

Lincolnshire Police

Policy Document



Firearms licensing policy PD 69

Policy document information

Reference number:	PD 69
Policy sponsor:	DCC
Policy owner:	Supt Specialist Operations – P Vickers
Author:	Mike Alford – FAL Manager
Publication date:	January 2026
Review date:	January 2028

Version history

Version	Date	Reason for issue
8	January 2020	Biennial Review - modernisation of department processes
9	January 2022	Biennial Review - new legislation
10	January 2024	Biennial Review
11	January 2026	Biennial Review

Code of Ethics

All staff involved in carrying out functions under this policy and associated procedures and appendices will do so in accordance with the principles of the Code of Ethics. The aim of the Code of Ethics is to support each member of the policing profession to deliver the highest professional standards in their service to the public.

Legislative compliance

This document has been drafted to comply with the principles of the Human Rights Act. Proportionality has been identified as the key to Human Rights compliance, this means striking a fair balance between the rights of the staff and those of the rest of the community. There must be a reasonable relationship between the aim to be achieved and the means used.

Equality and Diversity issues have also been considered to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and meet our legal obligation in relation to the equality duty. In addition, Data Protection, Freedom of Information and Health and Safety Issues have been considered. Adherence to this policy or procedure will therefore ensure compliance with all relevant legislation and internal policies.

Other legislation/law which this policy has been drafted to comply with:

- [Human Rights Act 1998 \(in particular A.14 – Prohibition of discrimination\)](#)

- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Crime and Disorder Act 1998](#)
- [H&S legislation](#)
- [Data Protection Act 2018](#)
- [Freedom Of Information Act 2000](#)

Security classification

Policy to be published on Intranet: Yes

Policy to be published on Force Website: Yes

Authorised Professional Practice (APP)

This Policy has been checked against APP. Lincolnshire Police has adopted the APP provisions, with supplementary information contained herein, which reflects local practice and the needs of the communities served by Lincolnshire Police.

Those provisions are shown in the links below and can be accessed via the home page of the APP website:

[Firearms licensing](#)

1. Policy aims (Purpose)

- 1.1. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the control of firearms and shotguns is administered in accordance with the Firearms Act 1968 and its amendments. The aim will be the interest of public safety, the reduction of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour and the protection of the rights and freedom of others. It will provide reassurance by ensuring that unsuitable persons do not possess legally held firearms and shotguns.
- 1.2. Lincolnshire Police is committed to ensuring that comprehensive enquiries are undertaken to ensure that certificates allowing possession of firearms, ammunition, shotguns and explosives are held by persons whom the CC believes are suitable:

- To be entrusted with a firearm or permitted to possess a shotgun without danger to the public safety or peace.
- Guns and ammunition must be stored securely and in accordance with the Home Office security requirements.
- Firearms can only be possessed by those who can show good reason.

2. Policy statement (Key information)

2.1. General Principles

- 2.1.1. Lincolnshire Police is committed to protecting the people of Lincolnshire by maintaining an appropriate level of protective services, ensuring quality local policing, and to achieve best value for money, productivity and efficiency. This is reflected in the statement of common purpose for Lincolnshire Police Firearms and Explosive Licensing department:

To protect the public by ensuring firearms and shotguns are only possessed by those who are safe to possess them.

And

To ensure all applications are dealt with in a thorough, fair and efficient manner so the best possible service is given to the public and the applicant.

- 2.1.2. This policy seeks to achieve an appropriate balance of:

- protecting public safety by preventing foreseeable or avoidable harm
- delivering an efficient licensing process that is proportionate, rigorous, cost effective, fair and timely
- providing a fair and transparent service to the public.

However, all decisions to grant, renew or revoke a licence are made on the grounds of public safety and not the potential cost of any appeal.

- 2.1.3. The safety of our communities is of paramount importance when considering the issue of firearms to members of the public. The principle of this policy is to ensure that all firearms, shotguns and explosives in the County are held lawfully and that appropriate mechanisms are in place to monitor their use in both a quantitative and qualitative sense.
- 2.1.4. All applications are to be treated on their individual merits, taking into account the applicants request against guidance issued on such matters by the Home Office publication. [Firearms licensing law 2016 - GOV.UK](#)
- 2.1.5. This policy applies to all matters relating to the Firearms Licensing function with exception to the seizure of firearms and revocation of certificates, which is dealt with separately in the firearms seizure policy Lincolnshire Intranet - Firearms Removal Policy PD 149.
- 2.1.6. This policy provides strategic direction for how Lincolnshire Police will approach the administration of firearm, shotgun and explosives licensing, in accordance with current legislation and guidance.
- 2.1.7. Administration of Firearms licensing will be completed through the use of the Firearms Licensing Online (FLO) system. The national NFLMS system is vital for public safety and this will also be updated and maintained.'
- 2.1.8. This policy is aimed primarily at Police and Police Staff within the Firearms Licensing Department although it remains relevant to other Police Officers and staff who may deal with related matters.

2.2. Processes and Decision Making

- 2.2.1. Lincolnshire Police in determining whether to grant, refuse or revoke a firearm, shotgun or explosives certificate will comply with current legislation and guidance.
- 2.2.2. Consideration must be given to the Lincolnshire Police 'Firearms & Explosive Licensing Risk Matrix & Procedures' document F&ELRM&P v8.25 Appendix B attached.
- 2.2.3. Decisions around security must comply with the current Lincolnshire Police Security Advice v.1.25 Appendix C attached.

- 2.2.4. The function of the Firearms Licensing Department is to process all applications for the legal possession of firearms, shotguns and explosives.
- 2.2.5. The Firearms Licensing Manager, Deputy Manager, Decision Makers, and Force Control Room Inspectors will be authorised under Section 55(2) of the Firearms Act 1968 to exercise those functions relevant to their role by the Chief Constable under that Act.
- 2.2.6. All applications will have the medical declaration verified in accordance with appendix A - Medical Information Verification for Firearms Licensing.
- 2.2.7. All applications will have referee(s) forms completed and received before processing applications.
- 2.2.8. The Firearms Licensing Department will maintain a computerised information recording and administration system, currently the National Firearms Licensing Management System (NFLMS) and Firearms Licensing Online (FLO). The system will hold details in respect of firearm, shotgun and explosives certificate holders, legally held weapons, previous and current applications and any relevant notes or intelligence.
- 2.2.9. The details held on the computer system will be available through the force warehousing database (GENIE) to police staff and police officers in support of operational policing. A number of key personnel in the Force Control Room and Intelligence Units will have read only access to the National Firearms Licensing Administration System.
- 2.2.10. The Firearms Licensing Department will act as a Centre of Excellence for guidance in relation to firearms and shotgun licensing for the force.
- 2.2.11. The Firearms Licensing Department will ensure that all applicants for firearm, shotgun and explosive certificates are scrutinised using all available sources of intelligence and relevant information as appropriate.
- 2.2.12. The FAL Manager, Deputy Manager, Decision Makers, and Force Control Room Inspectors will use the National Decision Making Model and the risk

matrix when making a decision to utilise their delegated authority in granting, renewing, reviewing or revoking certificate holders.

- 2.2.13. Consideration will be given, in relation to all applicants, for the granting or renewal of firearms, shotgun and explosives certificates to be the subject of a home visit in accordance with the following protocol in the below chart, unless a visit has already occurred during the period the force has been in possession of their application. If three months or more has elapsed then a visit should take place regardless. All renewal applications will be visited every five years.

Application / Event	Visit required?
Applications for grant of firearm certificate.	VISIT REQUIRED
Applications for renewal of firearm certificate.	VISIT REQUIRED unless previously visited in last term of licence and no changes or adverse incidents
Applications for grant of shotgun certificate (Not visited in respect of a firearms certificate within five years)	VISIT REQUIRED
Applications for renewal of shotgun certificate.	VISIT REQUIRED unless previously visited in last term of licence and no changes or adverse incidents
Applications where the individual has moved into Lincolnshire (Transfers In)	VISIT WITHIN 4 WEEKS OF TRANSFER
Applications for a variation to a firearm certificate.	VISIT REQUIRED unless like for like or reduction
Applications where there is a change of address.	VISIT REQUIRED unless no adverse reason and security can be suitably reviewed

Applications for the grant or renewal of a dealer's certificate.	VISIT REQUIRED
Applications for the grant or renewal of an Explosive License.	VISIT REQUIRED
All certificate holders in the event of an incident, which may result in the revocation of the certificate.	VISIT REQUIRED

2.2.14. Personal visits may be carried out with or without a prior appointment being made with the applicant or certificate holder. Consideration will be given to individual / operational circumstances, public safety and the prevention and detection of crime.

2.2.15. Lincolnshire police have a facility on their website whereby applicants are able to complete the necessary Firearms Licensing forms electronically. Follow this link: [Firearms Licensing Portal - Lincolnshire Police](#)

3. Other related documents and appendices

3.1. Appendices:

- Appendix A – Medical Information for Firearms Licensing
- Appendix B – Firearms & Explosive Licensing Risk Matrix & Procedures
- Appendix C – security Advice

Related documents:

- Home Office Guide on Firearms Licensing Law
- APP Major Investigation and Public Protection
- The Firearms Security Handbook 2005 produced by the Home Office, the Associations of Chief Police Officers in England, Wales and Scotland and the British Shooting Sports Council.

4. Monitoring and review

- 4.1 This policy is owned by the Head of Specialist Operations. This policy will be reviewed at two-year intervals or as dictated by legislative changes or identified inefficiencies.

5. Who to contact about this policy

- 5.1. Any enquires regarding this policy should be directed to the Firearms and Explosive Licensing Manager - Mike Alford,

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