



**Policy Title:** Change of Accommodation – Police Officers

**Date Published:** December 2025

**Business Lead:** Head of Workforce Planning

**CCMT sponsor:** Director of People

**Thames Valley Police ensures that all policies have been assessed and comply with MoPI Guidance, and the Data Protection Act 2018. In addition, this Policy has been reviewed by The Force Head of Health, Safety and Environment and has undergone an Equality Impact Assessment.**

## **1.0 About this Policy**

### **1.1 Rationale**

- 1.1.1 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.
- 1.1.2 Some accommodation moves require changes to officers' rent/housing allowance and affect equity loans. Changes in housing / rent allowances can only be activated by Corporate Finance after notification from the Workforce Planning team after the police officer has been granted permission to move.

### **1.2 Legislation / National Standards**

- 1.2.1 Personal information processed in compliance with this policy will be managed in accordance with the provisions of UK GDPR / Data Protection Act 2018 and the Joint Information Management Policy.

### **1.3 Intention**

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

### **1.4 General Principles**

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

- 1.4.2 This policy does not apply to any members of police staff, PCSOs, special constables or volunteers.
- 1.4.3 The policy applies to all circumstances when officers seek to change accommodation, regardless of their rank or posting.
- 1.4.4 The main principle of this policy is that, unless there is good reason, a request to change accommodation will be approved.
- 1.4.5 When a change of accommodation is authorised, this does not affect the right of the Chief Constable (via delegated responsibility) to transfer/re-post an officer on the grounds that it is necessary to meet the needs of the Force.

## **2.0 Statement of Policy**

- 2.1 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.
- 2.2 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.
- 2.3 The Head of Workforce Planning is responsible for the overall management of this policy.

## **3.0 Human Rights Articles Engaged**

### **(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

**(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.

**4.0 Health and Safety at Work**

- 4.1 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 posting guidance as described in the Police Officer Posting Policy.

**5.0 Communications, Challenges and Representation**

## 5.1 Communication

To ensure transparency and accountability any decision made as a result of following this policy should be clearly documented. This policy will be published within Force Files on Sharepoint and is suitable to be made available to the public and can be published on the Thames Valley Police Freedom of Information Publication Scheme.

## 5.2 Challenges and representation

All challenges and representations should be made in writing to:

Head of Workforce Planning  
Thames Valley Police  
Oxford Spires Business Park  
Langford Lane  
Kidlington  
Oxon  
OX5 1NZ

## **6.0 Review Date**

6.1 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
  - Changes to legislation
  - Representations made by individuals and relevant organisations
- Relevant diversity data

This policy shall next be reviewed in September 2027.

## **7.0 Related Guidance**

Police Officer Posting Policy.

## **8.0 Freedom of Information**

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.

## **9.0 Government Security Classification Policy**

This policy has been assessed as Official.

## **10.0 Relevant Supporting Information**

No relevant supporting information

**Appendix A****Standard Operating Procedure for Change of Accommodation - Police Officers****A1.0 Authority to approve changes in accommodation**

A1.1 All officers seeking to change their accommodation must submit a request using the self service function within Peoplesoft.

A1.2 The Workforce Planning Specialist, or nominated 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 Workforce Planning for a final decision.

A1.3 In the following cases the Head of Workforce Planning is the authorising officer for changes in accommodation:-

- Requests where approval will result in the costs of removal being borne by Thames Valley Police (See Removal Scheme Policy)
- All requests to move from Police and Crime Commissioner owned accommodation to Police and Crime Commissioner owned accommodation

**A2.0 Residency outside the force area**

A2.1 Officers are generally expected to reside within the Thames Valley Police area.

A2.2 Transfers between LCUs / OCUs cannot be granted to facilitate an officer's house purchase or choice of living accommodation.

A2.3 The approval of a request to live outside the force area will not be grounds for the officer to decline future postings.

**A3.0 Residency**

A3.1 Residency is one of a number of factors that inform posting decisions (see posting guidance) miles.

A3.2 Officers are expected to reside within a reasonable travelling distance from their place of work. Force distance guidance on accepted reasonable distance is a maximum of 40 miles and up to an hour commute each way.

A3.3 An officer can request to opt out of the posting guidance above. In reaching a decision, the Workforce Planning Specialist will take into account the following criteria:

- Demands of their current post
- Distance travelled (combination of crow miles/road miles and travel time)
- Potential future postings
- Any exceptional welfare considerations
- Health and safety considerations

Requests to opt out beyond distance guidance will normally be refused. If an officer wishes to appeal against a refusal, the appeal will be referred to the Workforce Planning Business Partner for decision.

A3.4 Approval to reside in excess of distance guidance 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.

A3.5 An agreed change of address outside the distance guidance cannot be used to justify a fresh posting or as grounds to refuse future postings. Officers should ensure they plan contingencies in case of being too fatigued to travel home, particularly if their role may lead to working extended hours at short notice.

A3.6 The opt out agreement will apply to future postings.

#### **A4.0 Housing / rent allowance**

A4.1 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.

A4.2 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.

A4.3 Housing / rent allowance is not generally payable to officers who have separated from their spouse and the spouse remains in the Police and Crime Commissioner owned property.

A4.4 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 Workforce Planning Specialist. If approved, this will initially be for 3 months. If the officer requires the allowance to be extended they must submit a report to the Workforce Planning Specialist 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.

A4.5 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 allowance<sup>1</sup>.

A4.6 In such cases a copy of the rental agreement must be sent to Workforce Planning Administrators, otherwise the accommodation will be treated as 'Lodgings' and attract half- rate allowance only.

A4.7 Room(s) in a house or flat with shared facilities will only attract half rate allowance.

#### **A5.0 Police and Crime Commissioner owned accommodation**

A5.1 Police and Crime Commissioner owned accommodation is not available for general allocation.

A5.2 Officers residing in Police and Crime Commissioner owned accommodation will not receive rent / housing allowance.

A5.3 Officers with an Equity Loan must always contact the Housing before moving out of the property the loan is secured against.

#### **A6.0 Refusals and appeals**

A6.1 Any refusal to approve a change of accommodation by the Workforce Planning Specialist may be appealed to the Business Partner Workforce Planning within 14 days of the officer's request being refused.

A6.2 The decision of the Business Partner Workforce Planning is final.

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