

Lincolnshire Police

Policy Document



Notifiable association policy PD 193

Policy document information

Reference number:	PD 193
Policy sponsor:	Deputy Chief Constable
Policy owner:	Head of Professional Standards
Author:	DI of ACU
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Version history

Version	Date	Reason for issue
7	March 2021	Biennial Review
8	March 2023	Biennial Review
9	July 2025	Biennial Review
10	November 2025	Addition to para 3.7

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](#)
- The National Standards of Professional Behaviour
- Police (Conduct) Regulations 2020
- Police (Performance) Regulations 2020

Security classification

Policy to be published on Intranet: Yes

Policy to be published on Force Website: Partially (not appendices)

Authorised Professional Practice (APP)

This Policy has been checked against the Counter Corruption Prevention Authorised Professional Practice (APP). Lincolnshire Police has adopted the APP provisions, with supplementary information contained therein, which reflects local practice, and the needs of the communities served by Lincolnshire Police.

[Professional Standards - Counter Corruption](#)

1. Policy aims (Purpose)

1.1. This policy aims to:

- To prevent actual or perceived compromise to individuals, operations and intelligence belonging to Lincolnshire Police
- To provide guidance on what a Notifiable Association is, ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities under the policy and, what procedures are to be followed for reporting a Notifiable Association.
- To establish a fair and transparent process for recording, assessing and managing notifiable associations.

- To protect the integrity of the organisation and individuals from any person, or group, who would benefit in any way from corrupting its staff.
 - Notify staff of the potential consequences in failing to observe recommended or agreed actions.
- 1.2. This policy does not seek to govern or unnecessarily restrict every aspect of an individual's private life, nor does it attempt to prescribe what the determination or outcome should be in every case which comes under consideration. Each set of circumstances will need to be considered in its own right so that the action taken is appropriate and proportionate to the need to protect the integrity of individuals and Lincolnshire Police.
- 1.3. If a member of Lincolnshire Police considers they **may** the subject of a notifiable association, then they should submit a Notifiable Association Report (P737) outlined in Appendix A. If you suspect a colleague should declare a Notifiable Association (3rd party reporting) then please contact the Anti-Corruption Unit for a confidential discussion. If unsure in any way, the presumption should be to report the association.

Under no circumstances should you use police computer systems to access information relating to your association or for any other non-policing purpose

2. Policy statement (Key information)

2.1. Application:

This policy applies in its entirety to all people “working” for Lincolnshire Police in the capacity of Police Officers, Special Constables and all Lincolnshire Police Support Staff including Police Community Support Officers, staff sub-contractors (including Custody Detention Officers), Volunteers and members of The Police and Crime Commissioners Office. It also applies to all Lincs Officers and staff working outside the force on secondment, to other departments or to the regional departments.

2.2. An association is:

- Meeting or uniting for a common purpose
- Keeping company or being familiar
- Being an ally, confederate, partner or colleague
- Having a family member, acquaintance, friendship, relationship, intimacy or connection, including a person who is a parent or carer (in any capacity including biological, adoptive, or otherwise) of the officer or staff member's child and/or
- Being a member of a group, organisation or society that is formed for the promotion of a common object or objects.

This may include associations formed through or maintained through Social Networking sites.

2.3. An association will be considered notifiable where it has any potential to, or may appear to other to have any potential to:

- Compromise the individual staff member
- Compromise the operations or activity of Lincolnshire Police
- Compromise the reputation of Lincolnshire Police.

2.4. An association becomes 'Notifiable' when the definition above is carried out with persons who are involved or have been involved in criminality, linked to the media, or inappropriate politically driven organisations. The following list is not definitive, but a declaration would be expected for:

- Persons with a criminal conviction
- Persons charged with a criminal offence where matters remain unresolved
- Persons known to be under investigation for, but not yet charged with, a criminal offence
- Persons who are the subject of criminal intelligence or are of interest
- Persons dismissed or required to resign from a police service or other law enforcement agency

- Persons employed as private investigators or employed by a criminal law legal firm
 - Television, print and online journalists
 - Individuals who are members of or have associations with extremist groups.
- 2.5. Individuals need to ask themselves the question, is my association, be it with an individual, a group, participating in a social activity, or frequenting a location likely to impact on the conditions above? Even if it isn't likely, could it be perceived as so by colleagues or the public? Whilst it is impossible to give precise definitions, it would include associating with those involved in drugs activity, criminality and closely associating with members of a recognised Organised Crime Group. If in doubt, a P737 notifiable association form must be submitted.
- 2.6. There is no definitive list of groups or organisations deemed inappropriate. For the purposes of this policy, unacceptable organisations include: the British National Party, Combat 18, English Defence League, National Front, as is membership of any organisation whose constitution, aims, objectives or pronouncements promote inequality in any form. Active membership could involve activities such as: the participation in leaflet drops, meetings, fund raising, and speaking on behalf of or writing articles for the said organisation in print or writing or sharing any material for the organisation in digital form including social media. These activities remain unacceptable; regardless of whether or not an individual is a formal member of the stated organisations. These activities are not exhaustive.

3. Determination/Decision Making

- 3.1. The reports will be managed and assessed by the Head of PSD, acting on the delegated Authority of the DCC, who may in the appropriate circumstances require procedures to be adopted around this association and make a determination as to what action may be required to minimise any risk to the organisation. These determinations may range from 'for information

only' to 'cessation' of the association if the risk to the organisation is considered untenable. Cessation would be the ultimate determination, and of course would not be taken lightly, but if such a risk to the organisation is evident then this may be the only option open to protect the individuals involved.

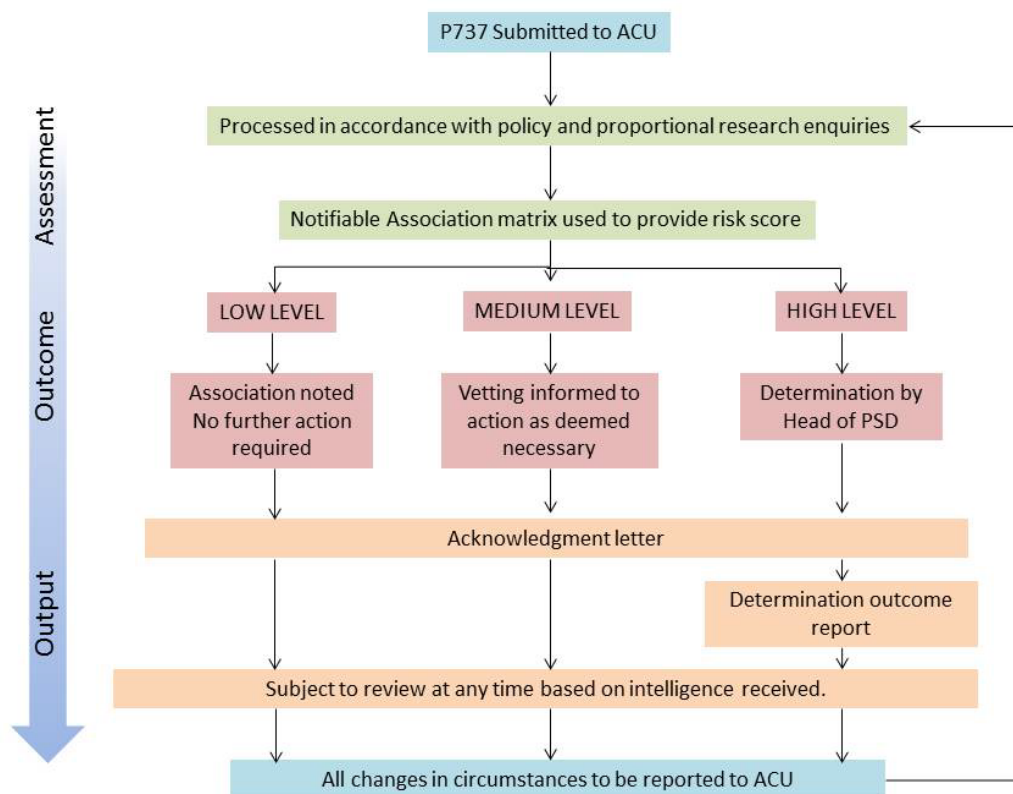
- 3.2. Where it is not practicable for an association to cease altogether, the determination may set limits, parameters or conditions to which the staff member will be required to adhere.
- 3.3. The Head of PSD will assess the risk and ensure an initial risk management plan is implemented. This may involve consultation with other senior staff, but proportionately and confidentiality will be maintained.
- 3.4. Research and enquiries proportionate to the circumstances will be undertaken by PSD at the direction of the Head of PSD on a case-by-case basis in line with the initial risk management plan. An outcome report will be submitted to the Head of PSD who, before making a determination, may liaise with other Departments or staff as appropriate (e.g. senior line managers, Occupational Health Department, HR, Vetting Unit, and other staff sub-contractors).
- 3.5. Where possible, the officer/staff member will be involved in conversations about how the risk can be managed/mitigated and will be supported through the process. This policy and the processes therein are intended to be open and transparent throughout, to support the needs of the individual officer/staff member as well as the needs of the organisation. Every effort will be made to finding a suitable and agreeable solution for all.
- 3.6. The staff member will then be informed in writing of whether the individual –
 - May continue the association without restriction
 - May continue the association with agreed conditions that will be set out in the notification
 - Must cease the association. (This will only be used in exceptional circumstances where all other options have been exhausted)

- 3.7. The staff member's line manager will also be informed by email, to ensure they are aware and can be prepared to consider if the association is relevant in the allocation of work. It is almost always inappropriate for a staff member to have professional policing dealings with an individual about whom they have a notifiable association. This will be made clear to the line manager, for their continuing consideration and for work to be reallocated should this situation occur.
- 3.8. The Head of PSD may decide to include a review period depending upon the circumstances. The staff member must report any change of circumstances by way of a written report to the Head of PSD, which will be subject to review.
- 3.9. Following any amendments to the determination arising from any changes in circumstances the staff member will be notified.

4. Policy Requirements

- 4.1. Information that a member of staff has failed to observe the requirements of this policy will be judged on a case-by-case basis by the Head of PSD and any conduct will be assessed against the Standards of Professional Behaviour.
- 4.2. Advice can always be obtained from PSD to assist in determining whether a formal notification is required. Where there is any doubt as to whether an association requires notification in accordance with the policy, a referral should be made.
- 4.3. Under no circumstances should research of police systems be undertaken by staff in order to establish whether an association should be reported. Such misuse of systems will be assessed against the Standards of Professional Behaviour, Force Security Policy and/or the Data Protection Act as appropriate.

5. Procedural Flow Chart



6. Matrix Guidance

- 6.1. The following guidance is to assist in the completion of Appendix 1 - Form P737 Notifiable Association report. However, if additional assistance or guidance is required then please contact the Anti-Corruption Unit.

Section 5 - This section describes the association between the person who this form is about, and any others named in section 3. Please select the most appropriate option below.

Association	Description
Direct/Close Family	This will be limited to immediate family members - parents, siblings, children, spouse including step/half relations

Relatives	Any family relation not covered by Direct/Close Family (i.e. cousin, uncle, aunt, in-laws etc) or a person who is a parent or carer (in any capacity including biological, adoptive, or otherwise) of the officer or staff member's child
Social Club	Any associate known through mutual membership or use of a social club, team, group or similar
Friend	Any person who could be describes as a friend (a person with whom one has a bond of mutual affection, typically one exclusive of sexual or family relations)
Gym	Any association known through membership or use of a gym
Press/Media	Any person who works in press or media (Includes local / national radio, papers etc)
Private Investigator or Legal Firm	Any person employed as a Private Investigator or employed by a criminal law legal firm.
Acquaintance	A person one knows slightly, but who is not a close friend (e.g. non-familiar Neighbour, Social Media 'Friend' etc)

Section 6 - This section describes the frequency/likelihood of contact between the person who this form is about, and any others named in section 3. Please select the most appropriate option below.

Frequency	Description

Daily	Contact would normally be expected to occur every day
Regular	Contact would normally be expected to occur with regularity, e.g. weekly, fortnightly or monthly
Planned	Club or social events
Infrequent	Contact has no regularity e.g. a few times in any year
Chance Meeting	Contact is only made if meeting by chance e.g. whilst shopping
Little or No Chance of Meeting	Contact is considered very unlikely, perhaps due to living far apart

7. Appendices:

- Appendix A – P737 Notifiable Association Report

8. Monitoring and review

- 8.1 The Professional Standards Department is responsible for monitoring and reviewing this policy. This Policy will be reviewed every two years and amended where required to ensure that policies and procedures remain compatible with APP and in-line with recognised best practice.

9. Who to contact about this policy

- 9.1. This policy is owned by the Head of Professional Standards. Any enquiries about this policy should be directed to the ACU Detective Inspector in the Professional Standards Department.