

Information on the ICV Scheme for applicants

Custody visiting in London

Under the Police Reform Act 2002, each police authority had a legal obligation to make arrangements for a custody visiting scheme to operate in its area. The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act (2011) transferred responsibility to the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC). The scheme has the full support and cooperation of the Commissioner but is independent of the police. The MOPAC holds overall responsibility for the scheme's management and administration but independent custody visitors (ICVs) are volunteers from within the community. The MOPAC is responsible for recruiting, selecting and appointing all custody visitors and tries to ensure a balance of age, gender and ethnicity. Successful applicants to the scheme are given training in all aspects of an ICV's role and responsibilities. Custody visiting is governed by a range of legislation and guidance including the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) 1984, the Home Office Codes of Practice and National Standards.

The role of ICVs and what is required

The objective of the visits is to monitor and report on the treatment and conditions of individual detainees. The objective of the scheme is to increase community confidence in the police.

ICVs are escorted by a custody officer or dedicated detention officer (DDO) at all times during the visit. The officer will offer every detainee being held the opportunity to speak with the custody visitors (unless they are being interviewed at the time of the visit). The majority of London ICV panels use self-introduction whereby ICVs will explain their role to the detainees, emphasising their independence from the police. In a small number of panels the police do this. For the visitors' protection interviews are carried out within sight, but out of hearing, of the escorting officer.

Strict rules of confidentiality apply. Detainees are only identified by their custody numbers, and the details of what visitors see and hear must be treated as confidential. ICVs are not concerned with the reason the person is being detained and must maintain their independence and impartiality at all times. They cannot provide advice to any detainee and do not become involved or take sides. They are there to look, listen and report on conditions in custody at the time of their visit.

ICVs are expected to attend local panel meetings every quarter to discuss the visits they, and colleagues, have made. These meetings are attended by the police and the MOPAC ICV Coordinator and provide an opportunity for face to face discussions with the police about any concerns raised on custody visits and any general custody issues. Up to date information can also be provided to ICVs from the police and MOPAC and each meeting will include a training element to provide on-going learning for ICVs. The MOPAC will also provide training in diversity issues and training for ICV panel chairs and vice-chairs.

Following a successful interview, ICVs need to complete security vetting. Once vetted, they are able to make unannounced visits with another ICV to their local custody facility.

During a six month probationary period, ICVs must complete initial training, attend any scheduled panel meetings and complete a number of custody visits with the panel chair, vice-chair or another experienced member before full accreditation as a visitor is confirmed. Once accredited, it is expected that each ICV will make a minimum of 12 visits over the course of a year. ICV

accreditation is reviewed every 3 years at which time performance issues, such as visits completed and meeting attendance, reliability and conduct are considered.

Reporting on visits

After every visit, custody visitors fill out a report form outlining the details of the visit. The form contains all the information about the visit, including details of any problems that were resolved immediately and those that need further action. ICVs can raise issues with the police before leaving the station. Copies of the reports are provided to the police and the MOPAC and can inform the discussions at ICV panel meeting. The details of all custody visits are retained by the MOPAC. Where concerns cannot be resolved immediately, a reporting structure is in place for the police to inform the MOPAC and ICVs how the concerns were resolved after the visitors left the station. Most issues are raised and dealt with locally by each panel, but should any more serious issues arise or if problems seem to be occurring across London then the MOPAC may raise these directly with the MPS Custody Directorate - the department responsible for custody practice and procedures across London.

How to apply

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer ICV please read the requirements listed below. If you feel you meet the criteria, fill out the application and monitoring information forms and send them to the FREEPOST address on the form. If your application is successful you will be asked to attend for a short interview. If there are no spaces on the panel to which you are applying, you will be asked if you would like to be placed on a waiting list. You can only apply to a borough where you live, work or study.

Requirements of applicants:

- You must be 18 years or over.
- For vetting purposes you must have resided in the UK for the last 3 years.
- Your appointment as an independent custody visitor is subject to successful clearance by the MPS Vetting Department.

ICV ROLE DESCRIPTION

1. To arrange custody visits with fellow visitors, in line with agreed rota.
2. To keep the coordinator and fellow custody visitors informed of any problems with scheduled custody visits.
3. To carry out custody visits to designated police stations in line with the London ICV Scheme guidelines and training.
4. To check on the health and wellbeing of detainees, their legal rights and entitlements and the conditions in which they are held with reference to PACE Code C.
5. Where appropriate consult the detainee's custody record to clarify and check any concerns raised by the detainee.
6. To discuss with the custody officer any concerns and requests arising from the visit and bring to the custody officer's attention any issues that need to be dealt with.
7. To complete the ICV visit report form, ensuring that all relevant information is recorded correctly, clearly and concisely.
8. To distribute copies of the visitor report form to the appropriate people.
9. To complete and submit expense claims in line with the London ICV Scheme guidelines.
10. To attend ICV panel meetings.
11. To attend on-going training as appropriate.
12. To carry out the duties of an Independent Custody Visitor with regard to the Health and Safety requirements of the London ICV Scheme.
13. To carry out the duties of an Independent Custody Visitor as set out in the London ICV Scheme Handbook

ICV Person Specification

Essential Criteria

Measure By:

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1. Must be at least 18 years of age. | Application |
| 2. Must live, work or study in the police service area (volunteers may visit in the borough in which they live, work or study). | Application |
| 3. To demonstrate sufficient time and flexibility to carry out the custody visiting role. | Interview |
| 4. To work with other visitors as part of a team to meet the London ICV Scheme's visiting programme. | Interview |
| 5. Good communications skills, both oral and written. | Application/Interview |
| 6. Shows an appreciation of the different groups and communities that reflect London's diversity, and a commitment to equal opportunities. | Interview |
| 7. To demonstrate resilience and an ability to challenge. | Interview |
| 8. To demonstrate an independent and impartial view in relation to all parties involved in the custody visiting process. | Interview |
| 9. To be able to maintain confidentiality. | Interview |
| 10. To demonstrate the ability to complete forms clearly and concisely. | Application/Interview |

Desirable Criteria

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|---|-----------------------------|
| 1. Some knowledge of independent custody visiting. | Interview |
| 2. To demonstrate mobility in relation to undertaking visits. | Application/Training |

Independent Custody Visitor Application Form

Please complete in manuscript or typescript.

1. PERSONAL DETAILS

Family/ Second Name Title (Dr., Mr., Mrs., Miss, Ms etc.)

First Name(s)..... Email Address.....

Permanent home address.....

..... Postcode.....

Telephone (Home)..... Telephone (Mobile).....

2. MAIN OCCUPATION AND VOLUNTARY OR PUBLIC SERVICE

Employment Status Job Role/Employer (if applicable)

In which London borough do you work or study (if applicable)?

Are you are: A Serving Magistrate? Yes/No* *Delete as appropriate

A Police Officer, a member of Police Staff, or a Special Constable? Yes/No*

A Metropolitan Police Service Volunteer? Yes/No*

Involved in any other Criminal Justice Work? . Yes/No

If Yes please specify.....

Please note that if you answer yes to any of the above questions you might not be eligible to become a custody visitor.

Do you volunteer for any other organisation? If Yes please specify.....

3. AVAILABILITY

Please circle the times when you **are available** to carry out visits (you would normally be expected to carry out one visit a month)

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
AM	AM	AM	AM	AM	AM	AM
PM	PM	PM	PM	PM	PM	PM
EVE	EVE	EVE	EVE	EVE	EVE	EVE

Where would you prefer to volunteer? (Please specify a borough where you either live, work or study).....

Although you will normally be asked to make visits in the borough you specify above, would you be prepared to make visits in other boroughs should this be required? Yes/No* *Delete as appropriate

4. INFORMATION IN SUPPORT OF APPLICATION

Please provide any other information you consider relevant to your application and your reasons for wanting to become an Independent Custody Visitor.....

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5. REFERENCES

Please provide the names and address' of 2 persons not related to you, who have agreed to support your application:

Name	Name
Address	Address
.....
Tel:	Tel:
Email:	Email:.....

6. CONVICTIONS

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence other than one that is spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974)?
Saying yes to this will not necessarily prevent the success of your application.

Yes/No* *Delete as appropriate

Please note: Volunteers applying to become ICVs are required to undergo security checks which are carried out by the Metropolitan Police Service vetting department on behalf of the MOPAC. The MOPAC will not be able to appoint any applicant who fails that vetting process. Any criminal conviction you have had in the last 10 years, or police caution in the last 3 years, may seriously affect your chances of successful vetting clearance. You are also required to have resided in the UK for the last three years in order to be vetted.

7. DISABILITY AND HEALTH

Please let us know if you require any reasonable adjustments, due to a disability or health condition, to enable you to attend an interview, or perform the duties of an independent custody visitor.

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8. DECLARATION

I declare that the information I have given in support of my application is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, true and complete. I understand that if it is subsequently discovered that any statement is false or misleading, or that I have withheld relevant information, my application may be disqualified or, if I have already been appointed, I may be dismissed.

I declare that I am aged 18 years or over.

Signature of applicant.....Date.....

WHAT TO DO NOW

After completing the Application Form and signing it, and completing the Monitoring Information Form, send the forms to the following freepost address: **ICV Coordinator, MOPAC, FREEPOST, LON17808, London, SW1H 0DY.**

Thank you for completing and returning these forms.

All applications will be assessed according to the criteria outlined in the Information Pack which accompanies this application form. Applications for voluntary appointment are made on the understanding that the MOPAC has the right to reject any applicant without giving a reason.

Personal data supplied on this Application Form will be held and processed by the MOPAC in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

Monitoring Information Form

Please note - completion of all or any parts of this form are optional and information is for statistical use only. It is not used for the purposes of selection. This section of the form is detached upon receipt.

What is your gender? (Please tick appropriate box)

Male Female Trans Male Trans Female
Other (please specify)

What is your sexuality? (Please tick appropriate box)

Bisexual Gay Heterosexual Lesbian

What is your date of birth?

..... Day Month Year

What is your age group (Please circle appropriate)?

Under 20 20-24 25-29 30-34 35-39 40-44 45-49 50-54 55-59 60-64 65+

Would you describe yourself as having a disability? (Please tick appropriate box)

Yes No

Under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, a disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on your ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities such as those involving mobility, manual dexterity, physical co-ordination, speech, hearing, eyesight or communication, or a permanent condition which is controlled by medication, e.g. diabetes, epilepsy.

What is your faith/religion? (Please tick appropriate box)

Buddhism Christian Hinduism
Islam Judaism Sikhism
None at all Other (please specify)

What is your ethnic group?

Choose ONE section from A to E, then tick appropriate box to indicate your cultural background:

A. Asian or Asian British

Bangladeshi Indian Pakistani

Other (please specify)

B. Black or Black British

African Caribbean Other (please specify)

C. Chinese or Chinese British

Chinese Other (please specify)

D. Mixed

White & Black Caribbean

White & Black African

White & Asian

Other (please specify)

E. White

British

Irish

Other (please specify)

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