



<u>Policy Title</u>	Change of Accommodation Policy – Police Officers
<u>CCMT Sponsor</u>	Director of Resources
<u>Department/Area</u>	Human Resources
<u>Section/Sector</u>	Human Resources Service Delivery

CONTENTS:

1.0 Rationale

2.0 Intention

3.0 General Principles

4.0 Guidance, Procedures & Tactics

5.0 Challenges & Representations

6.0 Communication

6.1 [Links to Police National Legal Database/Other](#)

6.2 [Implementation Strategy \(Policy Impact Assessment\)](#)

7.0 Compliance and Certification

7.1 [Human Rights Audit](#)

7.2 [Diversity Impact Assessment](#)

7.3 [Diversity \(Human Resources\)](#)

7.4 [Management of Police Information \(MoPI\)](#)

7.5 [Community Engagement Standards](#)

7.6 [Data Protection](#)

7.7 [Freedom of Information Act](#)

7.8 [Protective Markings](#)

7.9 [Health & Safety at Work](#)

8.0 Monitoring and Review

1.0 Rationale

1.1 Under Police Regulations 2003, Regulation 6 and Schedule 1 all police officers are required to seek permission from the Chief Constable if they wish to change their accommodation from that which was approved at the time of their appointment.

1.2 Many accommodation moves require changes to officers' rent/housing allowance. Changes in housing / rent allowances can only be activated by Corporate Finance after notification from Headquarters Shared Services Resourcing team when the police officer has been granted permission to move.

2.0 Intention

2.1 The intention of this policy is to provide policy guidelines to manage police officer requests to change their accommodation.

3.0 General Principles

3.1 This policy applies to all police officers, including student officers, transferees, re-joining officers, and those on secondments and career breaks.

3.2 This policy does not apply to any members of police staff, PCSOs, special constables or volunteers.

3.3 The policy applies to all circumstances when officers seek to change accommodation, regardless of their rank or posting.

3.4 The main principle of this policy is that, unless there is good reason, a request to change accommodation will be approved.

3.5 When a change of accommodation is authorised, this does not affect the right of the Chief Constable to transfer an officer on the grounds that it is necessary to meet the needs of the Force.

4.0 Guidance, Procedures & Tactics

4.1 Individuals involved in changing their accommodation have a responsibility to ensure that their actions support the intent and requirements set out in this policy. All officers should be aware of the policy and how to access it.

4.2 Details of the procedures to be followed when changing accommodation can be found in [Appendix A - Standard Operating Procedure for Change of Accommodation - Police Officers](#).

4.3 The Head of Human Resources Service Delivery is responsible for the overall management of this policy.

5.0 Challenges & Representations

5.1 To ensure transparency and accountability any decision made as a result of following this policy should be clearly documented.

5.2 All challenges and representations should be made in writing to:

Head of Human Resources Service Delivery
Thames Valley Police
Oxford Road
Kidlington
OX5 2NX

6.0 Communication

6.1 Links to Police National Legal Database Other

6.1.1 This policy should be linked to the [Posting Policy – Police Officers Policy](#).

6.2 Implementation Strategy

6.2.1 This policy will be published on the Policy and Procedures intranet site, the Thames Valley Police website, Manager's Briefing and will be included in an All User E-mail.

7.0 Compliance and Certification

7.1 Human Rights Certification

(i) Legal Basis

The legal basis for this policy document is derived from:

- Police Regulations 2003, Regulation 6 and Schedule 1

(ii) Human Rights Articles Engaged

This policy has been audited for compliance with the Human Rights Act and has the potential to engage Article 8 Right to Respect for Private and Family Life. A public authority may interfere with the exercise of this right in accordance with the law and as is necessary in a democratic society in the interests of:-

- national security
- public safety or the economic well-being of the country
- the prevention of disorder or crime
- the protection of health or morals
- the protection of rights and freedom of others

Audited by: Jill Simpson

Audited on: 8 October 2008

(iii) Prohibition of Discrimination

Application of this policy could discriminate against individuals either directly or indirectly.

Article 14 states the enjoyments of the Rights and Freedoms set forth in the European Convention of Human Rights shall be secured without discrimination on any grounds, such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, nation or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status.

7.2 Diversity Impact Assessment

7.2.1 This policy has been assessed for its relevance against the six strands of diversity and has been rated as “LOW”.

7.3 Diversity (Human Resources)

7.3.1 In the application of this policy, the Force will not discriminate against any persons regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, race or ethnic origin, religion, age or disability.

7.4 Management of Police Information (MoPI) Compliance

7.4.1 This policy does not affect any of the key business areas as identified by Management of Police Information (MoPI).

7.5 Community Engagement Strategy and Standards

7.5.1 This policy has no community engagement implications.

7.6 Data Protection

7.6.1 Personal information processed in compliance with this policy will be managed in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998.

7.6.2 Line Managers must be aware that the information they hold under as a result of this policy must be managed in a secure manner in order to prevent inappropriate access.

7.7 Freedom of Information Act

7.7.1 This policy is suitable to be made available to the public and can be published on the Thames Valley Police Freedom of Information Publication Scheme.

7.8 Protective Markings

7.8.1 This policy has been assessed as **NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED**.

7.9 Health & Safety at Work

7.9.1 There are implications for the health and safety of officers and the public if officers are driving long distances to and from work, particularly if they work 24/7 shift patterns or long hours due to commitments or operations. There is the risk of road traffic collisions potentially attributable to driver fatigue. This policy seeks to reduce this risk by not authorising changes of accommodation for officers that are beyond 20 crow miles of their current posting in the majority of cases.

8.0 Monitoring and Review

8.1 This policy contributes to the following strategic objective:

- To improve the use of our resources

8.2 Policy Review

8.2.1 This policy document will be reviewed every two years. The review will take into account the following criteria:-

- Examples of good practice from other Forces or other organisations
- Representations made by individuals and relevant organisations
- Relevant diversity data

8.2.2 This policy will next be reviewed in December 2010.

APPENDICES**Appendix A****Standard Operating Procedure for Change of Accommodation - Police Officers****1.0 Authority to approve changes in accommodation**

- 1.1 All officers seeking to change their accommodation must submit a request (using the Per 21 form at [Appendix B](#)) for this to be authorised to Shared Services Resourcing at Headquarters.
- 1.2 The Shared Services Resourcing Officer (or his / her deputy) has authority to approve changes of accommodation for police officers, except in the circumstances detailed at section 1.3 below, which will be referred to the Head of Human Resources Service Delivery for a final decision.
- 1.3 In the following cases the Head of Human Resources Service Delivery is the authorising officer for changes in accommodation:-
- Requests where approval will result in the costs of removal being borne by the Police Authority
 - All requests to move from Police Authority owned accommodation, to Police Authority owned accommodation

2.0 Residency outside the force area

- 2.1 Officers are generally expected to reside within the Thames Valley Police Area.
- 2.2 Transfers between BCUs / OCUs / departments cannot be granted to facilitate an officer's house purchase or choice of living accommodation.
- 2.3 The approval of a request to live outside the force area will not be grounds for the officer to decline future postings.

3.0 Residency in excess of 20 miles from the home station / posting

- 3.1 All references to mileage are straight distance miles ('crow' miles) not road miles.
- 3.2 Officers are expected to reside within a reasonable travelling distance from their place of work. Officers cannot reside more than 20 miles from their posting.
- 3.3 An officer can request to opt out of the 20 mile limit. In reaching a decision, the Shared Services Resourcing Officer will take into account the following criteria:
- Demands of their current post

- Distance travelled
- Potential future postings
- Any exceptional welfare considerations
- Health and safety considerations

Requests to opt out beyond 30 miles will normally be refused. If an officer wishes to appeal against a refusal, the appeal will be referred to the Head of Human Resources Service Delivery for decision.

3.4 Approval to reside in excess of 20 miles will be on the condition that no travelling / overtime costs will be paid by the force for journeys to or from their home to their normal place of work. Approval may not be used as a justification for a new posting.

3.5 If a decision is taken to allow an officer to opt out of the 20 mile limit they will be reminded of the risk of travelling long distances before and after work and that the onus is on them to manage that risk.

3.6 The opt out agreement will apply to future postings.

4.0 Housing / rent allowance

4.1 Housing / rent allowance is **only** payable for those officers joining the force prior to 1 September 1994. However, the procedures for approval to change accommodation apply equally to all officers whenever they were appointed.

4.2 Officers entitled to housing / rent allowance and who reside together will be granted a half rate allowance each or pro-rata if either officer is part-time.

4.3 Housing / rent allowance is not generally payable to officers who have separated from their spouse and the spouse remains in the Police Authority owned property.

4.4 An additional allowance can be granted to officers who have left the matrimonial home in the following circumstances when they are:-

- lodging in accommodation (not an owner / occupier or privately renting) and
- still responsible for contributing to the mortgage / rent of the matrimonial home

A report requesting the additional allowance should be submitted to the Shared Services Resourcing Officer. If approved, this will initially be for 3 months. If the officer requires the allowance to be extended s/he must submit a report to the Shared Services Resourcing Officer requesting an extension. The allowance can be extended for a maximum of 3 months. The additional allowance will be for 50% of the officer's housing / rent allowance entitlement when they were in the matrimonial home.

4.5 Should the property be *privately rented* (i.e. renting a whole property that is self contained) and the officer joined the force prior to 1 September 1994, that officer will be entitled to the standard housing / rent allowance¹.

4.6 In such cases a copy of the rental agreement must be sent to Shared Services Resourcing at Headquarters, otherwise the accommodation will be treated as 'Lodgings' and attract half-rate allowance only.

4.7 Room(s) in a house or flat with shared facilities will only attract half rate allowance.

5.0 Police Authority owned accommodation

5.1 Police Authority owned accommodation is not available for general allocation.

5.2 Applications for single accommodation should be submitted to the Business Manager of the relevant BCU / OCU.

5.3 Requests for family accommodation will only be granted by the Head of Human Resources Service Delivery in accordance with the requirements of the Housing Act 1985. The circumstances when approval is granted will normally be for:-

- officers transferring in from another force
- new recruits moving into the force area
- on welfare grounds

However, the legislation is complex and the above grounds will not on their own guarantee that approval to live in family accommodation can be granted. In addition the availability and location of family accommodation will be taken into account.

5.4 Officers joining prior to 1 September 1994 may be given approval to live in a family accommodation in accordance with Police Regulations.

5.5 Officers residing in Police Authority owned accommodation will not receive rent / housing allowance.

6.0 Refusals and appeals

6.1 Any refusal to approve a change of accommodation by the Shared Services Resourcing Officer may be appealed to the Head of Human Resources Service Delivery within 14 days of the officer's request being refused.

6.2 The decision of the Head of Human Resources Service Delivery is final.

¹ Unless the officer lives with another officer who joined the force prior to 1 September 1994, in which case section 4.2 above applies.

Change of Accommodation – Police Officers only

Section 1

Name: Rank: Number:
Station: Department/Area:

Current address:	
Post Code:	Telephone Number:

Type of accommodation currently occupied (please tick):

Owner/occupier Privately rented Lodgings Single quarters Police House
Other (please specify)

If occupied with another police officer, please state with whom:

I seek authority to live at the below address:

New address:	
Post Code:	Telephone Number:

Type of accommodation to be occupied (please tick):

Owner/occupier Privately rented Lodgings Single quarters Police House
Other (please specify)

If to be occupied with another police officer, please state with whom:

Date of removal (if known):

If not known, please inform Shared Services Resourcing at Headquarters as soon as the date is known.

Signed: Date:

Section 2

Application approved: YES / NO

Authorising officer name: Signed: Date:

Section 3

Decision noted by officer

Name: Signed: Date:

*Please return to Shared Services Resourcing at Headquarters after noting.
See below for notes of guidance.*

Please mail your Per 21 to
accommodationrequests@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk

NOTES FOR GUIDANCE ON CHANGING (POLICE OFFICER) ACCOMMODATION

All police officers are required under Police Regulations to seek approval *before* they can change accommodation.

Authority to approve generally rests with the Shared Service Resourcing Officer except in the circumstances detailed below, which will be referred to the Head of Human Resources Service Delivery for a final decision:-

- Requests where approval will result in the costs of removal being borne by the Police Authority
- All requests to move from Police Authority owned accommodation, to Police Authority owned accommodation

Housing / rent allowance

Housing / rent allowance is only payable for those officers joining the force prior to 1 September 1994. However, the procedures for approval to change accommodation apply equally to all officers whenever they were appointed.

Without prior notification and confirmation of approval of the change of accommodation, Corporate Finance cannot pay any housing / rent allowance.

Should the property be *privately rented* (i.e. renting a whole property that is self contained), that officer will be entitled to the standard housing allowance (unless the officer lives with another officer who joined the force prior to 1 September 1994, in which case they will only receive half-rate allowance each). In such cases a copy of the rental agreement must be sent to Shared Services Resourcing at Headquarters, otherwise the accommodation will be treated as 'Lodgings' and attract half-rate allowance only.

Room(s) in a house or flat with shared facilities will only attract half rate allowance.

Officers residing together will be granted a half-rate allowance each or pro-rata if either officer is part time.

Housing / rent allowance is not generally payable to officers who have separated from their spouse and the spouse remains in the Police Authority owned property. An additional allowance is, in certain circumstances, granted to officers who are separated from the spouse and family. This is for a temporary period only and is reviewed as domestic circumstances change.

Location / distance from current station / posting

Officers are generally expected to reside within the Thames Valley Police Area and within a reasonable travelling distance from their place of work (generally 20 crow miles). Transfers cannot be granted to facilitate an officer's house purchase or choice of living accommodation.

Please contact Shares Services Resourcing if you have any queries about changing accommodation - HQResourcing@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk