, commensurate with the period of absence. Forces should recognise skills and experience throughout recruitment and deployment and consideration should be given to appointing at a higher rank where appropriate. Rejoiners will benefit from a bespoke personal and professional development plan.

### 3. Attraction and promotion

The manner in which forces advertise rejoiner vacancies, and the channels through which they promote them, can have a big impact on the quality and quantity of



applicants. It is important to set out clearly what the role they are returning to is or, if this is not possible, a clear indication of how the candidate will be matched to a vacancy. Clarity in terms of time commitment, flexibility and other parameters is also important. Those that have left policing can be hard to reach through normal channels. Evidence suggests that for policing, using serving officers to promote opportunities can be an effective channel to use and social media channels can also help promote vacancies more broadly. Forces could build rejoiner attraction into their wider communications strategy.

#### 4. Recruitment and selection

Even highly experienced officers may lose confidence in their professional skills and abilities after time away from policing. It is important to ensure that the recruitment and selection process is clear and proportionate. Keep the application process as straightforward as possible; explain what rejoiners can expect and provide a timeline; accept that examples of recent knowledge and experience may not be possible and highlight important factors such as salary, pension implications, probation and options for flexible working at the outset. Communication should be clear and prompt and forces should provide guidance and support to rejoiners throughout the recruitment timeline.

#### 5. Flexible working

Those leaving policing do so for a variety of reasons and upon return, for some, flexible working could be a key priority. Forces should give consideration to where people need to work, when they need to work and how much people need to work. Ideally the parameters of rejoining will meet the needs of both the force and the rejoiner. Forces should consider whether working from home or across different locations is possible; whether the role can accommodate compressed or flexible hours, or annualised flexibility, and whether the role could be undertaken as a job-share or in a part-time capacity.

#### 6. Supporting rejoiners

Providing strong and effective support helps to maximise the likelihood of returner satisfaction and retention and line management is critical to this support. It is important that rejoiners understand their objectives and expectations in role. Line managers should meet regularly with rejoiners to ensure appropriate support and training is in place. The level of support offered is likely to be front-loaded and will reduce as the returner reintegrates. Other key support elements such as the appointment of a buddy, mentor

and/or coach should be considered. Establishing a network of support for each rejoiner could also include a programme manager and rejoiner champions.

#### 7. Creating career pathways

For many, rejoining the police will be a significant decision that has not been taken lightly. It is critical that support does not evaporate once the rejoiner is back in the service. At an early stage it can be beneficial to retention and wellbeing to look at long-term career development. Within the first few months, it is important to discuss career aspirations and build a medium-to-long-term plan. Training beyond that which facilitates re-entry to the service could help to further develop skills and broaden experience and exposure to opportunities. Where forces are able to provide mentors, consider retaining this support beyond the initial re-entry period along with other appropriate opportunities for training and continuing professional development.

#### 8. Rejoiners and talent strategies

In pursuit of embedding a returner programme, forces should consider the incorporation of principles and practices for returners throughout the organisation. Longer term, learning from running a returner programme can be disseminated more widely across the force to foster an inclusive culture and support the attraction and retention of a more diverse workforce. Forces could establish an ongoing rejoiner pathway into policing as part of their talent strategy rather than opening discrete windows for recruitment at times of impeded capacity. This could include the creation of a forum for managers to share best practice, such as an online discussion group or through training sessions.

#### 9. Aligning programme goals and business need

While a number of forces have established ways to welcome rejoiners back to policing, this is an underexploited recruitment pathway. As such, evaluation of what works well and what can be improved is limited in policing. At the outset, forces should establish a method to evaluate the benefits to policing and the methods used to attract, recruit, support and retain rejoiners. This could include assessing the calibre and success rates of candidates based on what attraction and recruitment processes were adopted; seeking feedback from rejoiners and line managers and, in the longer term, assessing levels of retention.

## Learning requirements for rejoiners

Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the force to determine that an individual officer is fit for duty. In making this determination, it is **extremely** important that the officer themselves feel they are equipped to deal with the challenges and complexities of the role ahead.

### Learning requirements for officers rejoining the service within 0-12 months

Subject to the individual force requirements for Officer Safety Training (see below under Personal Safety Training) and the specified COVID-19 learning (see below under Essential Learning – COVID-19), officers who have left the service from a frontline role, and are rejoining within 12 months, would be considered competent for deployment into that role, or to a position requiring a subset of the skills and knowledge associated with that role.

### Learning requirement for officers rejoining the service after more than 12 months' absence

For those re-entering the service after a longer period of time there will inevitably be a greater learning requirement (than those rejoining within the first 12 months), due to more significant level of skills and knowledge fade.

The likelihood is that those looking to rejoin policing will have been outside of policing for less than five years. Acknowledging that there may be those looking to return beyond the five-year period, as now enabled by changes to regulations, each rejoiner will be different in terms of their retention of skills and knowledge. Whatever the requirements of those rejoining the service, appropriate training can be accessed through one or more of the curricula for emergency deployment or other components of the National Policing Curriculum (NPC).

Additionally, forces may need to signpost those who have been away for a longer period to the local services available for welfare and support, eg, local federation representatives, force occupational health units etc.

In these circumstances forces should establish the level of knowledge, skills and understanding of the rejoiner through conducting basic assessments and professional discussions. (The curriculum for the emergency deployment of student officers (see below) can be used to inform this process.) Learning can then be targeted towards those areas of

the basic curriculum where further development is required. This may be particularly relevant for areas of the curriculum where there is significant new content, eg, safeguarding and vulnerability.

Dependent on the circumstances of the rejoiner (ie, whether they are rejoining as a resource for short-term deployment during the COVID-19 emergency, or rejoining as a more long-term member of the service), the local force can then determine the level of upskill learning required. Forces should identify appropriately-skilled and qualified individuals to make these assessments. Ultimately, the force assessment lead is responsible for final decisions.

Through the curricula provided by the College, forces can access:

- **Curriculum for the emergency deployment of student officers (COVID-19)** – This covers the learning associated with the basic operations expected of constables on patrol, including: ethics and values of the service, use of police powers, professional standards expectations, providing public support, protecting the vulnerable, and legislation relating to the more common policing incidents officers are likely to encounter.

Additionally, for more extensive policing duties and roles, forces can access curricula relating to:

- **PEQF initial entry routes.**
- **Other role-related specific learning within the NPC.**

# Rejoiner Essential Learning

## Personal Safety Training

The following national guidance on the delivery of Officer (Personal) Safety Training was communicated to the service by DAC Matt Twist in the Op Talla Operational Daily Briefing issued on 26 March 2020:

‘Following the most recent updates from Government and Public Health England (PHE), we are aware that some forces have taken the decision to suspend officer safety training. This supports the requirement for social distancing and will in the short term increase the number of operational officers available as those who were rostered to be training become available for duty. There are also circumstances where the operational need, eg, in recruit training or for those who have been off operations for a longer period of time, will outweigh the risk and it is appropriate for this training to continue.

It is clear that without continuing initial OST training for new officers they would not be deployable in a frontline operational context.

On 23 March the Met announced it was suspending all OST [Officer Safety Training] refresher training until 1st October, but will keep both OST and ELS [Emergency Life Support] training running for new probationers joining the service and those who are returning to duty after maternity leave or long-term sickness. I am aware that there are several forces across the country who have already adopted similar measures.

Any decision on whether to continue with OST in any form, and the amount of risk each force is prepared to accept, sits with individual chief constables. These decisions will not be taken lightly and it is recommended that forces complete an assessment of the risks related to officers losing accreditation over the period (especially if they haven't been trained as part of the preceding training cycle) balanced against that of the need to keep the maximum number of people available for operational deployment, and also the requirement to follow PHE distancing guidance insofar as is possible’.

In terms of Personal Safety Training, where appropriate, rejoiners to the service should be considered in a similar way to those who may have been absent from service for an extended period (eg, long-term sick leave, maternity leave etc.).

## Essential learning – COVID-19

In response to the current Coronavirus emergency, the College has created specific learning standards relating to safe operational policing under these critical conditions. These standards, embedded in the Emergency Curriculum, while covering broad-ranging policing functions, are applicable to all mainstream duties of frontline policing, including response policing, searching vehicles, premises and individuals, managing conflict, escorting individuals to custody etc.

**It is essential that all those entering the service to carry out frontline roles, including rejoiners with an absence of more than 12 months, undertake this learning.**

## Delivery and assessment methodology

In the current national situation, standard delivery and assessment methods may not be feasible or appropriate. Forces should make use of methods that promote health and safety and encourage social distancing, for example:

- Pre-learning (online references, specific pre-join tasks, directed pre-join study, relevant e-learning).
- Remote (distance) learning delivery (and assessment).
- Self-directed learning.
- Use of software and collaboration tools, such as Microsoft Tools and Blackboard Ultra.
- Recording material so it can be delivered in flexible ways.

Forces working with a higher education provider can use their expertise in delivering learning virtually. We would also encourage a consistent approach across forces, through sharing of good practice wherever possible.

## Accountability

Ultimately the force is accountable for the employment and deployment of all officers and staff into the operational policing environment, and any subsequent performance issues which may occur. The limitations of the training they will have received under the emergency curriculum should be considered against any instances of unsatisfactory performance during this period of COVID-19 emergency deployment.

# Frequently asked questions

## Eligibility

### **What is a rejoiner?**

A rejoiner is a person who is to be appointed as a member of a police force having previously served as a member of a police force, having satisfactorily completed the period of probationary service in the rank of constable required under [Regulation 12](#) and resigned or retired from that force. A rejoiner is not a person participating in the Direct Entry Inspector or Superintendent programmes; a transferee from another force; someone on secondment; someone on a career break or a member of a police force.

### **Can a rejoiner member who left as a uniform officer rejoin in a detective post?**

Yes. A rejoiner member can re-enter into a detective role subject to the Rejoiner Principles. The Rejoiner Principles provide guidance for how to ensure the rejoiner member has the appropriate skills available to them in whichever role they undertake upon rejoining.

### **Can a serving officer leave the service and apply as a rejoiner member at a higher rank, therefore circumventing existing promotion mechanisms?**

Any serving officer wishing to apply as a rejoiner member to a higher rank would be required to resign from the police to be defined as a rejoiner member. They would then be subject to the Rejoiner Principles, the recruitment standards set down by the recruiting force and a probationary period during which assessments must be successfully completed ahead of passing probation. There is no guarantee that a rejoiner member would be successful in recruitment to rejoin the service at a higher rank and if they were they would still be required to undertake any legislative exam or work-based assessment required at that rank.

## Terms and conditions<sup>1</sup>

### **What will a rejoiner member be paid at point of re-entry?**

[Regulation 24 of The Police Regulations 2003](#) provides for the pay of police officers. Regulation 24 states that reckonable service for the purposes of pay takes into account all

---

<sup>1</sup> Police terms and conditions are set out in the relevant police legislation and regulations, including but not limited to [The Police Act 1996](#), [The Police Regulations 2003](#) and determinations thereunder, [The Police \(Performance\) Regulations 2020](#) and [The Police \(Conduct\) Regulations 2020](#). This document does not replace legislation in respect of rejoiners, but sets out the position of rejoiners in relation to legislation.

service in that rank and/or at a higher rank (on temporary promotion or otherwise). A rejoiner member would not be expected to restart the pay scale if re-entering at the same or lower rank as on departure. Instead they will re-enter at the pay point commensurate to length of service previously completed in that rank as per governing regulations for police pay.

### **What about pensions?**

When someone leaves the police (rather than retiring) their pension becomes deferred, in some cases not payable until state pension age. Since 2015, those returning within five years of leaving have enjoyed protection of certain pension rights, such as the ability to have the previously earned pension at the scheme's pension age rather than the deferred pension age.

How an individual rejoiner is treated for pensions purposes will depend on which police pension the rejoiner was formerly a part of, the length of time away from the police service, and if any of the time away has been spent in public service. The majority of people are likely to join the 2015 police pension scheme, but we recommend that rejoiners (and prospective rejoiners) contact their pension administrator (ie, for the last force they served in) to understand what applies in their circumstances.

### **What is the Coronavirus Police Retention Scheme?**

The scheme is designed to provide additional resource and resilience during the Coronavirus pandemic and its aftermath. This will enable chief constables to respond positively to the response from officers who want to return or continue their service to help the response to COVID-19 and provide resilience in the coming months. Full details of the scheme, including a separate FAQs section, can be found in Annex A.

### **How are other conditions of employment affected?**

Rejoiner members are treated in the same manner as any other police officer. This includes conditions on full and part-time working, maternity leave, testing for substance misuse, restrictions on private life, dismissal and personal records. Rejoiner members wanting to take a career break must have completed their rejoiner probationary period before applying. Regulations on career breaks are set out in Annex OO to [Regulation 33 of The Police Regulations 2003](#).



## Support for rejoiner members

### **What if rejoiners require additional flexibility?**

Rejoiners may have ongoing care-giving responsibilities or other reasons for flexible working requirements. Changes to regulations give chief officers discretion to extend probationary periods where appropriate. The Rejoiner Principles allow rejoiners at least six months to study for an exam, with the opportunity to resit an exam should they not meet the required standard on the first attempt, and allow flexibility on when training should be completed. In addition, rejoiner members working part time are subject to probationary periods calculated in relation to their agreed weekly period of duty.

### **What support will be available to help rejoiners?**

Police procedures, technology and demands change over time. Rejoiners will need to become familiar and comfortable with these changes. In addition to completing the formal requirements for a role, forces will conduct a comprehensive assessment of rejoiner members' development needs, in-line with the minimum standards. This will include a period of WBA, additional training and formal assessment. Forces have a duty under the Rejoiner Principles to provide appropriate and adequate support and guidance to rejoiner members with regard to training, development and assessment.

## Assessment and probation

### **Who decides what a rejoiner member is required to complete in terms of training and assessment?**

A comprehensive evaluation of a rejoiner's professional development needs against the role profile for the vacancy will be completed by a suitably qualified person as determined by the recruiting force, in-line with the minimum standards. This person will be able to identify the appropriate WBA, training needs and other essential requirements for the role.

### **Do rejoiners have to be on probation?**

Rejoiners are subject to different probationary periods depending on the time out of force. Those who left policing less than one year before their reappointment as a police officer are subject to a six-month probationary period. Those who left policing more than one year before their reappointment, or who rejoin at a different rank to that which they previously served at, are subject to a 12-month probationary period. In all instances, chief officers have the discretion to extend probation as they see fit.

**What is required of those returning at a higher rank?**

Those who rejoin at a higher rank than the one they previously served at are required to sit, and pass, all of the required exams for that rank. In addition, rejoiner members will be required to complete WBA and other identified requirements deemed appropriate. Rejoiner members who return at a higher rank serve at that rank from the point they are appointed and complete the requirements for that rank while on probation.

**When will a rejoiner member know what is expected of them in terms of training and assessment?**

The comprehensive evaluation of a rejoiner's professional development needs against the role profile will be completed by the recruiting force ahead of attestation, which takes place on appointment.

**What happens if a rejoiner member fails to meet the required standard of one or more of the training or assessment components?**

It is imperative that a rejoiner member can evidence their competence in rank/role and the purpose of any identified training or assessment is to provide this assurance. [Regulation 13 of the Police Regulations 2003](#) states that during his period of probation in the force, the services of a constable may be dispensed with at any time if the chief officer considers that he is not fitted, physically or mentally, to perform the duties of his office, or that he is not likely to become an efficient or well-conducted constable. Dismissal through Regulation 13 would also be the preferred course of action if a rejoiner member's performance during their probationary period does not meet the required standard, according to police regulations.

**If a rejoiner member re-enters at a higher rank but fails to pass probation and leaves the service, can they reapply to rejoin the service at a later date?**

Yes. Failure to achieve the required standard upon re-entry at a higher rank does not preclude a rejoiner member from applying to rejoin the service at a later date. This will be subject to the recruitment and forces' requirements at point of reapplication.

**How much time should a rejoiner member be given to study between rejoining and taking the sergeant or inspector exam, if this is a requirement of re-entry?**

To enable a rejoiner sufficient time to study for the sergeant or inspector exam, a period of at least six months should be afforded ahead of the exam date. Should a period of at least six months between rejoining and exam not be possible, the rejoining member must sit the exam at the first opportunity after an initial period of six months has passed. Rejoiner

members would be expected to study for the exam in the same manner as a non-rejoiner member.

**How much time should a rejoiner member be given to study between rejoining and taking the NIE, if this is a requirement of re-entry?**

To enable a rejoiner sufficient time to study for the NIE, a period of at least 14 weeks should be afforded ahead of the exam date. Should a period of at least 14 weeks between rejoining and exam not be possible, the rejoining member must sit the exam at the first opportunity after an initial period of 14 weeks has passed. Rejoiner members would be expected to study for the exam in the same manner as a non-rejoiner member.

**What happens if a rejoiner requiring the sergeant or inspector exam fails to meet the required standard at the first attempt?**

Rejoining members should be afforded one opportunity to resit any required exam should they not meet the required standard at the first attempt. Should a rejoiner fail to meet the required standard for the exam at the second attempt, it will be for the chief officer to determine the resulting course of action.

**What happens if a rejoiner requiring the NIE fails to meet the required standard at the first attempt?**

Rejoining members should be afforded one opportunity to resit any required exam should they not meet the required standard at the first attempt.

Should a rejoiner fail to meet the required standard for the exam at the second attempt, it will be for the chief officer to determine the resulting course of action.

**What happens if a rejoiner member fails to reach the required standard for WBA?**

Should the WBA component not be successfully completed within the probationary period, the chief officer retains the ability to extend probation. Should a rejoiner fail to complete the WBA within their probation (or extended probation), it will be for the chief officer to determine the resulting course of action.

**If a rejoiner member left the service and seeks to rejoin at a rank that does not have an existing established WBA or legislative exam, how will they be assessed?**

The recruiting force will undertake a comprehensive evaluation of a rejoiner member's professional development needs. The recruiting force will dictate the additional assessment requirements for a rejoiner member, which will always involve WBA. It could also include assessment, such as a bespoke exam at superintendent level. It will be for the recruiting

force to determine the most appropriate way to assess suitability to enter at that rank, and determine the assessment during probation.

**What impact does the PEQF have on those rejoining the service?**

Three new entry routes into the policing profession at the rank of constable have been developed as part of the PEQF. New starters to policing are required to attain specified educational qualifications prior to completion of probation when entering via these new regulated routes.

Rejoiner members at any rank are not currently required to attain these educational qualifications during their rejoiner probation.

# Annex A – Coronavirus Police Retention Scheme

## Introduction & Background

On Thursday 26 March, given the events surrounding the current pandemic the Home Secretary announced the Government's commitment to relaxing tax and pension rules for officers nearing retirement or who have recently retired so as not to deter them from continuing or returning to serve.

On Wednesday 22 April John Glen, The Economic Secretary to the Treasury, made a written statement confirming that the relevant tax rules concerning the requirement for a service break of a month (as required by the Finance Act 2004) for officers aged 50-55 retiring and returning as a police officer are temporarily suspended until 1 June 2020.

This means that, until this date, retired officers who re-join the police to support Government's response to the COVID-19 outbreak will not be subject to tax charges if they leave service with a pension and rejoin within a month.

This includes returning to a police staff role.

Whilst NPCC welcomes this statement and the Government's commitment. We are now working with the Home Office on several issues:

- The urgent need for detailed information in support of the written ministerial statement (WMS) to give confidence to forces in implementation.
- Extension of the arrangements beyond 1 June 2020. This date arises from a wider approach to Government financial measures to COVID-19 and there is a good prospect of the arrangements 'rolling forward', although this is not confirmed. Officers currently serving their one-month gap in service could now plan to bring forward their start date.

In addition to clarity on the WMS and its extension, forces will be aware there is 'fixed term' provision in the arrangements and officers who are re-appointed effectively have the same security of tenure of any officer. NPCC continues to explore the funding issue of charges that fall to forces to pay, if they choose not to abate pensions for re-joiners. At present, the implications of this can be mitigated either by abating the pension payable or part-time working. The NRT can provide direct advice to forces on these points.

At present, returners and rejoiners often elect not to become members of a 'new' pension scheme but some have been enrolled into the 2006 scheme. The eligibility of rejoiners to enrol into the 2015 scheme has been raised with the Home Office.

## The Coronavirus Police Retention Scheme (CPRS)

The scheme is designed to provide additional resource and resilience during the Coronavirus pandemic and its aftermath. This will enable Chief Constables to respond positively to the response from officers who want to return or continue their service to help the response to COVID and provide resilience in the coming months.

The temporary provisions allow a police officer to retire from the force for as little as one day, and then return as an attested officer, a temporary concession which means a month's break in service is not required. The scheme offers:

- Retirement at qualifying age/length of service (30 years' pensionable service or age 55 in the 1987 Pension Scheme) with access to full commutation lump sum.
- Immediate (1-day gap in service) re-joining the service as an officer until 1 June 2020.
- Immediate payment of pension which may be subject to abatement. Abatement means reducing any police pension payable to ensure that, after re-appointment, returning officers do not receive gross earnings in terms of pay + pension greater than that received pre-retirement. Chief Constables may apply abatement in part or in full or may allow an officer to receive both pay and pension at the same time.
- Any rent or housing allowance currently received will cease on retirement, but officers will receive any allowances to which new student officers are entitled – such as London weighting, London allowance, SE regional allowance.
- Officers will be subject to re-attestation, vetting and will be allocated a new warrant number/shoulder number/collar number.
- Officers will re-enter at the pay point commensurate to length of service previously completed in that rank as per governing regulations for police pay.
- Continuing access to training and learning and development opportunities.
- Immediate access to the 2006 New Police Pension Scheme, with the likely access to the 2015 Police Pension Scheme available in future.
- Potential, depending on force requirements and subject to agreement by the Chief Constable, to return on a part-time basis (eg, half time = 20 hours per week) and continue to receive pension in full, such that officers can earn the same in pro rata pay and pension as earnings in the former role – but working only part-time hours.

## Frequently Asked Questions – Pay and pensions

### 1. Who can apply for the CPRS scheme?

Police officers:

- a. Who held all ranks up to and including Chief Superintendent and retired from the Force within the last 5 years (forces may restrict this to a shorter time frame, dependent on local requirements).
- b. Who are currently working in the Force and have reached or are coming up to 30 years' pensionable service in the 1987 Police Pension Scheme.

The rank at which an officer will return is for each force to determine, depending on vacancies, force requirements for skilled officers and the skills and experience of each individual officer.

### 2. What if I have less than 30 years' service or am a member of the 2006 Scheme?

**Can I apply if I have worked for the force for 30 years but not completed 30 years' pensionable service (ie, due to part time working)?**

Whilst officers aged over 50 with at least 25 years' service may leave and rejoin with an immediate pension, commutation is limited and they would not be able to rejoin as 1987 members. In general, it would not be in a member's interest to leave and re-join before they achieve maximum pensionable service under their current scheme.

Similarly, for a member of the 2006 Scheme, remaining in service beyond age 55, accruing more 2006 benefits and boosting the automatic lump sum would provide benefits broadly equivalent or better than leaving and re-joining.

### 3. What is Abatement of Pension?

It is the reduction or withdrawal of any police pension in payment on return to service. This is done to ensure that an individual does not earn more in pay and pension than they earned before retirement, including allowances and any compensatory grant associated with rent allowance. Abatement is a principle to protect public finance and is used widely in the public sector.

Abatement is applied at the discretion of the Chief Constable of each force and any application of this may be time limited, eg, for 12 months to provide additional resource and resilience during the coronavirus pandemic and its aftermath. Please ask your local HR for your force's approach to this.

#### **4. What will happen if full abatement of my existing pension applies?**

Your existing pension will be withdrawn. Abatement is applied at the discretion of each force. If abatement is applied to your pension, or if your pension is paid in full, this can be reviewed and changed during your service at the Chief Constable's discretion, with appropriate notice to you.

#### **5. Will I be able to join a new pension scheme?**

You will have immediate access to the 2006 Scheme, with likely access to the 2015 Police Pension Scheme available in future.

#### **6. Will the force make a lump sum payment in the event of death in service?**

Death in service benefits are provided under the Police Pension Schemes, so, if you died in service, no benefits would be payable unless at the time of death you were a member of the 2006 Police Pension Scheme.

#### **7. What are the rules on injury awards, including awards for death as a result of an injury on duty?**

Injury Benefits are not provided under the Police Pension Schemes; they may be paid to any officer who is injured or dies while in the execution of duty, whether the officer was a member of a pension scheme or not. The criteria are set out in a separate set of Injury Benefit Regulations.

#### **8. What are the tax implications?**

Please check with HMRC as all personal circumstances will be different. For example, tax codes are individual and tax applied may vary depending on, for example, whether an officer as an individual or part of a couple is receiving child benefit.

In general, you will pay tax on your police salary and tax on your pension. Pension payments are not subject to deduction of National Insurance contributions. Because of the salary you'll be earning, some of your pension may be subject to tax at the rate of 40%.

- **Tax rates for 2020 – 21 are:**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Earnings</b>	<b>Tax Rate</b>
Personal Allowance	Up to £12,500	0%
Basic rate	£12,501 to £50,000	20%
Higher rate	£50,001 to £150,000	40%
Additional rate	over £150,000	45%



**9. I would like to work part-time; can I apply for the Return Scheme?**

Requests for part-time working and non-standard shift patterns will be considered in line with force policy and requirements.

**10. What effect will part time working have on my pension abatement and tax implications?**

Working part time hours will reduce salary in the new role, such that the total of pay and pension may not exceed earnings before 'retirement'. For example, a typical officer may earn £40,123 in base salary and £3,000 in rent allowance and compensatory grant = £43,123 per annum pre-retirement.

If the pension due post-retirement was £20,062 and earnings for 20 hours per week were £20,062, total earnings would be £40,124 – less than previously, so no pension abatement would be applied. Tax in such cases is likely to be at a similar rate to that paid pre-retirement, although without the annual payment of compensatory grant 'tax rebate' associated with the payment of rent allowance.

Please check with HMRC as all personal circumstances will be different.

**11. What will my rate of pay be on re-joining?**

Officers may re-enter at the pay point commensurate to length of service previously completed in that rank as per governing regulations for police pay.

**12. I received housing/rent allowance prior to my retirement; will I receive this on my return to the force?**

No. You are no longer able to receive housing allowance as a new entrant re-joiner. Your force might allow partial abatement and part payment of your pension, to ensure that; overall, you receive the same remuneration package. This will be at the force's discretion.

## **CPRS Terms and Conditions**

Those re-joining under the CPRS are, in terms of Regulations, no different to any other police rejoiners. The College of Policing has produced guidance, detailing provisions specific to the current coronavirus pandemic and specific leaning requirements.

---

<sup>1</sup> Police terms and conditions are set out in the relevant police legislation and regulations, including but not limited to [The Police Act 1996](#), [The Police Regulations 2003](#) and determinations thereunder, [The Police \(Performance\) Regulations 2020](#) and [The Police \(Conduct\) Regulations 2020](#).

The following FAQs are intended as a brief overview of issues about which officers may have questions. In all cases, the Police Regulations 2003 (as amended) and other legislation detailed below provide the framework within which re-joining will be undertaken. In addition, Chief Constables will determine how schemes will operate depending on the local circumstances and the requirements of the force.

## Frequently Asked Questions – CPRS Terms and Conditions Issues

### **13. Can I apply if I left the force before reaching 30 years' pensionable service?**

If you resigned from the force before reaching 30 years' pensionable service, you can return as a special constable or you can apply to re-join.

Training, assessment of fitness requirements and vetting required will depend on how long ago you resigned.

Please contact your force for more details of the specials and re-joiner process.

### **14. I am currently an ex officer working in the force as a member of police staff. Am I eligible to apply for the CPRS?**

Yes, you can apply for the scheme but all the provisions on re-joining will apply.

### **15. What is the selection process for the CPRS?**

This will be at the discretion of your force, but is likely to include an application process, confirmation of eligibility, a medical assessment, fitness testing if required and vetting.

### **16. Will I still be a warranted police officer if I return under the CPRS?**

Yes. You will retain all your existing powers when you return to work, once you have been re-attested.

### **17. Will I retain my old warrant number? What about a new warrant card?**

You will be treated as a new entrant and possibly provided with a new warrant number & card as you have retired and subsequently re-joined.

### **18. Can I return to my old role? Will I be assigned back to my former team/posting?**

This will depend on the requirements of the Force and any special skills you have. Force HR units will take this into consideration when considering your posting. Postings will be at the discretion of the Chief Constable.

**19. Can I be posted to another role/location by the Chief Constable?**

As a re-joiner you will be covered by police regulations as per any other serving officer.

**20. Is there an appeals process built into the selection process?**

This will be at the discretion of your force.

**21. What will the medical assessment process involve?**

You will need to complete a health declaration form, which will be assessed by Occupational Health (OH). You may then be required to undergo a medical assessment by OH, which may involve a medical examination, prior to being able to join the scheme.

The assessment will be to ensure that you are fit and remain in satisfactory health for the role of a police officer.

**22. Will I need to complete mandatory training in order to be re-engaged on the CPRS**

Police officers will continue to be covered by all policies and standard operating procedures relating to health and safety and training etc. Therefore, if you are in an operational role you must undergo the relevant mandatory training.

If your training is still in date when you are re-engaged, there is no need to complete training until the expiry date unless this is a specification of the medical advice.

**23. Will I need to complete the Job-Related Fitness Test (JRFT)?**

It is for individual forces to decide whether to conduct the JRFT as part of the recruitment process or initial training. As part of re-joining the force on the return scheme you are normally required to successfully complete the JRFT to level 5.4 on the bleep test.

During this current period forces may be unable to test recruits due to the social distancing restrictions implemented by the Government. In these cases, re-joiner applicants will self-declare in the recruitment process that they can reach the standard of 15m Multi Stage Fitness Test – 15m MSFT, level 5:4 on their appointment date. On the re-joiner's start date into the service (or as soon as practicable) they will be retested.

If you do not pass the JFRT you will not normally be allowed to undertake OST training and therefore may be deployed into a non-front-line role. However, there is an expectation you will pass the fitness test to be fully deployable.

Those that fail will be issued with an action plan and will be expected to successfully complete the JRFT within their first three months. Failure to do so will result in being exited from the scheme.

**24. Will I need to do the JRFT if I have restrictions or a medical condition?**

Your application will likely take longer, as an assessment will need to be undertaken by the Chief Medical Officer as to your capability and potential posting. If a non-operational posting is agreed, the requirement to undertake the JRFT and OST will be assessed against that medical advice.

**25. Will I need to complete vetting in order to be re-engaged on the CPRS**

If you have left the Force you will need to undertake vetting the level of which will be at the discretion of the Force depending on the length of gap in service.

**26. What is my annual leave entitlement upon re-joining?**

Annual leave entitlement will be consistent with your rank on re-joining and your reckonable service.

**27. What about outstanding rest days from my previous service?**

Rest days should be used up prior to retirement. It is possible that, during this period to ensure business continuity, your force may agree to carry forward your rest days. Please contact your local HR for advice.

**28. What about outstanding holiday/annual leave from my previous service?**

You'll be paid in lieu for all outstanding leave when you retire and take your lump sum. You will begin a new leave entitlement from the first day of your re-engagement.

**29. Do rejoiners have to be on probation?**

Rejoiners are subject to different probationary periods depending on the time out of force. Those who left policing less than one year before their reappointment as a police officer are subject to a six-month probationary period.

Those who left policing more than one year before their reappointment, or who rejoin at a different rank to that which they previously served at are subject to a 12-month probationary period. In all instances, chief officers have the discretion to extend probation as they see fit.

**30. What is required of those returning at a higher rank?**

Those who rejoin at a higher rank than the one they previously served at are required to sit, and pass, all the required exams for that rank. In addition, rejoiner members will be required to complete WBA and other identified requirements deemed appropriate. Rejoiner members who return at a higher rank serve at that rank from the point they are appointed and complete the requirements for that rank while on probation.

**31. Is there an end date for applications for the CPRS Scheme?**

Check with your Force.

**32. Is there a tenure period with the Force CPRS Scheme?**

Most forces will foresee a requirement for additional resources for at least six months. Depending on the circumstances at the time, officers may elect to leave or, subject to maintaining fitness levels and other force requirements, remain as part of the on-going uplift programme to achieve an overall increase in police officer numbers of 20,000 by 2023.

If abatement is applied to your pension, this can be reviewed and changed during your service at the Chief Constable's discretion, with appropriate notice to you.

**33. Can I apply for an Extension of Service beyond Compulsory Retirement Age to remain on the Return Scheme?**

Yes. Applications will be considered in line with the normal rules regarding an Extension of Service.

**34. How much notice period do I have to provide if I want to retire from the Force later?**

You would need to provide at least one month's notice to terminate your appointment on the CPRS, or such longer notice as may be required according to your rank.

**35. I was previously on adjusted duties; can I apply for the CPRS Scheme?**

Yes. You can apply, and your posting/offer will depend on force requirements.

**36. If I change my mind after re-joining can I resign in the normal way?**

Yes, the same general conditions of service of any apply and you would be able to resign.

**37. Can the force terminate my employment after a defined period?**

You will be required to retire at compulsory retirement age.