



PS 145 Career Breaks Policy

July 2012

Version 1.0

Statement of legislative compliance

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

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Aims and objectives of the policy

Nottinghamshire Police 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. Nottinghamshire Police 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 organization. This career break scheme offers this facility, subject to meeting certain provisions and conditions.

The overall aim of this policy is to enable police officers and police staff to take an unpaid break from their chosen career. This allows the force to retain the skills and experience of those individuals in circumstances where they would otherwise be lost.

Policy statement

Eligibility

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

- Have successfully completed their probationary period.
- Consent to resume a career with the Force.

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

Each application for a Career Break will be judged on its individual merit taking account of the exigencies of the service. A career break may be taken for a variety of reasons, which may include (this list is not exhaustive)

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

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. It is acknowledged that individuals may wish to engage in other employment for the purpose of financially supporting the career break. In those circumstances prior approval must be obtained from the Head of HR & OD.

Length of Career Break

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

The Head of HR& OD has the discretion to extend the period of career break beyond the prescribed maximum period in exceptional circumstances.

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

Applying For a Career Break

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

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

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

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

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

Appeals

Where an application is rejected; the individual has the right of appeal. The appeal must be submitted to the Head of HR&OD within 28 days of receipt of the written notification of refusal.

The Head of HR & OD will communicate the decision in writing within 14 days of receipt of the appeal. The decision to uphold or reject the appeal by the Head of HR &OD will be final.

Return to work

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

There is no guarantee that police staff will return to their original Post/Area/Department following a career break.

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