

Force and Dept policy - Office Standards.doc

WEST MIDLANDS POLICE
PRESS & PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT



GUIDANCE ON FORCE & DEPARTMENTAL POLICY

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The following booklet contains guidance on the following topics:

1. Booking Annual Leave
2. General Office Standards
3. Mileage Claims
4. Office Hours
5. Overtime Working
6. New Staff Update – Policies and Advice
7. Press Bureau and News Desk Enquiries
8. Release of Photographs to the Media
9. Saturday Cover
10. Shift Allowance/Standby Allowance
11. Sickness Reporting
12. Telephone Answering
13. Training
14. Use of Mobile 'Phones and WMP 'Phones

Included:

- Picture release form
- Staff induction checklist
- Induction tests to be completed
- First day induction
- Leaver's checklist

1. BOOKING ANNUAL LEAVE

To ensure consistency and resilience, all requests for annual leave should be made to the head of news (or head of dept / head of PR if head of news not available), giving as much notice as possible.

Where possible, holidays should be booked four weeks in advance to ensure adequate cover can be arranged. If less than four weeks, it is YOUR responsible to find shift cover where necessary.

Where possible, LPU based comms managers should avoid taking holidays at the same time as comms officers.

Leave will be allowed in accordance with the department's resourcing requirements.

Unless in exceptional circumstances, up to four comms managers can have leave at any one time. In addition one member of the admin team and two members of the web team will be allowed leave at any one time.

Leave has not been authorised until the head of news or line manager has signed the card. Please recognise this when making holiday/travel arrangements and bookings.

Line managers will ensure fairness in relation to the booking of leave around Bank Holidays.

Once leave has been agreed, the card should be forwarded to Amie for recording on PROMIS.

The spreadsheet for shifts, which includes holidays, can be found at W:\Shifts Master\holidays 2011. Any amendments to this spreadsheet should only be made with the prior agreement of the head of news.

2. GENERAL OFFICE STANDARDS

HEALTH & SAFETY AND OFFICE TIDYNESS

It is the duty of every member of staff, irrespective of grade or rank, to ensure the office remains tidy and free from potential health & safety hazards. Walkways must remain clear at all times.

All accidents and near misses must be reported by the individual involved unless you are unable to do so, in which case they should be referred to a line manager. These can be reported on line via the Personnel web site.

Please ensure all cups, plates and cutlery are cleaned and put away at the end of every tour of duty.

STANDARDS OF DRESS

Staff are expected to attend for work wearing a reasonable standard of office wear. Jeans, trainers and sports wear are not acceptable unless prior agreement is given by a line manager (e.g. an office move).

TIME BOOK

At Lloyd House, staff should use the signing in book to record their start and finish times, including lunch breaks or when leaving Lloyd House for an external visit. Under no circumstances is it permissible to sign in or out on behalf of a colleague.

3. MILEAGE

For current user rates see:

http://intranet2.wmpad.local/hq_departments/internal_audit/mileage_guide.aspx.

When completing a mileage form please use the postcode for the start and the finish location of your journey, the operational name or press bureau log number in the 'purpose of journey' section.

If a staff member is required to attend a location other than their normal place of work directly from home, or return to their home directly from a location other than their normal place of work, they can only claim the excess mileage over and above their normal 'home to office' journey.

4. OFFICE HOURS

7.00 am to 7.00 pm - Monday to Thursday

7.00 am to 6.00 pm – Friday

7.30 am to 3.30 pm – Sat working hours (8.00 am to 3.00 pm – Sat opening hours)

Lunch should be staggered between 12.00p.m and 2.00p.m. There must be at least one person on the news desk at any one time.

Lunch will be a maximum of 1 hour unless agreed by a line manager.

(The formal standard working day is 7hrs 18mins with a 42 minute lunch.)

5. OVERTIME WORKING

Each member of staff will be issued with a time owing card and this will be retained in a folder within the department.

Overtime must be properly authorised and should only be worked when operationally necessary, with prior authority where appropriate.

All time owing worked should be entered onto the time card and signed by a line manager as soon as possible after being carried out.

Individuals can accumulate a maximum of 30 hours, and time owing should be taken within three months of the overtime being worked. If there are extenuating circumstances for accumulating time owing beyond this, an application should be submitted to the head of department and the request will be assessed on an individual basis.

All public holidays must be recorded on the time owing card. Up to four hours worked on a public holiday accrues one day. All entries should include the date and hours of overtime worked and the operational name or press bureau log number to which the overtime relates.

Days off in lieu for Saturday cover should be recorded and taken within three months, unless there are extenuating circumstances.

It is the responsibility of individual members of staff to ensure their record card is correctly completed, certified and returned to the Admin Officer on each occasion they work overtime.

5a OVERTIME WHILE ON CALL

The purpose of having staff on call is to deal with emergency situations that may develop outside office hours. The late cover will deal with any ongoing issues which go on beyond office closing time unless there is potential for further calls on the subject. Later in the evening if this is anticipated the late cover will contact the 'on call' officer to brief them of any ongoing incidents.

If the 'on call' officer is called out on Sunday night going into Monday morning, they will notify the staff member working 8-4 on news desk to come in at 7.00a.m. as they will be unable to cover the early shift.

If a member of staff deals with an enquiry from home that would normally involve having to travel into the office to deal with, they must create a log at the start and conclusion of the job to satisfy the claim and audit process.

6. NEW STAFF UPDATE – POLICIES AND ADVICE

All staff should ensure they read the above document – which is stored under w:induction site for new staff: new staff update.

7. PRESS BUREAU & NEWS DESK ENQUIRIES

All staff should have press bureau open on their computers to enable them to answer basic queries from the media where the response is evident from the log. If the enquiry is protracted, it should be passed to the news desk or relevant LPU comms manager to action.

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It is imperative that press bureau logs are both created and fully updated regularly as this may form part of a bigger issue at a future point.

Logs should be created using the following headings:

FOI

STATISTICS

Headings such as INFO, DQ should no longer be used.

For consistency, the main heading should be in bold and the area in lower case.

All logs should contain as much detail as possible of the query, including contact details such as phone numbers.

8. RELEASE OF PHOTOGRAPHS TO THE MEDIA

The release of photos to the media should be made in conjunction with the guidelines laid down by the national Communicators Advisory Group (formerly APPRO).

The below interim guidance has been agreed with the force solicitors and covers the release of images in the following circumstances:

Missing people – should recorded on Impact

Defendants during/after court case – see attached release authority

ASBOs – See attached risk assessment

Dead victims of crime/RTCs - written consent from family - recorded in FLO Log or pocket book

Wanted people/dangerous offenders/sex offenders – see attached risk assessment. Needs written consent of ACPO

Suspects on CCTV – see attached RA

Known criminals for crime prevention – see attached risk assessment

'Wanted' force website or Crimestoppers national website – see attached risk assessment. Needs written consent of ACPO

Enquiries from overseas to trace British nationals as suspects or victims of disasters - Written consent from family or Foreign Commonwealth Office.

Risk assessments need to be completed by the OIC and signed off by the crime manager or, in urgent cases where no crime manager is available the duty inspector.

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The name of the person giving authority should be recorded on press bureau and we will arrange the release of the images.

It is the responsibility of a line manager to make a final decision as to the release of any image,

The release authority should be filed on the OCU case papers for auditable reasons and in the event of any civil action being lodged against the force regarding the release or to satisfy an FOI request.

To ensure that we can release images contemporaneously to the media, it would be helpful if the OIC contacts the press office at the start of any trial so we can obtain the images in anticipation of a finding of guilt and the completion of the release authority.

A policy has been drafted and is with Local Policing regarding the release of images for ASBOs.

9. SATURDAY COVER

Saturday cover staff should normally work on the preceding Friday to familiarise themselves with the issues raised that day, which have the potential to carry over into the Saturday duty.

On Saturdays, staff should notify the Switchboard when they come on duty to prevent calls being directed to the FCC, advising them of the office hours.

Lunch should be taken from 12.00pm to 1.00pm, during which staff must leave a voicebank message and advise any callers that will refer any urgent calls to the Force Communication Centre.

10. SHIFT / STANDBY ALLOWANCE

SHIFT ALLOWANCE

The shift pattern is based on the following criteria:

- A span of eleven hours or more between start time of the earliest shift and finish time of the latest shift
- At least four hours between the starting time of the earliest and latest shifts
- At least half of the shifts in the shift cycle include some unsocial hours

STANDBY ALLOWANCE

A period of standby duty is defined as either of the following:

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- Any period from the end of normal office working hours to the beginning of normal office working hours the next day
- A twelve-hour period at weekends or on a public holiday

All payments of standby allowance are subject to income tax, national insurance and pension contributions.

Payment of this allowance is due to staff who are required to be on standby outside their normal period of duty. This extends to staff above spc 26, who can also claim overtime if worked as part of a standby allowance.

Payment is made for each session of standby

11. SICKNESS REPORTING

Staff should notify a line manager in the event of any absence. If possible, they should do this in person.

Notification of absence needs to be made as soon as possible so alternative staffing arrangements can be made.

The line manager should enter details directly onto PROMIS or notify admin for them to complete a WA 51 Sickness Absence Report.

Where the absence is for a period of longer than seven calendar days the employee must submit a doctor's medical statement, not later than the eighth day. By this stage they should have been contacted by their manager to discuss the prognosis and when they are expected to be fit to return to work.

For longer absences, further doctor's statements must be submitted when appropriate.

On their return to work the manager must hold a return to work discussion with the employee, which should be on the day of their return.

On their return, the employee must complete Parts 1-3 of WA 51 (A) form, the details of which should be entered by admin directly onto PROMIS. It is important there is no delay in this process as this can result in additional sickness absence being attributed to the employee (and OCU/department) when in fact they have returned to work.

Part 4 of WA 51 (A) should be completed by the line manager, setting out the main issues covered during the return to work discussion.

For periods of absence exceeding 14 days, or when more than one doctor's statement has been issued, the employee must obtain a final doctor's note confirming their fitness to return to duty.

Please refer to force police for full details of sickness policy.

Where normal working hours are disrupted due to unforeseen events such as public transport strikes or severely inclement weather, the lost time can be treated in one of three ways (by mutual agreement between the individual and the line manager):

- (i) Annual leave
- (ii) Unpaid leave
- (iii) Time owing (debited against credited time)

MEDICAL/DENTAL/OPTICIAN/CHIROPODY ABSENCES

Wherever possible, staff should arrange personal appointments outside of normal core hours. However, this is not always possible and in cases where an urgent appointment is required, or the booking of an appointment outside core times would cause an undue delay, they may be booked during core time, subject to line manager approval. In this case prior permission should be obtained from the authorised manager and an explanation of the circumstances given. Individuals should attempt to arrange an early morning/late evening appointment wherever possible.

12. TELEPHONE ANSWERING

Phones should not be left ringing and ALL members of the department should answer calls.

Staff should be mindful of noise levels in the office and the content of their discussions while colleagues are on the telephone to prevent a breach of confidentiality and to ensure professionalism.

13. TRAINING

All new staff must complete the following e-learning packages:

- Freedom of Information Act
- E-Mail Basic User Level
- Handle with Care - Data Protection Programme
- Government Protective Marking Scheme

All staff should have access to:

- External email
- Press bureau
- W drive - PressWP on 'File Server 2 (10.125.1.12)

Passwords should be allocated for:

- Internet editing
- Plasma screen editing

14. USE OF MOBILE 'PHONES AND WMP 'PHONES

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On occasions staff will need to make or receive private telephone calls. There is no objection to this provided that calls are kept to a minimum.

Private calls to numbers outside this country are only allowed with the authority of a line manager. These calls will be connected by the switchboard operator who will time the call and arrange for the cost of the call to be notified to the caller.



**West Midlands Police Authority For
Image/CCTV Release**

1. Summary	
Name of offender:	DOB:
Address:	OCU:
Officer In Case:	Date of Authority:

2. Information (Provide details of offence)
Offence: Issuing Court: Date of Sentence: Length of Sentence:

3. Consultation	
Authority seeking:	
Date of Consultation:	
Parties Consulted:	
Outcome of Consultation:	
Authority Consenting to use of any images held:	

4. Reporting restrictions	
Restrictions made during hearing:	YES/NO Copy attached: YES/NO (If no detail restrictions)
Appeal against conviction:	YES/NO Date: Outcome of Appeal:

Force and

5. Publicity Sought
WMP Press Release: YES/NO
WMP Press Officer consulted:
Media Circulation area:

6. Other affected persons. Are there any persons who may be affected or may have their human rights unnecessarily and disproportionately interfered with? Does the benefit of the publicity outweigh the collateral damage to these persons?

7. Proportionality. Is the offence and sentence sufficiently serious to warrant a disclosure of this type?

8. Mental health issues

9. Omitted prohibitions

10. Outstanding matters

11. Justification for Release if not for a policing purpose.

12. Authorisation (from DCI or in their absence duty Inspector)
Name: Rank: OCU: Date: Signed:
On Behalf of WMP Press Office: Authority: Name: Date: Signed: Date of Press Release: Copy of Press Release Attached: Yes/No OCU Communications & Reassurance Officer to complete: Newspaper article appeared and date: Signed: Date: On completion of all press activity the authority will be returned to the OIC for filing with case papers.

B OCU INDUCTION CHECKLIST

Name Date

1. Basic Introductory Information

**2. Career Opportunities
Conditions of**

3. Terms &

Employment

The scope of your own job and responsibilities?
The name of your supervisor/ section head?
If there are any special rules within your section?
The location of your toilets/ canteen facilities?
Did you know....✓ Box if yes

What career opportunities are available to you?
How vacancies are advertised?
How to apply for an internal vacancy?
The basics of the Equal Opportunities Policy?

Your general terms of employment?
What you do if you are sick or absent?
What do you do if you want to book a holiday?
Do you know what to do if you have a hospital/doctor/ dental appointment?

4. Training/Educational
Did you know....✓ Box if yes
What is the force policy on training/education for officers/ support staff?
What is the availability of in-house training courses?
How to apply for training courses?

5. Salaries & Wages
When and how you will be paid?
Whether you are entitled to any increments?
What stoppages/deductions might occur on your salary/wages?
About your pension rights?

6. Welfare Facilities
About the range of welfare/ occupational health services that are available to you through West Midlands Police?

7. Health & Safety
Did you know....✓ Box if yes
What procedures you must follow if there is a fire?
The location of fire exits and fire fighting equipment?

Supervisor's Signature.....

Employee's Signature.....

How and to whom accidents should be reported?
Where the First Aid box is in your building?

When completed return to Personnel Department for your Personal file.

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ON LINE TESTS TO BE COMPLETED BY NEW MEMBER OF STAFF

Name

- Freedom of Information Act
- E-Mail Basic User Level
- Handle with Care - Data Protection Programme
- Government Protective Marking Scheme

B OCU FIRST DAY INDUCTION BY LINE MANAGER

Name.....

Date.....

- **Tour of station, department, nearest toilets, exits, canteen**
 - Health and Safety input:
 - Fire exit
 - Evacuation
 - Near miss
 - Fire alarm- equipment, break glass points
 - Accidents
 - Responsibilities
 - First Aid box

- **Lunch-hour, canteen, shops**
- **Codes/ Badge - explain security**
- **Smoking policy- show area if applicable**
- **Conduct at work**
- **What to do if sick, doctors, dentists**
- **How to answer the telephones:**
- **Message and message pads**
 - Internal/External
 - Divert
 - Clamp on
 - Hash

- **Explain Diversity responsibilities and policies e.g. bullying, First Contact Adviser, Equal opps.**
- **Explain Official Secrets Act and responsibilities**
- **Disability Video to be viewed (not currently available as at 17/1/06)**
- **Issue 4Sight Aide Memoire and DVD to be viewed**

- **Computer Training**
 - To complete on-line Data Protection Training and In Line of Fire (Fire Safety Training) and GPMS and Freedom of Information
 - To complete intranet welcome pack

- **Issue Widebanding Portfolio (if applicable)**

For Distribution to CPs

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- **Issue Line Managers Responsibility Leaflet**
- **Issue Contract (if applicable)**
- **Any queries, questions?**

Signed individual Date.....

Signed Line Manager Date

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LEAVERS CHECKLIST

Name Rank.....

Leaving Date.....

ACTION	DATE SENT	DATE RECEIVED
RESIGNATION RECEIVED		
VARIATION TO PAYROLL		
ORIGINAL WP630 AND CERTIFICATE TO CHIEF CONSTABLE.		
E-MAIL TO PSD		
E-MAIL TO IT		
E-MAIL TO SWITCHBOARD		
WG401 TO FINANCE DISTRIBUTION (INCL WP630 TO EXCHEQUER AND PENSIONS)		
WG401 TO STORES DISTRIBUTION		
LETTER AND EXIT INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE		
FILE TO LEAVERS		
RECORD IN MOVEMENTS		