



AVON & SOMERSET OFFICE OF POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

Volunteer Recruitment FAQs

On behalf of the residents of Avon and Somerset, Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Mark Shelford ensures that Avon and Somerset Police delivers the best possible service and meets the needs of its communities.

The PCC also has to make sure that Avon and Somerset Police are helping to deliver on the Police and Crime Plan.

To do this, the PCC scrutinises certain issues and activities with the help of local people, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) and representatives from specialist agencies. To 'scrutinise' means to critically observe and examine work.

These activities include:

- The use of police powers
- The management of police complaints
- The Out of Court Disposals Process (outcomes to deal with low level offences without going to court)
- The welfare of detainees through the Independent Custody Visiting (ICV) Scheme

The aim of this document is to answer questions from those interested in becoming a volunteer. If you have a question that is not covered here, please contact the Volunteering team via:

OPCCvolunteering@avonandsomerset.police.uk

FAQS

1. Is this a paid role?

Volunteers are not paid for their time. However, any costs incurred as a result of travel including parking are fully reimbursed.

2. What are the benefits for me to volunteer?

Becoming a volunteer for the PCC will make a real difference to your community and will help to continue to improve and learn.

You will be able to learn new skills or add to your existing skillset, which can strengthen your CV. You will be able to make new friends as you will be working with people from all walks of life. Volunteering is well known to improve your physical and mental health.

These roles also offer you the opportunity to give your opinion on a range of issues which affect your community in relation to upholding policing standards.

3. Is there a minimum age to be a volunteer?

The minimum age for a volunteer is 18 years of age. There is no upper age limit for volunteers.



4. How many hours will I be expected to work each month?

After the 6 month probationary period, (which includes appropriate training), the minimum expectation will vary depending on the type of volunteer role. Ideally, you will be able to provide a regular commitment according to the needs of your specific volunteer role.

For example, the Independent Scrutiny of Police Powers Panel (ISoPPP) hold quarterly meeting with preparatory work required (often pre reading documents that will be sent to you in plenty of time before meetings).

You can choose to do as little or as much as you like but as a guideline we estimate allowing approximately 4-8 hours per quarter to examine and scrutinise cases for the ISoPPP. Following this, you will be required to attend a meeting that will normally run 1000-1500 either remotely via Microsoft Teams or in person.

Similarly for the Independent Scrutiny of Police Complaints Panel preparatory work is required per quarter, approximately 4-8 hours. Meetings are held quarterly, via Microsoft Teams and last 2 hours.

Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs) can volunteer to do as many visits as they would like to offer but there has to be a minimum of one custody visit per month.

5. Do I need to attend as a volunteer in person or can volunteering be done virtually?

The Independent Scrutiny of Police Complaints Panel (ISPCP) operates virtually. All preparatory work for meetings can be completed at home and quarterly meetings are held online via Microsoft Teams.

When volunteers start as part of their training, it is likely that some attendance in person will be required, in particular, for shadowing. However, once you are competent and confident, almost all volunteer participation can be done virtually for the ISPCP.

The Independent Scrutiny of Police Powers Panel operate a hybrid approach to meetings – so both online and in person are options. You can attend in person or remotely via Microsoft Teams and case review work and preparation for panel meetings can be completed at home using a home computer.

Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs) will visit custody sites in person – these are located in Bridgwater, Keynsham and Patchway.

6. What training will be provided for the role and will I be given an induction before I start?

Training will be provided based on the nature of the volunteering role and inductions will be undertaken locally to ensure that volunteers complete the essential online learning packages, are familiar with the relevant police buildings for health and safety purposes and to introduce them to the team.

Volunteers will be supported by OPCC staff as well as fellow volunteers. This will include a buddy scheme, shadowing and practical training in person.

7. Would I have to undergo any security or vetting checks?

Yes, all individuals who take up a volunteer role within the OPCC will need to be vetted depending on the nature of the role and their access to systems.

Volunteers will also be asked to provide references. Please refer to the role profile for further details.

More information on police vetting can be found on:



<https://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/apply/jobs-and-volunteering/vetting/>

8. Do I need to have any specific qualifications or work experience?

Please refer to the role profile for the position you are applying for as this may vary. Basic IT skills are required for the majority of the roles. Generally, we are looking for people who are honest, have high integrity and professionalism, are friendly, non-judgemental and positive towards the public, are able to work in a team and genuinely have great enthusiasm for wanting to volunteer make a difference.

9. Would I be working on my own or as part of a team?

This would vary depending on which role you are applying for. Please see the role profile for more details. There will always be opportunities to be supported by your fellow volunteers even if some preparatory work for meetings is completed independently.

10. Can I apply for more than one volunteer role?

Yes, of course you can apply for as many volunteer opportunities as you like. However, you will not be able to apply to volunteer for the Independent Scrutiny of Police Complaints and Scrutiny of Police Powers Panel at the same time. The team will happily discuss what role you are most suited for during the interview selection or prior to applying.

11. What does the volunteer selection process involve?

- Submission of an application form
- Suitability interview lasting approximately 45 minutes.
- Vetting checks

You will be contacted about your application status at each stage of the process.

12. How can I talk to someone about a volunteering position to find out more?

Questions about our volunteering positions can be emailed to opccvolunteering@avonandsomerset.police.uk and a member of the team will get back to you.

For more information please go to:

<https://www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/get-involved/volunteering-opportunities/>