



Attendance Management Policy (Surrey and Sussex) (950/2024)

Abstract

This policy and procedure explains the principles of the effective management of attendance for police officers, police staff and Special Constables. It outlines how unsatisfactory attendance (UAP) will be managed with reference to clear processes to ensure a supportive, fair, consistent, and timely approach.

Any further queries, advice and support regarding this policy should be directed to the People Resolution Centre (PRC) in the first instance. If appropriate, the PRC will escalate to the People Business Partner, who will make contact with the line manager and offer further advice and guidance.

Policy

1. Introduction

1.1 This policy and procedure explain the principles of the effective management of attendance. It outlines how unsatisfactory attendance (UAP) will be managed with reference to clear processes to ensure a supportive, fair, consistent, and timely approach.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy applies to:

- Police officers with reference Police (Performance) Regulations 2020 (except officers above the rank of chief superintendent) and officers who have not completed their probation. For police officers in probation please refer to Managing a Probationary Police Constable.
- All police staff apart from those individuals who have not completed their probation. For police staff in probation please refer to Managing Police Staff Probation Periods Policy (Surrey and Sussex) (1183).
- **Police staff only** – There may be exceptional circumstances where there is a requirement to move through a formal stage before the end of the specified period. However, this should only be where the manager considers and can rationalise that there is a significant impact on the public, the department, or the Force.
- Special Constables in certain circumstances (including those in probation) as they are subject to the Unsatisfactory Performance Procedures (UPP) set out in police regulations (Police (Performance) Regulations **2020***)

2.2 All individuals must abide by and demonstrate exemplary conduct and behaviour with reference to the Code of Ethics for the policing profession. Sussex police staff should also note the contents of Police Staff Handbook under 'conduct' for Standards of Professional Behaviour.

2.3 This policy does not apply to matters relating to misconduct which should be managed in accordance with Police (Conduct) Regulations 2020* for police officers and for police staff the Police Staff Disciplinary Policy (Surrey and Sussex) (797).

2.4 Following a Severity Assessment or investigation, matters can result in the Appropriate Authority (AA), the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) or a Local Policing Body directing such matters are dealt with via the Practice Requiring Improvement Process (for officers and Special Constables), or by use of the Unsatisfactory Performance Procedure including both informal and formal stages where appropriate. Please reference the [Home Office Guidance for full details](#).

2.5 If an individual is applying for another role, they will need to be made aware of the conditions relating to any outstanding formal UPP process. If an internal candidate is successful, discussion will take place between the line manager and hiring manager if an individual is being supported under the Performance and/or Attendance Management Procedure(s), either informally or formally. Each application for an internal move will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis and will address whether it is in the best interest of the individual and the organisation; with a view to support their career development and wellbeing where an individual is subject to any UPP / UAP (informal or formal).

The guidance document relating to this situation is the Internal Recruitment Guidance found on the Surrey and Sussex intranet under Recruitment FAQs. The aim of this guidance is to facilitate discussions and assist decision making.

3. Policy Statement

3.1 The underlying principles are to provide a supportive, fair, open, and proportionate method of managing attendance. Both Forces aim to strike a reasonable balance between satisfying operational demand and the needs of the individual.

3.2 Policies and associated guidance should inform decision making which should consider organisational values, professional judgement (on the context and circumstances of each situation) and 'policing principles'. Decisions and subsequent action taken should be proportionate, legitimate and ethical as informed by the National Decision Model (NDM).

3.3 Through taking prompt appropriate action, and/or support the intention is to provide individuals with timely intervention(s) to help achieve satisfactory levels of attendance.

3.4 The use of tape recording by an electronic device (e.g., mobile phone etc.) will not be permitted during any informal or formal workplace meetings between an individual and their manager(s). However, if an individual requests this as a requirement for a reasonable adjustment in the context of disability, as defined by the [Equality Act 2010](#), this may be considered. Any covert recording of any meeting or private discussions during adjournment is strictly prohibited. It is requested that the individual and their police

friend, trade union official, certified union representative or work colleague take their own belongings from the room during a break / adjournment.

Procedure

1. Introduction

1.1 In fostering a proactive approach to the effective management of attendance the organisation will provide a fair, open, and proportionate method of dealing with attendance issues to minimise the impact that absence has on their colleagues and maximise resources to provide a quality service to the public.

For ease of reference the procedure is divided as follows:

- Section A - Use of Focus.
- Section B - Attendance - Formal Procedures.
- Section C - Employment Data.

1.2 To assist with the navigation of these procedures, please refer to the table below:

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1.3 Key Principles

- This policy is in line with the [Conduct and Performance Regulations 2020](#) and [Home Office Guidance 2020](#).
- This policy and its procedures relate only to attendance. For performance issues please refer to the separate Performance Management Policy and Procedure.
- Where attendance concerns are identified, appropriate action must be taken at the earliest opportunity to remedy.
- Support by line managers will help individuals understand possible options for improving attendance and help enable them to take the necessary action which would normally be:
- Attendance – Informal Support Plan as the first step.
- Each case will be considered on its own merits, taking into account the current circumstances at all stages.
- Nothing in this document overrides the need to take account of the requirements of the [Equality Act 2010](#) including the need to make workplace adjustments as appropriate.
- Attendance and Performance issues must be dealt with through separate processes.

1.4 Line Management Responsibilities Related to Attendance

- Ensure all individuals are aware of the levels of attendance expected of them.
- Ensure all individuals are adequately trained and supported to do their job well.
- Respond supportively to any health conditions, implementing any workplace adjustment(s) in the short or longer term to enable an individual to undertake their role / attend work, especially individuals with a disability or likely to have a disability under the Equality Act 2010. For further guidance and support please refer to the Disability Guidance Toolkit.
- Refer individuals as appropriate to the Occupational Health team in a timely way. Referrals are completed via the Wellbeing Hub on the intranet. Please also refer to Occupational Health: Line management guidance to assist you in making a referral.
- Maintain appropriate regular contact during periods of sickness absence.
- Records are disclosable (as is any information about an individual such as notes and emails) so ensure they are accurate and factual.

- Medical certificates – ‘Fit Notes’ should be uploaded on the Origin Self-Service Portal in Surrey (previously People Solutions) and attached to the sickness absence by the line manager (or second line Manager). In Sussex, the Fit Note should be retained locally by the line manager.
- Create a positive and supportive work environment.
- In cases where informal management interventions have not achieved the expected levels of performance or attendance, line managers will usually move to formal procedures. However, prior to escalation, cases must be considered on their specific merits.

The Attendance Management Flowchart provides an overview of the different stages of managing unsatisfactory attendance.

1.5 Individual Responsibilities

- Maintain regular attendance at work.
- Inform the line manager as soon as possible if there are any issues impacting on achieving above.
- Notify the line manager as soon as they are not fit for work and no later than their expected start time (confirmation of the reason for absence enables the manager to decide what type and level of support the individual may require, to help facilitate an early return to work. It also enables the organisation to comply with its duty of care). Please see 3.1 for guidance on how to report a sickness absence within each Force.
- Maintain contact with the line manager during a period of sickness as agreed.
- Attend and engage with Occupational Health appointments and any discussions with management.
- Promptly provide medical certificates / fit notes.

1.6 Unsatisfactory attendance is an unacceptable level of absence during agreed hours of work preventing an individual from performing the duties of the role they are currently undertaking to a satisfactory level or standard.

1.7 Within the formal stages, the improvement plan requires that a specified period is set (usually 3 months) although it can be longer or shorter, but it should not exceed the 12 month validity period*, at the end of which the review will take place. In some circumstances it may be possible to extend the specified period (see the flowchart for how to extend the specified period), but once set it cannot be shortened (see exception ** below); therefore, it is key that an appropriate period of time is chosen. For example, if setting a specified period of three months (or for a shorter or longer period) for the improvement to be made, an individual will have the whole of that three month period to make the necessary improvement. Progression under the formal procedure to the next stage cannot be made until this period ends, even if the plan is breached before the end of the specified period.

* **Validity period** – This is a period of 12 months from the date of notice that Performance must be improved / maintained during the formal stages of the Performance process.

** **Police staff only** – There may be exceptional circumstances where there is a requirement to move through a formal stage before the end of the specified period, However, this should only be where the manager considers and can rationalise that there is a significant impact on either the public, the department, or the Force. If a manager is considering this, they must consult with their People Business Partner.

2. SECTION A. Use of Focus

2.1 Focus meetings are an important element of effective attendance management for both Forces. They provide an opportunity to:

- a) Ensure every individual knows where to direct their effort in terms of work goals and behaviour, aligned with Force goals.
- b) Provide constructive feedback regarding any attendance concerns so individuals understand how their attendance impacts on their performance, the performance of their colleagues and the achievement of Force goals.
- c) Allow individuals to reflect on and discuss attendance concerns with their line manager so that they can be given the most appropriate support to improve their attendance.
- d) Allow individuals to reflect on their attendance and to be able to accommodate any changes that can be agreed which will improve or support their attendance.

Please refer to Focus Guidance and Focus Feedback for further information.

3. Attendance Management

3.1 Reporting a Sickness Absence

Please refer to the Quick Guide to Reporting Sick, Keeping In Contact and Return to Work Guidance.

New sickness absence should be reported as follows: verbally (not text) and by speaking to the line manager (or other appropriate supervisor) no later than the individual's expected start time at work. Sickness absence details should then be recorded by the line manager or other appropriate supervisor on the Origin Self-Service Portal for Surrey (previously People Solutions) or SAP in Sussex.

Part Day Sickness

Part day sickness is recorded when the individual has been at work for 3 hours or more. If the individual becomes too ill to work during a shift, they should let their line manager or other appropriate supervisor know they are unwell and need to leave work. The manager / supervisor must then record the absence on the Surrey Origin Self-Service Portal or Sussex SAP.

If the individual has been at work for less than 3 hours this will be recorded as a full day's absence.

Following a part day sickness, if the individual is unwell the following day, they will need to treat this as a new sickness occurrence and report sick as usual and the line manager or other appropriate supervisor needs to record on the Origin Self-Service Portal or SAP as the start of a new sickness occurrence.

It is important that the line manager is kept informed of an individual's recovery and of any anticipated return to work date.

Any sickness absence lasting 8 calendar days or more requires a 'Fit Note' (a copy is acceptable). For Surrey, a copy should be uploaded in the Origin Self-Service Portal (previously People Solutions) and attached to the sickness absence. For Sussex a copy should be retained by the line manager. The line manager will review and consider whether any action is needed.

Special Constables need to report their sickness absence for operational purposes to their line manager or Duty Supervisor / Sergeant.

From 01st July 2022 the [Social Security \(Medical Evidence\) and Statutory Sick Pay \(Medical Evidence\) \(Amendment\) \(No.2\) Regulations 2022 \(SI 2022/630\)](#) provided that nurses, occupational therapists, pharmacists and physiotherapists in England, Scotland and Wales may issue a statement of fitness for work (known as a 'fit note') following an assessment of a patient's fitness for work. Prior to the introduction of these Regulations, only doctors were able to issue fit notes.

3.2 Keeping in Contact

The nature and frequency of contact during a period of sickness absence should be agreed between the line manager (or another appropriate person) and the individual. For example, it may not be necessary to communicate on a weekly basis where the absence is due to a broken leg.

Keeping in regular contact during periods of sickness absence provides an important opportunity to:

- Review any support that is in place and explore if there is any additional support that can be offered.
- Explore any options for returning to work.
- Discuss any advice from the individual's GP.

Communication during any period of sickness absence is important and there is a mutual obligation for the line manager and the individual to keep in contact with one another. The main method of contact is likely to be verbal and the contact log should be updated to reflect this.

Dependent on the reason for sickness absence, a home visit may be appropriate. Managers should consider a home visit on a case by case basis where the individual's sickness absence has reached 14 days or more, or it is anticipated that the absence may be for this duration. Home visits must be planned, have prior consent and take place at a mutually agreed time. The individual may be accompanied during the visit by a family member or representative.

The home visit supports:

- Creating a sensitive environment where the individual is given time to discuss their sickness absence and has the opportunity to raise any concerns.
- A review of the sickness absence and identification of what support can be provided.
- Discussion about whether a period of rehabilitative duties might assist a return to work.

Where the individual would prefer the meeting not to take place at their home, other options should be explored. Appropriate contact helps reinforce working relationships and avoids individuals either perceiving they have or are becoming isolated. It is important to note that no-contact is not an option and regular discussions between the individual and a Manager must be maintained. Both the line manager and individual are responsible for maintaining communication.

3.3 Keep a Record with any Supporting Documentation

Line managers should document any contact during any period of sickness absence. The information record should include details of dates, the type of contact, e.g., verbally or home visit, a summary of the conversation, agreed actions, note of any support and timescales etc. Records of attempted contact should also be noted using the contact log template (this can be referred to for ongoing support for the individual and cases management).

It is helpful to follow up all discussions about the individual's sickness absence with an email confirming the details of what was discussed, referencing any actions or workplace adjustments agreed and review dates set. By asking the individual to confirm the contents of the email it will clarify what has been agreed and provide a helpful reference for future discussions. If unable to send information via the individual's personal email address, then an alternative may be to send the details via post. Records are disclosable, as is any information about an individual such as notes and emails, so ensure they are accurate and factual.

3.4 Return to Work Meeting

A return to work meeting is an important part of supporting the individual's return to work and should be held as soon as possible. In preparation for the meeting the line manager should be familiar with the individual's sickness absence record and be aware of any significant changes in the workplace during the period of sickness absence. The purpose of the return to work meeting is as follows:

- To welcome the individual back to work.

- To ensure they are fully fit to return to work.
- To confirm the sickness absence and update the sickness absence record as necessary.
- To identify and address any problem that may be causing or contributing to the sickness absence.
- To discuss and/or identify any adjustments to the workplace / hours / duties that may reduce / eliminate sickness absences.

Details of the return to work must be recorded on the Origin Self-Service Portal (previously People Solutions) for Surrey Police and for Sussex Police (SAP) by the line manager (or second line manager).

Where there are ongoing concerns about the individual's sickness absence record consideration will be given to the following:

- Introduction of an Informal Support Plan or improvement or the requirement for more formal action;
- Referral to the Occupational Health team via the Wellbeing Hub;
- Any other support needed such as workplace adjustments.

NB – Reflective Practice is not appropriate to be used for attendance management.

3.5 Returning to Work – Recuperative Duties

Recuperative duties are agreed where following an injury, accident, illness or medical incident, the individual is unable to immediately resume their full duties. This allows time for the individual to adapt and prepare for a return to full duties and hours of work (a phased return to work). It may be appropriate to arrange a recuperative plan which would usually cover a period of 4 weeks and not would not generally exceed 3 months. The following criteria apply:

- Recuperative plans are short term, and it is expected that full duties will be resumed as soon as possible.
- Line managers should discuss a suitable recuperative plan with the individual to agree arrangements and it may be advisable to seek guidance from the Occupational Health team (Managers Advice Line).
- Where reduced hours are considered appropriate, the expectation is that a minimum of 4 hours a day is a reasonable amount of time to support an individual's return to work. Although this may need further consideration depending on the complexity of the case and the advice from the GP and/or Occupational Health, as applicable.
- Line managers are responsible for monitoring this arrangement on a regular basis.

3.6 Disability and Workplace Adjustments

Surrey Police and Sussex Police are committed to considering making workplace adjustment(s) to support a person with a disability to continue to, or return, to work. There are clear benefits to undertaking this commitment in terms of ethically supporting the wellbeing of individuals in the workplace and with consideration of legal requirements.

In accordance with the provisions of the [Equality Act 2010](#) if an individual is disabled or becomes disabled we are legally required to make workplace adjustments to enable the individual to continue working.

In some circumstances workplace adjustments may be considered even if the individual does not meet the disability definition as per the Equality Act 2010 and with reference to the Disability Guidance Toolkit.

3.7 Workplace adjustments may vary and may involve, for example, acquiring specific equipment or accommodating a higher level of sickness absence, depending on the illness or condition. It may require the adjustment of timeframes when managing concerns about attendance. It could also be making physical adjustments to the workplace, moving the individual to another job or location nearer home.

For further information on workplace adjustments please refer to:

- Disability Guidance Toolkit.
- Agile Working Policy (Surrey and Sussex) (1199).
- Flexible Working Policy (Surrey and Sussex) (816).
- Arranging training (see Disability Guidance Toolkit pages 11 – 14).
- Access to work can be contacted by an individual.

The individual will usually be able to explain the workplace adjustment(s) they consider necessary. In situations where the high level of sickness absence is related to a disability there is a requirement for adjustments to be considered so that the individual is not disadvantaged.

Occupational Health can advise on workplace adjustments, but it is for the line manager to decide whether the adjustment is 'reasonable' and achievable in the context of organisational requirements and available resources. Where a workplace adjustment is not considered reasonable, the line manager will need to explain and make a record of the reason(s). Further support and advice can be obtained from the People Resolution Centre.

If Surrey Police or Sussex Police are unable to accommodate necessary workplace adjustments within an individual's existing role, then an alternative role will be explored. For police staff please refer to Medical Redeployment for Police Staff Policy (Surrey and Sussex) (1182). For police officers please refer to Police Officer Postings and Tenure Guidance Document.

3.8 As with all absence, disability related sickness absence will be recorded. This will help line managers make informed, fair, and appropriate decisions regarding attendance.

3.9 Disability Leave

Disability related leave is paid leave that allows reasonable absence during working hours for rehabilitation, assessment and treatment for a condition covered by the Equality Act 2010. Please refer to Leave (Police Officers and Police Staff) Policy (Surrey and Sussex) (477) for further guidance.

3.10 Police Officer Adjusted Duties

Adjusted duties are a long-term restriction for police officers and are only put in place once Occupational Health have undertaken a medical assessment.

The following criteria apply:

- Adjusted duties will usually apply to cases where the condition / illness an individual has is longer term in nature (i.e., has or is likely to last 12 months or more).
- Adjusted duties are subject to an appropriate role being available.
- Officers undertaking adjusted duties must be reviewed annually as their condition may improve sufficiently to have fewer restrictions and, where possible, return to full duties.

Adjusted duties are those which fall short of full deployment and the triggers for placing officers on adjusted duties are:

- An officer fails to resume full duties following a period of recuperation (see the section above on Recuperative Duties).
- A failure to pass the job related fitness test or Personal Safety Training which brings to light an underlying medical condition that makes adjusted duties appropriate.
- A medical review that comes about for some other reason.

For further guidance please refer to Management of Police Officers on Limited Duties / Adjusted Duties.

- Adjusted Passport Workflow.
- Adjusted Duties Flowchart.
- Adjusted Duties FAQs.

3.11 Medical Redeployment

Individuals may be considered for redeployment on medical grounds when they have been declared medically unfit for their current role by Occupational Health and attempts to accommodate them in their current role have been considered and deemed unsuccessful. Please refer to Medical Redeployment for Police Staff Policy (Surrey and Sussex) (1182). For police officers please refer to Police Officer Postings and Tenure Guidance Document.

3.12 Adjustment Passport

An Adjustment Passport (AP) is a document owned by the individual which is created in conjunction with the line manager and as necessary with input from Occupational Health. The individual does not have to have a disability to have an AP, it can be initiated where an individual has a specific health condition or learning difficulties that could have an impact on their ability to work. Please refer to Adjustment Passport and Adjustments in the Workplace Flowchart for further information.

3.13 Medical Appointments

Surrey Police

Surrey Police provides a reasonable amount of paid time-off to individuals to attend confirmed medical appointments (e.g., GP / Hospital Appointment / Dentist) and this should not be taken as sickness absence. Managers may ask to see evidence of the appointment i.e., letter or appointment card.

Wherever possible, individuals working full-time should make appointments at the beginning or end of the working day. Wherever possible, individuals contracted to work part-time hours should make appointments during the time they are not contracted to work. Individuals who have the opportunity to work flexibly should aim to work their hours around medical appointments where it is practicable to do so. Medical appointments leave can be booked where an appointment cannot be made or moved to a non-working day.

If, during the appointment, a procedure is carried out i.e., the individual is admitted as a day case, or the individual is unable to work as a result of the appointment this would count as a sickness absence and the individual should follow the normal sickness reporting procedures.

Normal sickness absence procedures apply where a medical appointment is a day case, as the individual has to be at work for at least 3 hours before or after an appointment for it to be classified as a medical appointment, unless it is covered by disability leave.

Sussex Police

Outside of the special provision of Disability Leave and medical appointments relating to gender transitioning processes, time off for doctor or dentist appointment(s) during work time is unpaid.

In all cases individuals should avoid disrupting their work commitments as far as possible and appointments should be made outside working hours unless there is absolutely no alternative. Where time off for more regular appointments is requested, it may be possible to make some appointments on days off or take annual leave, or if this is not possible explore the option to make up some of the time taken.

Surrey Police and Sussex Police

Please see Leave (Police Officers and Police Staff) Policy (Surrey and Sussex) (477) the provisions related to fertility leave, elective surgery, organ or bone marrow donations and medical screening.

3.14 Injury and Accidents at Work

Absences related to an injury or accident on duty will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis dependent on the individual circumstances and manager should consult their People Business Partner for advice and guidance. Accidents can be reported via the Intranet at Accident-Reporting.

3.15 Sick Pay

Police Officers – Occupational Sick Pay

Police officers are entitled to full pay for 6 months (183 days) in any 12 month period, followed by half pay for the second period of 6 months. After 12 months (rolling) sick pay ceases.

Special Constables – Statutory Sick Pay

Only under certain circumstances are Special Constables entitled to Statutory Sick Pay, namely when an injury or a disease is contracted whilst on duty (including travelling to / from work). In these instances, they may be able to claim up to 26 weeks Statutory Sick Pay. A report concerning such cases must be sent to the Director of People Services via the Divisional Commander in the relevant Force as soon as possible.

Police Staff – Occupational Sick Pay

Police staff entitlements vary according to the length of continuous service as detailed below:

During 1st year of service.	1 month's full pay and (after completing 4 months service) 2 months half pay.
During 2nd year of service, 2 months full pay and 2 months half pay.	During 3rd year of service, 4 months full pay and 4 months half pay.
During 4th and 5th years, 5 months full pay and 5 months half of service pay.	After 5 years' service, 6 months full pay and 6 months half pay.

Police Officers and Police Staff

The payment of occupational sick pay will be based on appropriate entitlement as detailed above and a review of how much sickness an individual may have already been paid during the preceding 12 months (on a rolling basis).

Half Pay and Nil Pay

For further information please refer to:

Surrey Police - Sick Pay and Pay Reduction

Sussex Police - Managing Half Pay / Nil Pay

Managing Unsatisfactory Attendance - Informal

It is important to identify any potential causes for unsatisfactory attendance as soon as possible and ensure that areas of support such as any workplace adjustments have been thoroughly explored.

3.16 Attendance Triggers - Surrey Police

For attendance purposes, in addition to on-going support from line managers, quantitative trigger points will be used to identify a need for supportive action. The intention is to encourage action at the earliest opportunity and facilitate attendance discussions.

The attendance triggers are;

- Three or more episodes of sickness absence amounting to six or more days in a rolling six month period and/or
- The individual has been on long-term sickness for over 28 days.

Attendance Triggers - Sussex Police

The attendance triggers are:

- Four periods of absence in any twelve month period or
- One absence exceeding twenty one days or a total of twenty one days absence in a rolling 12 month period.

Attendance Triggers - Surrey Police and Sussex Police

- Any sickness absence that gives cause for concern e.g., pattern of sickness absence or concerns that an underlying health problem exists. Any absence related to medical appointments as part of gender transitioning processes should not be included as part of attendance triggers.

Note: Triggers will be calculated to take account of the working arrangements for part time individuals i.e., the number of days worked.

A trigger will only be hit where a sickness absence is for a full day or more. Part day sickness absences will not automatically count towards the triggers (Note: An individual who has to leave work through sickness before the first 3 hours of the day / shift period will be recorded as sick for the whole day. All part day absences i.e., any absence greater than 3 hours will need to be inputted onto SAP (Sussex Police only). Frequent part day absences or any forms of regular absence (e.g., frequent dependants leave)

should be explored as part of an attendance review. In some cases, these may be considered as a pattern of sickness absence that causes concern.

Once the quantitative triggers have been reached and/or any sickness absence causes concern the informal procedures should be applied.

Where an individual has a disability or is likely to have a disability defined under the Equality Act 2010 a workplace adjustment may be to increase attendance triggers or extend timescales. For further information please refer to Disability Guidance Toolkit - Attendance Triggers and Timescales – How to determine a workplace adjustment.

In addition to the above, any sickness absence that gives specific cause for concern should be discussed at the earliest opportunity.

Note: The right to a self-certified sickness absence may be withdrawn on an individual basis where an individual's level and frequency of absence gives cause for concern. There is not a set point at which managers could remove this right. Each case will be considered on its own merits and in consultation with the People Business Partner.

3.17 Attendance Discussions

Attendance discussions are an important feature of effective attendance management, and it is helpful to consider the following factors:

- Review the attendance record.
- Explore the reasons for sickness absence.
- Identify areas of support.
- Implement an Informal Support Plan that sets targets for improvement, confirms support that is being provided and details of what the individual will do to assist in improving their attendance. An overall review period of 3 months is reasonable in most circumstances. If the support plan is breached during the review period, or it is clear that allowing more time will not result in the required improvement, it may be appropriate to move to the formal stage 1.

In conjunction with the Informal Support Plan it is essential that managers keep a record of any actions / workplace adjustments agreed and review dates set. It is helpful to keep this record as a continuous record (a rolling log) so that there is a visible timeline for the manager and individual to reference. Managers should send the document to the individual to add comments or confirm actions agreed. This record can also be used to keep a log of attempts to contact the individual if there are difficulties in maintaining contact.

Copies of return to work meeting(s) / discussions should also be included as part of the Managers records. Note: Records are disclosable (as is any information about an individual such as notes and emails) so ensure they are accurate and factual.

It is important for line managers to record on the Informal support plan the impact of the sickness absence(s) on service delivery, the team, department, and Force.

Regular reviews based on agreed timescales should take place. The final review should take place ideally just before the end of the plan or as soon as possible afterwards.

If a satisfactory level of attendance is not achieved or maintained during the review period or reoccur the individual's line manager may need to commence the formal Unsatisfactory Attendance Process.

3.18 Long-term sickness

Individuals will be classified as having long-term sickness absence where they have been absent from work for a continuous period of 28 days or more due to sickness.

It is recommended that after two weeks of sickness absence (or earlier if an extended sickness absence is predicted) the manager will contact the individual to discuss diagnosis, recovery, potential workplace adjustments, rehabilitation plan and return to work, and potential stages of attendance process.

Managers are reminded to exercise sensitivity, taking account of the circumstances of the absence. In cases where the sickness absence is ongoing and there are no likely indicators of a return to work it may be appropriate to hold a meeting. This meeting will review the sickness absence of the individual, their progress towards recovery and all the support they have received. Generally, the meeting will include line management and the individual. People Services may attend as appropriate, and guidance may be sought from Occupational Health.

An individual on long-term sickness absence can take annual leave during certified sickness absence and will need to book this in the usual way. Please note however this will not break the period of sickness absence.

Upon return to work / duty at the end of a period of sickness, where annual leave has not been taken due to sickness, the following will apply:-

If it is within the same leave year, an individual will be entitled to receive the leave entitlement from that year, minus any leave they have already taken. If an absence does not exceed past the new leave year, it should be taken in the current leave year and should only be carried over in exceptional circumstances.

Where an individual returns to work / duty late in the leave year and so does not have the opportunity to take all their annual leave before the end of the leave year, or where an individual returns to work / duty in a new leave year, they will be entitled to carry over four weeks' annual leave (less any annual leave and bank holidays already taken) into the new leave year (pro rata if part time). However, any annual leave carried over must be taken within 18 months of the end of the leave year in which it accrued.

Payment for outstanding annual leave is not permissible, except if an individual is leaving the organisation following a period of sickness where they have not been able to take their annual leave due to sickness. Payment calculations will mirror the arrangements set out in the preceding paragraphs.

Whilst off on long-term sickness absence, if an individual wishes to receive Routine Orders and job vacancies by email, they should notify their line manager who should then notify the People Resolution Centre of the home email address of the individual.

For guidance regarding Occupational Health Referrals please go to the Wellbeing Hub.

4. SECTION B. Formal Procedures for Attendance

4.1 Formal Framework for Unsatisfactory Attendance

Regular reviews and support will help minimise unsatisfactory attendance. However, there may be occasions when, despite adequate support, an individual fails to reach the required standard of attendance. Where this is the case, the formal process outlined at 4.3 below will be followed. Prior to progressing to the next stage, each case will be considered on the current circumstances.

4.2 Acceptable Levels of Attendance

It is for individuals and managers to work together to achieve acceptable levels of attendance. Whilst in most cases this will enable a positive result, it must be noted that progression through the formal process could ultimately lead to dismissal where acceptable levels of attendance are not achieved. For the Formal Action Plan please refer to the Unsatisfactory Performance or Attendance First / Second / Final Stage Formal Improvement Action Plan template.

4.3 Formal Review Stages

Police Officers

Stage	Chair	Appeals heard by	Potential Outcomes
First Stage Meeting	1st line manager	2nd line manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Written Improvement Notice (must be issued within 7 working days) and Improvement Action Plan.• Review periods for chair to agree but in most cases to be at least 1 month.
Second Stage Meeting	2nd line manager	senior manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Issue of Final Written Improvement Notice and

			<p>Improvement Action Plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review periods for chair to agree but in most cases to be at least 1 month.
Third Stage Meeting	Panel of 3 members (Refer to Police Regs)	Police Appeals Tribunal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dismissal. • Redeployment to alternative duties. • Exceptionally, extension of final written Improvement Action Plan.

Police Staff

Stage	Chair	Appeals heard by	Potential Outcomes
First Stage Meeting	1st line manager	No right of appeal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written Improvement Notice (must be issued within 7 working days) and Improvement Action Plan. • Review periods for chair to agree but in most cases to be at least 1 month.
Second Stage Meeting	2nd line manager	No right of appeal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue of Final Written Improvement Notice and Improvement Action Plan. • Review periods for chair to agree but in most cases to be at least 1 month.
Third Stage Meeting	Surrey Superintendent / above or staff equivalent	Surrey Chief Superintendent /	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dismissal.

	Sussex Chief Inspector or M2 or above (not Chief Superintendent or Head of Department)	above or staff equivalent Sussex Chief Superintendent or Head of Department from different Division / Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redeployment to alternative duties. • Exceptionally, extension of Final Written Improvement Notice and Improvement Action Plan.
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For copies of all letters, forms, and guidance, please refer to the Attendance Management Flowchart.

4.4 Right to be Accompanied

To provide support and advice during formal meetings, police officers may be accompanied by a police friend (as defined in The Police (Performance) Regulations 2020). Police staff may be accompanied by a trade union official, certified union representative or a colleague who works for Surrey Police / Sussex Police.

4.5 Appeals

Police officers have the right to appeal against the outcome of all 3 formal stages. For stage 1 and 2 an appeal should be made in writing to the second line manager (stage 1) or senior manager (stage 2) within 7 working days of receiving the improvement letter, stating their grounds for appeal (see 4.7).

4.6 Police staff have the right to appeal against the outcome of the stage 3 meeting. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the nominated person within 10 working days of receipt of the outcome letter (refer to the Attendance Management Flowchart), setting out the grounds for appealing the decision.

4.7 An appeal can only be raised on one of the following grounds:

- That the finding and/or terms of the notice / sanction are unreasonable.
- There is new evidence.
- There is a breach of procedures or other unfairness.
- That any of the terms of the improvement notice are unreasonable.

Where the appeal is against dismissal, if the decision to dismiss is upheld, the effective date of termination will remain as previously agreed.

4.8 Unsatisfactory Attendance and Pay

For officers and staff, incremental progression if applicable may be withheld in cases of unsatisfactory performance, unsatisfactory attendance. The line manager must clearly

advise the individual of their recommendation on incremental advancement at the time of making the decision and must inform Payroll when incremental progression should be withheld and when incremental progression should be reinstated upon a satisfactory outcome of the process. People Business Partners should be consulted to aid this decision.

Police officer performance and pay are linked, and Police Constable (PC) to Chief Inspector ranks who are assessed as satisfactory will receive their pay increment on their anniversary of promotion / joining. If an officer is under formal UPP with an 'improvement necessary' or 'unsatisfactory' rating, they should not receive their increment rise for that performance year. However, if the formal action only starts in the 6 weeks prior to the end of the 12 month period being assessed, and is not representative of this period, the Chief Constable may permit incremental progression.

Line managers should take into account all circumstances before deciding to withhold individual's incremental progression, taking particular care with regards to disability related issues. Line managers should seek the advice of the People Business Partner if unsure.

5. Medical Retirement Under Police Pension Regulations - Police Officers (also referred to as 'Ill Health Retirement')

5.1 The Police Pensions Regulations provide that where a local policing body is considering whether an officer is permanently disabled, or permanently medically unfit, it shall refer the issue to the selected medical practitioner (SMP) for a decision.

5.2 Where an officer is referred to the SMP for consideration of permanent disablement or permanent medical unfitness under the Police Pensions Regulations, no action shall be commenced or continued under the Performance Regulations with regard to unsatisfactory attendance until the issue of permanent disablement has been considered and the report of the SMP has been received by the local policing body. Surrey Police and Sussex Police will consider the point of referral to the SMP to be once Occupational Health and Wellbeing are in receipt of an application form for Ill Health Retirement.

5.3 Where an officer appeals to a Medical Appeal Board against a decision of the SMP that they are not permanently disabled or permanently medically unfit (an officer has 28 days to do so), or to a Crown Court against a decision of the local policing body not to refer the permanent disablement questions to an SMP, no action shall be commenced or continued under the Performance Regulations with regard to the unsatisfactory attendance of the officer until the appeal has been resolved.

5.4 Action can, however, be taken under the UPP where a case has been referred or is the subject of appeal if the unsatisfactory attendance is unrelated to the condition forming the basis of the referral or appeal. However, the Force must be confident that there is no connection as a decision to proceed in such circumstances may be challenged in the courts or tribunals. The appropriate manager must be sure of this and seek advice from the Force medical advisor (FMA) and the HR professional acting on behalf of the local policing body (via the Occupational Health and Wellbeing Ill Health Retirement Case Manager) before any decision is taken to commence or continue the UPP.

5.5 Any stage 2 UPP procedure for attendance or performance will be halted or extended before progressing to stage 3 if the matter of permanent disablement or permanent medical unfitness is commenced or is unresolved and will only continue once the matter is concluded.

5.6 Please refer to the Managing Police Officer and Police Staff Ill Health Retirement Policy (Surrey and Sussex) (542) for further information.

6. SECTION C Employment Data

6.1 Surrey Police and Sussex Police collect and process personal data relating to police officers and police staff to manage the employment relationship. It is important that employees understand how that data is collected and used in order to meet the Force's data protection obligations. Further details can be located by searching the Intranet using the term 'Privacy Notice'.

Team: People Services Department. Employee Relations Lead.