

## Step by Step



### Flexible Working

URN: J-Pr-318

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**Host Force:** Dorset Police  
**Host Policy Unit:** Dorset Police Legitimacy Team  
**Step by Step Owner:** Alliance Employee Relations  
**Step by Step Author:** HR Strategy & Policy Lead (ER)

**Associated Policy:** [J-P-186 Flexible Working](#)

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#### Applicable to:

Devon & Cornwall Police	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Dorset Police	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
OPCC Devon & Cornwall	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
OPCC Dorset	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Officers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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Before reviewing the following step by step, individuals and line managers must ensure they have familiarised themselves with the Flexible Working Policy setting out the Force's provisions and eligibility criteria in full.

Whilst a fair approach and a consistent process is applied when requesting, considering, and processing flexible working requests, the operating procedures in each force vary, as a consequence of different governance and approval routes. Individuals should refer to the relevant flowchart for the force in which they serve / are employed by and should seek advice and support from HR Operations – Admin (D&C) / Legitimacy Team (Dorset), where required:

[Flowchart – Devon & Cornwall Police](#)

[Flowchart – Dorset Police](#)

## 1.0 Introduction

Devon & Cornwall Police and Dorset Police (the Force) are committed to supporting individuals to work flexibly, to achieve a better balance between their working lives alongside personal responsibilities and preferences, whilst ensuring operational resilience. Flexible working requests are welcomed from individuals for any reason in an effort to aid their 'work / life balance', such as to support childcare or caring responsibilities, or to undertake additional studies or training.

Flexible working is any type of work arrangement that gives flexibility in how long, where and when individuals work. A typical flexible working arrangement may include, but is not limited to, any of the following and / or a variation of the following:

- part time working,
- annualised hours,
- compressed hours,
- term time working,
- job sharing,
- staggered hours,
- phased retirement.

Further information on the types of flexible working arrangements can be found within Appendix One of the Flexible Working Policy.

Whilst there are differences in relation to the Police Regulations and employment law that govern flexible working arrangements for officers and staff (employees), this procedure, where possible, will adopt a single approach. Where this is not possible, any difference in approach will be clearly stated.

All individuals have a right to request flexible working, however there is no automatic entitlement for a request to be granted. Each request must be considered individually and carefully assessed against the needs of the Force, the business continuity of the department and the individual. The Force must agree to a flexible working request unless there is a genuine business reason not to.

Flexible working requests will be considered for all roles unless the role has been objectively justified as unsuitable for a flexible working arrangement, e.g., due to the nature of the work or service requirements, however the starting position is to consider what may be possible. Where a department considers that a post is unsuitable for flexible working, this should be discussed with HR Operations – Admin (D&C) / the Legitimacy Team (Dorset), to ensure that the view is proportionate and legitimate.

In accordance with legislation, the Force has two months to consider and confirm the outcome of a flexible working request, unless an alternative date has otherwise been mutually agreed. The 'statutory timeframe' starts when the individual submits their formal flexible working request to their line manager and ends at the conclusion of an appeal, where applicable. Individuals are required to provide at least three months' notice of the requested start date, to allow sufficient time to process the request.

Flexible working arrangements are subject to review by the line manager on a regular basis (where the request is a reasonable adjustment or a short term / temporary arrangement) and at least annually, to ensure the working arrangement continues to meet the needs of the organisation and the individual. Where, as a result of the review, the pattern is identified as ineffective either for the Force or the individual, the working pattern should be re-negotiated between the line manager and individual to identify a suitable alternative arrangement that is agreeable between both parties. Advice is available from HR Operations - Admin (D&C) / Legitimacy Team (Dorset) as appropriate.

Where an individual involved in any element of this process requires reasonable adjustments to support participation, they should highlight this at the earliest opportunity. The Force will make the necessary reasonable adjustments wherever possible. Welfare needs should be considered throughout the application of this process and where welfare needs are identified, individuals should be signposted accordingly.

## 2.0 Eligibility and Entitlement

Flexible working is available to all officers and staff (employees), including those employed on fixed term contracts and apprenticeships from day one of service / employment, subject to the criteria below. Agency workers, as employees of the agency, will be managed in line with the relevant agency's own flexible working policy / procedures.

Only one request for flexible working may be 'live' at any time. A request will be considered live until:

- a decision about the request is made by the Force,
  - the request is withdrawn,
  - an outcome is mutually agreed between the relevant manager and the individual, or
  - the statutory two month period for deciding requests ends.
- (Source: ACAS, 2024)

## **Officers**

There is no limit to the number of times an officer may request flexible working.

Police Regulations 2003 allow for part time officers to request to return to full time duties at any time. There is, however, no automatic right for an officer to work full time duties in the part time post they occupy. Where a suitable vacancy exists, the Force will post the officer within two months. Where a suitable vacancy is not available, the officer may be required to take up an alternative post (in the same rank) and will be posted no later than four months after the request was made.

A student officer must work a minimum of 24 hours per week. Any flexible working arrangement will be subject to completion of initial training and achieving independent patrol (D&C) / street duties (Dorset), all of which must be completed on a full time basis.

## **Employees**

Employees have a statutory right under the Employment Relations (Flexible Working) Act 2023 to make up to two flexible working requests in any 12 month period. To be eligible to make a flexible working request, the employee must have submitted no more than one request within the previous 12 months.

Whilst employees are able to make a request to return to full time working, there is no automatic entitlement for the request to be granted.

An approved flexible working request constitutes a permanent change to an employee's terms and conditions of employment, with the employee having no right to revert to their previous working arrangement. A trial period or a short-term arrangement may therefore be considered by mutual agreement between the line manager and individual, prior to any permanent change being implemented, which will be paid in accordance with the hours worked.

## **3.0 General Information**

### **Cease of Flexible Working Arrangement**

Where the individual decides they no longer wish to continue undertaking a previously agreed flexible working arrangement, they must submit a request to their line manager. Where the request results in an increase in hours or allowances, this will be subject to budgetary approval.

### **Change of Role**

Where an individual transfers into another role, the individual must submit a new flexible working request. Where approved, their existing arrangement can continue. Alternatively, they may request an alternative flexible working pattern via the new line manager.

## **Joint Requests**

Where an individual and their partner both submit flexible working requests, the Force should consider both requests in conjunction with each other, with the respective line managers liaising to consider how to achieve the needs of the Force and both individuals.

## **Organisational Change**

During a period of organisational change, the Force may review existing flexible working arrangements at a departmental level, to ensure they continue to meet the changing needs of the organisation.

## **Pensions**

Individuals working reduced hours as part of a flexible working pattern are entitled to the same benefits under the Police / LGPS Pension Scheme as those that work full time. Individuals should contact their pension administrator to understand the financial impact of a reduction in working hours.

## **Salary and Leave Entitlement**

Where an individual reduces their hours as part of a flexible working arrangement, including a short term / temporary arrangement, their salary, allowances (excluding expenses), annual and public / bank holiday entitlement and other paid leave provisions will be calculated pro rata, in accordance with the hours worked.

The Force will make salary deductions and / or require repayment where it is identified that an individual has been in receipt of a salary and / or allowance which is not commensurate with the actual hours worked. Individuals are responsible for reviewing the accuracy of their pay and / or allowances and highlighting any discrepancy to HR Operations – Admin, via their line manager, at the earliest opportunity. For further information, refer to J-P-004 'Overpayment of Salary and Allowances' procedure, available within the Alliance Policy and Procedure pages of the intranet.

## **Trial Period / Short Term Arrangements**

Where there are concerns from either party on the viability of a working pattern or the impact on the individual, team and / or department, the individual and their line manager may mutually agree a trial period or a short-term arrangement, prior to a permanent change being implemented. The arrangement should be for a reasonable time, with a review date set by the line manager. A temporary arrangement will not usually exceed six months.

### **4.0 For Further Assistance**

Please contact [HR Operations - Admin \(D&C\)](#) or [.HR Ops Dorset – Admin \(Dorset\)](#) if further support is required.

## 5.0 Supporting Links and Guidance

[ACAS Code of Practice – Handling Flexible Working Requests](#)  
[ACAS Guide – The Right to Request Flexible Working](#)  
[College of Policing Guide – Flexible Working in the Police Service](#)  
[Flexible Retirement Procedure](#)  
[J-Pr-062 - Flexitime Procedure](#)  
[J-Pr-060 - Flexiplace Procedure](#)  
[Identifying Your Allowances](#)

### **Devon and Cornwall Police**

[Annual Leave Calculators – Police Officers](#)  
[Annual Leave Calculators – Police Staff](#)  
[Flexible Working – Request Form](#)  
[Flexible Working – Request Form \(53 week working pattern\)](#)  
[Invite to Flexible Working Request Meeting \(email template\)](#)  
[Additional Expenditure Request \(email template\)](#)  
[Invite to Flexible Working Appeal Meeting \(email template\)](#)  
[Withdrawal Request from Individual \(email template\)](#)  
[Extension to Time Limit \(email template\)](#)  
[Flexible Working – Review Form](#)

### **Dorset Police**

[Flexible Working - Request Form](#)  
[Flexible Working Appeal Form \(incorporating Appeal Outcome Form\)](#)  
[Police Officer Shift Pattern Calculator](#)  
[Police Staff Shift Pattern Calculator](#)  
[Invite to Appeal Letter](#)  
[Flexible Working Appeal Rejection Letter](#)  
[Flexible Working Appeal Upheld Letter](#)  
[Withdrawal Request from Individual \(email template\)](#)  
[Extension to Time Limit Letter](#)  
[Flexible Working – Review Form](#)

HR Privacy Notice: [\(D&C\)](#) / [\(Dorset\)](#).

## 6.0 Flowchart – Devon & Cornwall Police

1. Individual determines their eligibility	<p>The individual must ensure that they are eligible to submit a flexible working request, in line with the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the individual must be an officer or employee of Devon &amp; Cornwall Police (not an agency worker),</li><li>• student officers can request to work a minimum average of 24 hours per week, subject to completion of initial training and independent patrol, all of which must be completed on a full time basis,</li><li>• employees can apply for no more than two flexible working requests within a 12 month period (there is no limit for officers).</li></ul>
2. Individual discusses request with the line manager	<p>The individual should arrange to meet with their line manager at a mutually agreed time and location, either in person or via Teams, or where mutually agreed, via the telephone.</p> <p>The individual should discuss their wish to change their working pattern with their line manager in the first instance, prior to submitting a formal request, to identify any potential implications, as well as possible alternative approaches at an early stage.</p> <p>Managers should emphasise a positive approach to flexible working and must not deter any individual from making a request to work flexibly.</p>
3. Individual completes and submits the request to the line manager	<p>The individual must fully complete the 'Flexible Working Request Form,' stating that it is a statutory request, providing three months' notice of the effective date.</p> <p>The individual must email the request to their line manager (or an alternative manager in their absence) for consideration, copying in HR Operations – Admin.</p> <p>The request form is available within Section 5.0 'Supporting Links and Guidance'. Paper or scanned copies cannot be accepted unless exceptional circumstances apply.</p> <p>The following information must be provided within the submission:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the date of the request,</li><li>• the change the individual is requesting in relation to their hours or times or place of work,</li><li>• the current and proposed working patterns,</li><li>• the effective date of the proposed change,</li><li>• if and when flexible working requests have been made in the previous 12 months (applicable to employees only).</li></ul>

## 6.0 Flowchart – Devon & Cornwall Police (Cont'd)

3. Cont'd	<p>Where the individual is making their request in relation to the Equality Act 2010, e.g., as a reasonable adjustment for a disability, this should also be stated.</p> <p>Individuals returning from maternity, adoption or shared parental leave (SPL) should ensure that they complete a 'Return to Work from Maternity / Adoption Leave / SPL Form' in conjunction with their flexible working request, which is available within the Maternity / Adoption / SPL guidance, via the People Portfolio pages of the intranet. Where the individual is absent from work, the form can be accessed via the Family Leave Support Portal on the Force internet site.</p> <p><b>Officers only:</b> Where an officer is returning from extended leave, e.g., a career break, and does not have a substantive line manager, the Flexible Working Request Form must be submitted to the Promotions and Postings Team, for a suitable vacancy to be identified.</p>
4. Line manager to review the request	<p>The line manager must review the Flexible Working Request Form, checking the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the individual's eligibility (see Step 1),</li><li>• that the request form has been completed in full,</li><li>• the accuracy of the information, e.g., the current and proposed patterns equate to the actual working hours, including any applicable allowances,</li><li>• whether there is an increase in expenditure, e.g., an increase of hours / allowances, which must receive budgetary approval (see Step 9).</li></ul>
5. Line manager to meet with the individual	<p>The line manager must meet with the individual in person, via Teams, or where both agree, via the telephone, at a mutually convenient time and location to discuss the proposed changes, with a view to reaching a mutually beneficial agreement which satisfies the needs of the individual and the Force.</p> <p>In the absence of the line manager, e.g., due to annual leave, the meeting should be held by the second line manager. Where the line manager is unable to meet with the individual within a reasonable timeframe due to conflicting shift patterns, a suitable alternative manager should be identified to hold the meeting and the individual updated accordingly.</p> <p>The meeting may be as brief or longer as required and will provide an opportunity to listen, engage meaningfully and</p>

## 6.0 Flowchart – Devon & Cornwall Police (Cont'd)

5. Cont'd
- explore the changes the individual is seeking and how these may be accommodated.
- The individual can request to be accompanied by a work colleague, trade union (or an official employed by a trade union) or staff association representative, as appropriate, and is responsible for arranging their attendance. **Please note:** Where the chosen representative is not available, the individual may request a postponement of the meeting provided it is reasonable and the meeting takes place no more than five calendar days later, being cognisant of the two month statutory completion timeframe (see Step 6).
6. Line manager to consider the request and make a decision in principle
- The line manager must carefully consider the request within a reasonable period, being cognisant of the two month statutory timeframe, which starts when the individual submits their formal flexible working request to their line manager and ends at the conclusion of an appeal (where applicable).
- Where a delay is likely, the line manager must keep the individual informed of progress, including the likely timescales and where required, completing the 'Extension to Time Limit' email template by mutual agreement and forwarding this to the individual, copying in HR Operations - Admin. In exceptional cases, temporary arrangements may need to be considered whilst this process is ongoing. Advice can be sought from HR Operations – Admin, as appropriate.
- The line manager must:
- review the benefits of the proposed change for the individual / business area and weigh these against any adverse operational, organisational, or financial impacts,
  - provide an initial view in principle only, confirming whether or not the request is supported,
  - confirm to the individual whether the request is subject to budgetary and HR Change approval (additional expenditure only).
7. Line manager refers the request to SLT
- Where the request is supported, the line manager must email the completed Flexible Working Request Form, along with their recommendation, to the appropriate Senior Leadership Team (SLT) member and, where applicable, a flexible working panel, for authorisation, copying in HR Operations - Admin.
- Where the request is not supported, the line manager should seek advice from the SLT and / or HR Operations – Admin before rejecting the request (see Step 13), as appropriate.

## 6.0 Flowchart – Devon & Cornwall Police (Cont'd)

8. SLT reviews the request and confirm the decision	<p>The SLT member will review the request and consider the impact on the department design.</p> <p>Where concerns are identified, the SLT member must meet with the individual (either in person or via Teams) to discuss and explore any alternative approaches before rejecting any request. The SLT member will email their decision, along with the justification, to the line manager, copying in HR Operations - Admin.</p> <p>Where the request is approved, proceed to Step 9. Where the request is rejected, proceed to Step 13.</p>
9. Line manager requests budgetary and HR Change approval (additional expenditure only)	<p>Where the request results in an increase in hours or allowances, the line manager must obtain approval from the following departments, using the 'Additional Expenditure Request' email template, available within Section 5.0 'Supporting Links and Guidance':</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• HR Change, who will review the departmental impact,</li><li>• the Alliance Finance Team (via the local Alliance Finance representative), who will provide budgetary approval.</li></ul> <p>Where budgetary and HR Change approval is received, proceed to Step 10.</p> <p>Where the budget is not available, the line manager should discuss any alternative approaches with the individual (either in person or via Teams) before rejecting a request.</p> <p><b>Officers only:</b> the line manager must be cognisant of an officer's right to return to full time duties at any time and an alternative posting may need to be considered. Advice can be sought from the Resourcing Team as appropriate.</p> <p>Where the request is rejected, proceed to Step 13.</p>
10. Line manager approves the request	<p>The line manager must provide confirmation of approval of the request, by completing the line manager review section of the 'Flexible Working Request Form' and emailing this to the individual.</p> <p>The completed Flexible Working Request Form, along with confirmation of budgetary and HR Change approval (where applicable) must be emailed to HR Operations – Admin for processing.</p>
11. HR Operations – Admin process the request	<p>HR Operations – Admin will review and process the request.</p> <p><b>Please note:</b> Where the request has inaccuracies or is incomplete, HR Operations – Admin will return this to the line</p>

## 6.0 Flowchart – Devon & Cornwall Police (Cont'd)

11. Cont'd	<p>manager for amendment. This may result in a delay in the start date in order to meet the timescales for processing.</p> <p>HR Operations – Admin will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• issue a variation to terms and conditions (officers) / variation to contract (employees) letter within one month of the effective date, confirming the flexible working arrangement,</li><li>• notify the Payroll Team (where a salary adjustment applies),</li><li>• send a copy of the agreed working pattern to the Resource Management Unit (RMU), who will update GRS and ensure compliance with the Variable Shift Agreement Framework (officers only) and Working Time Regulations,</li><li>• update the HR system and retain the request on the individual's HR record.</li></ul>
12. Line manager to calculate annual leave entitlement	<p>Where the individual reduces / increases their hours part way through the year, the line manager will recalculate their annual leave entitlement, with support from HR Operations – Admin as appropriate.</p> <p>Annual leave calculators are available within Section 5.0, 'Supporting Links and Guidance'. Further information is available within the Annual Leave guidance, available via the People Portfolio pages of the intranet.</p>
13. Request is rejected by the relevant line manager	<p>Following discussion with the individual, where alternative options have been explored and a flexible working request is rejected, the relevant line manager must complete the line manager review section of the 'Flexible Working Request Form', providing sufficient justification of the basis in which the request was rejected.</p> <p>The relevant line manager may wish to discuss the decision with HR Operations – Admin, who will review the justification for rejecting the request and discuss any alternative approaches, where these are identified.</p> <p>A request should only be rejected where clear, legitimate, and objectively justified business or operational grounds apply, which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the burden of additional costs,</li><li>• an inability to reorganise work amongst existing staffing,</li><li>• an inability to recruit additional staff,</li><li>• a detrimental impact on quality,</li><li>• a detrimental impact on performance,</li><li>• a detrimental effect on ability to meet customer demand,</li></ul>

## 6.0 Flowchart – Devon & Cornwall Police (Cont'd)

### 13. Cont'd

- insufficient work available for the periods the individual proposes to work, or
- planned structural changes to the organisation.

(Source: ACAS, 2024)

The relevant line manager will identify an appropriate 'Appeals Manager' in anticipation of an appeal, who must be a senior manager within the department that the individual works.

The relevant line manager must meet with the individual (either in person or via Teams) to:

- clearly explain their decision and the basis on which the request was rejected,
- inform the individual of their option to appeal within 10 calendar days, how to submit an appeal and to whom (see Step 15),
- ensure that the individual has access to the appropriate support, available via the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), HR Operations – Admin, the Equality, Diversity and Human Rights team, Staff Associations (officers), Trade Unions (employees) and local staff support groups.

Following the meeting, the relevant line manager must return the 'Flexible Working Request Form' to the individual, including the completed section of the line manager review. The relevant line manager will provide a copy to HR Operations – Admin, who will record the outcome on the HR system and retain the documentation on the individual's HR record.

**Officers only:** Where a request to return to full time working cannot be supported within the officer's current role, the relevant line manager must explore a suitable alternative post of the same rank. Advice is available from the Resourcing Team, as appropriate.

### 14. Individual withdraws their request, as appropriate

The line manager may consider the flexible working request withdrawn in the following circumstances:

- the individual has notified their line manager in writing (using the email template available within Section 5.0 'Supporting Links and Guidance') that the request has been withdrawn,
- the individual has failed more than once to attend a meeting or appeal meeting without good reason, or
- the individual has refused to provide information which can be used to assess the request.

The line manager must confirm acknowledgement of a withdrawn flexible working request by email to the individual,

## 6.0 Flowchart – Devon & Cornwall Police (Cont'd)

14. Cont'd	<p>copying in HR Operations – Admin, who will record this on the HR system.</p>
15. Individual submits an appeal, as appropriate	<p>The individual can appeal against a decision to decline all or part of their flexible working request. The appeal must be made within 10 calendar days of being notified of the decision outcome, setting out the grounds on which the appeal is made, by completing the relevant 'Flexible Working Request – Appeal' section of the 'Flexible Working Request Form'.</p> <p>The individual must submit their appeal by email to the appointed Appeals Manager, copying in HR Operations - Admin.</p>
16. Appeals Manager conducts appeal meeting	<p>The Appeals Manager must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• acknowledge receipt of the appeal in writing,</li><li>• arrange an appeal meeting within a reasonable time at a mutually convenient date / time, being cognisant of the two month statutory completion timeframe,</li><li>• send the individual an invite to a flexible working appeal meeting, available as an email template within Section 5.0 'Supporting Links and Guidance'.</li></ul> <p>The appeal meeting must be held in person or via Teams, or whereby mutual agreement, by telephone.</p> <p>The individual can request to be accompanied by a work colleague, trade union (or an official employed by a trade union) or staff association representative, as appropriate, and is responsible for arranging their attendance. <b>Please note:</b> Where the chosen representative is not available, the individual may request a postponement of the meeting provided it is reasonable and the meeting takes place not more than five calendar days later, being cognisant of the two month statutory completion timeframe (see Step 6).</p> <p>Advice is available from HR Operations – Admin, as appropriate.</p>
17. Appeals Manager confirms outcome of appeal	<p>Following the meeting the Appeals Manager will provide the individual with confirmation of the outcome of the appeal.</p> <p><b>Appeal Upheld</b></p> <p>Where an appeal is upheld, the Appeals Manager will complete the 'Flexible Working Request – Outcome of Appeal' section of the 'Flexible Working Request Form' and email this to the individual, copying in the line manager and HR Operations Admin.</p> <p>The written decision must include:</p>

## 6.0 Flowchart – Devon & Cornwall Police (Cont'd)

17. Cont'd

- a description of the agreed working pattern,
- the date from which the new working pattern is to take effect.

HR Operations – Admin will:

- issue a variation to terms and conditions (officers) / variation to contract (employees) letter within one month of the effective date,
- notify the Payroll team (for requests resulting in a salary adjustment),
- notify the Resource Management Unit (RMU), who will update the GRS system,
- record the outcome on the HR system,
- retain the request on the individuals HR record.

### **Appeal Rejected**

Where an appeal is rejected, the Appeals Manager will complete the 'Flexible Working Request – Outcome of Appeal' section of the 'Flexible Working Request Form' and email this to the individual, copying in the line manager and HR Operations – Admin.

The written decision must include:

- the grounds for the refusal,
- an explanation as to why the grounds for refusal apply under the circumstances, and
- where applicable, part of the request that can be implemented or, where the department can offer some flexibility but are not able to agree the requested pattern.

**Please note:** The appeal process must be concluded no later than two months from the date the individual submitted their request unless an alternative date has been otherwise agreed.

There is no further right of appeal.

18. Line management complete flexible working review

Flexible working arrangements are subject to review by the line manager:

- on a regular basis, where the request is a reasonable adjustment or a short term / temporary arrangement,
- at least annually.

The manager must meet with the individual as part of the review (either in person or via teams), to discuss any concerns or benefits as a result of the working pattern, to ensure they continue to meet the needs of the organisation and the individual.

## 6.0 Flowchart – Devon & Cornwall Police (Cont'd)

18. Cont'd

Where, as a result of the review, the pattern is identified as ineffective either for the Force or the individual, this should be re-negotiated between the line manager and the individual, to identify a suitable alternative arrangement agreeable to both parties.

Where the individual requests a change to their working pattern as a result of the review process, a new Flexible Working Request Form will need to be submitted.

Where the Force requests a change to an individual's working pattern as a result of the review process, advice should be sought from HR Operations – Admin.

The line manager will complete a 'Flexible Working Review Form' (available within Section 5.0 'Supporting Links and Guidance') and forward this to HR Operations – Admin, for updating on the HR system and retaining on the individual's HR record.

Managers should contact [HR Operations - Admin \(D&C\)](#) if the situation they are managing does not appear to be straightforward.

## 7.0 Flowchart – Dorset Police

1. Individual determines their eligibility	<p>The individual must ensure they are eligible to submit a flexible working request, in line with the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the individual must be an officer or employee of Dorset Police (not an agency worker),</li><li>• student officers can request to work a minimum average of 24 hours per week, subject to completion of initial training and street duties, all of which must be completed on a full time basis,</li><li>• employees can apply for no more than two flexible working requests within a 12 month period (there is no limit for officers).</li></ul>
2. Individual discusses request with the line manager	<p>The individual should arrange to meet with their line manager at a mutually agreed time and location, either in person or via Teams, or where mutually agreed, via the telephone.</p> <p>The individual should discuss their wish to change their working pattern with their line manager in the first instance, prior to submitting a formal request, to identify any potential implications, as well as possible alternative approaches at an early stage.</p> <p>Managers should emphasise a positive approach to flexible working and must not deter any individual from making a request to work flexibly.</p>
3. Individual completes and submits the request to their line manager	<p>The individual must fully complete the 'Flexible Working Request Form' and the appropriate shift pattern calculator, stating that it is a statutory request, providing three months' notice of the effective date.</p> <p>The individual must email the request to their line manager (or an alternative manager in their absence) for consideration, copying in HR Operations - Admin.</p> <p>The request forms are available within Section 5.0 'Supporting Links and Guidance'. Paper or scanned copies cannot be accepted unless exceptional circumstances apply.</p> <p>The following information must be provided within the submission:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the date of the request,</li><li>• the change the individual is requesting in relation to their hours or times or place of work,</li><li>• the current working hours,</li><li>• the proposed working pattern,</li><li>• the effective date of the proposed change,</li></ul>

## 7.0 Flowchart – Dorset Police (Cont'd)

3. Cont'd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• if and when flexible working requests have been made in the previous 12 months (applicable to employees only).</li></ul> <p>Where the individual is making their request in relation to the Equality Act 2010, for example, as a reasonable adjustment for a disability, this should also be stated.</p> <p>Individuals returning from maternity, adoption or shared parental leave (SPL) should ensure that they complete a 'Return to Work from Maternity / Adoption Leave / SPL Form' in conjunction with their flexible working request, which is available within the Maternity / Adoption / SPL guidance, via the People Portfolio pages of the intranet. Where the individual is absent from work, the form can be accessed via the Family Leave Support Portal on the Force internet site.</p> <p><b>Officers only:</b> Where an officer is returning from extended leave, e.g., a career break, and does not have a substantive line manager the Flexible Working Request Form must be submitted to the Promotions and Postings Team, for a suitable vacancy to be identified.</p>
4. Line manager to review the request	<p>The line manager must review the Flexible Working Request Form, checking the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the individual's eligibility (see Step 1),</li><li>• that the request form has been completed in full,</li><li>• the accuracy of the information, e.g., the current working hours and proposed pattern equates to the actual working hours, including any applicable allowances,</li><li>• whether there is an increase in expenditure, e.g., an increase of hours / allowances, which must receive budgetary approval.</li></ul>
5. Line manager to meet with the individual	<p>The line manager must meet with the individual in person, via Teams, or where both agree, via the telephone, at a mutually convenient time and location to discuss the proposed changes, with a view to reaching a mutually beneficial agreement which satisfies the needs of the individual and the Force.</p> <p>In the absence of the line manager, e.g., due to annual leave, the meeting should be held by the second line manager. Where the line manager is unable to meet with the individual within a reasonable timeframe due to conflicting shift patterns, a suitable alternative manager should be identified to hold the meeting and the individual updated accordingly.</p> <p>The meeting may be as brief or longer as required and will provide an opportunity to listen, engage meaningfully and explore the changes the individual is seeking and how these</p>

## 7.0 Flowchart – Dorset Police (Cont'd)

5. Cont'd	<p>may be accommodated.</p> <p>The individual can request to be accompanied by a work colleague, trade union (or an official employed by a trade union) or staff association representative, as appropriate, and is responsible for arranging their attendance. <b>Please note:</b> Where the chosen representative is not available, the individual may request a postponement of the meeting provided it is reasonable and the meeting takes place not more than five calendar days later, being cognisant of the two month statutory completion timeframe (see Step 6).</p>
6. Line manager to consider the request and make a decision in principle	<p>The line manager must carefully consider the request within a reasonable period, being cognisant of the two month statutory timeframe, which starts when the individual submits their formal flexible working request to their line manager and ends at the conclusion of an appeal (where applicable).</p> <p>Where a delay is likely, the line manager must keep the individual informed of progress, including the likely timescales and where required, sending the individual an 'Extension to Time Limit Letter' by mutual agreement, copying in HR Operations - Admin. In exceptional cases, temporary arrangements may need to be considered whilst this process is ongoing. Advice can be sought from HR Operations – Admin, as appropriate.</p> <p>The line manager must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• review the benefits of the proposed change for the individual / business area and weigh these against any adverse operational, organisational or financial impacts,</li><li>• provide an initial view in principle only, confirming whether or not the request is supported,</li><li>• confirm to the individual whether the request is subject to budgetary approval (additional expenditure only),</li><li>• complete the review section of the 'Flexible Working Request Form'.</li></ul>
7. Line manager refers the request to the second line manager	<p>Where the request is supported, the line manager must email the completed 'Flexible Working Request Form' and the proposed shift pattern to the second line manager for consideration, copying in HR Operations - Admin.</p> <p>Where the request is not supported, the line manager should seek advice from the Senior Management Team (SMT) and / or HR Operations – Admin before proceeding to the next step.</p>

## 7.0 Flowchart – Dorset Police (Cont'd)

8. The second line manager reviews the request and confirms a decision in principle	<p>The second line manager will review the request, consider the impact on the department design and will, where applicable, provide evidence that sufficient budget is available to accommodate the request.</p> <p>Where concerns are identified, the second line manager must meet with the individual (either in person or via Teams) to discuss and explore any alternative approaches before rejecting any request in principle.</p> <p>The second line manager will record their decision in principle within the review section of the flexible working request form and forward this to the Legitimacy Team by email, copying in HR Operations - Admin.</p>
9. Legitimacy Team to review the request and confirm the decision	<p>The Legitimacy Team will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ensure the request has been completed fully,</li><li>• conduct a review of the request to ensure a fair and consistent approach has been taken and operational perspective has been considered at all stages,</li><li>• contact the SMT member to ensure that the resource management implications are considered,</li><li>• where applicable, recommend alternative options to the line management for consideration / negotiation with the individual,</li><li>• make a final decision to approve or reject the request.</li></ul> <p>Where the request results in an increase in hours or allowances, the Legitimacy Team will review the evidence provided within the request and make any further enquiries as necessary.</p> <p>The Legitimacy Team must obtain formal approval for additional expenditure from the following departments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• HR Change, who will review the departmental impact,</li><li>• the Alliance Finance Team (via the local Alliance Finance representative), who will provide budgetary approval.</li></ul> <p>The Legitimacy Team will record their decision within the review section of the 'Flexible Working Request Form' and email the outcome, including confirmation of budgetary and HR Change approval (where applicable), to the line manager, copying in HR Operations - Admin.</p> <p>Where the request is approved (with or without further negotiation), proceed to Step 10. Where the request is rejected, proceed to Step 13.</p>

## 7.0 Flowchart – Dorset Police (Cont'd)

10. Line manager confirms approval	The line manager is responsible for forwarding the completed 'Flexible Working Request Form' to the individual, to include written confirmation of approval of the request.
11. HR Operations – Admin process the request	<p>HR Operations – Admin will review and process the request. <b>Please note:</b> Where the request has inaccuracies or is incomplete, HR Operations – Admin will return this to the line manager for amendment. This may result in a delay in the start date in order to meet the timescales for processing.</p> <p>HR Operations – Admin will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• issue a variation to terms and conditions (officers) / variation to contract (employees) letter within one month of the effective date, confirming the flexible working arrangement,</li><li>• notify the Payroll Team (where a salary adjustment applies),</li><li>• send a copy of the agreed working pattern to the Duties team, who will update GRS and ensure compliance with the Variable Shift Agreement Framework (officers only) and Working Time Regulations,</li><li>• update the HR system and retain the request on the individual's HR record.</li></ul>
12. HR Operations - Admin to calculate annual leave entitlement	Where the individual reduces / increases their hours part way through the year, HR Operations - Admin will recalculate their annual leave entitlement and advise the line manager accordingly.
13. Request is rejected by the Legitimacy Team	<p>Following discussion with the individual, where alternative options have been explored and a flexible working request is rejected, the Legitimacy Team will provide sufficient justification of the basis in which the request was rejected.</p> <p>A request should only be rejected where clear, legitimate, and objectively justified business or operational grounds apply, which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the burden of additional costs,</li><li>• an inability to reorganise work amongst existing staffing,</li><li>• an inability to recruit additional staff,</li><li>• a detrimental impact on quality,</li><li>• a detrimental impact on performance,</li><li>• a detrimental effect on ability to meet customer demand,</li><li>• insufficient work available for the periods the individual proposes to work, or</li><li>• planned structural changes to the organisation</li></ul> <p>(Source: ACAS, 2024)</p>

## 7.0 Flowchart – Dorset Police (Cont'd)

13. Cont'd	<p>The Legitimacy Team will record their decision within the review section of the 'Flexible Working Request Form' and inform the line manager of the outcome by email, copying in HR Operations - Admin.</p> <p>HR Operations – Admin will identify an appropriate 'Appeals Manager' in anticipation of an appeal, who must be a Senior HR Manager.</p> <p>The line manager must subsequently meet with the individual (either in person or via Teams) to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• clearly explain the decision and the basis on which the request was rejected,</li><li>• inform the individual of their option to appeal within 10 calendar days, how to submit an appeal and to whom (see Step 15),</li><li>• ensure that the individual has access to the appropriate support, available via the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), HR Operations – Admin, Legitimacy Team, Staff Associations (officers), Trade Unions (employees) and local staff support groups.</li></ul> <p>Following the meeting, the line manager must return the 'Flexible Working Request Form' to the individual, including the completed section of the review.</p> <p><b>Officers only:</b> Where a request to increase to full time working cannot be supported within the officer's current role, the line management must explore a suitable alternative post of the same rank. Advice is available from the Resourcing Team, as appropriate.</p>
14. Individual withdraws their request, as appropriate	<p>The line manager may consider the flexible working request withdrawn in the following circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the individual has notified their line manager in writing (using the email template available within Section 5.0 'Supporting Links and Guidance') that the request has been withdrawn,</li><li>• the individual has failed more than once to attend a meeting or appeal meeting without good reason, or</li><li>• the individual has refused to provide information which can be used to assess the request.</li></ul> <p>The line manager must confirm acknowledgement of a withdrawn flexible working request by email to the individual, copying in HR Operations – Admin, who will record this on the HR system.</p>

## 7.0 Flowchart – Dorset Police (Cont'd)

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| 15. Individual submits an appeal, as appropriate | <p>The individual can appeal against a decision to decline all or part of their flexible working request. The appeal must be made within 10 calendar days of being notified of the decision outcome, setting out the grounds on which the appeal is made, by completing a 'Flexible Working Appeal Form', available within Section 5.0 'Supporting Links and Guidance'.</p> <p>The individual must submit their appeal by email to the appointed Appeals Manager, copying in HR Operations - Admin.</p>  |
| 16. Appeals Manager conducts appeal meeting      | <p>The Appeals Manager must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• acknowledge receipt of the appeal in writing,</li><li>• arrange an appeal meeting within a reasonable time at a mutually convenient date / time, being cognisant of the two month statutory completion timeframe,</li><li>• send the individual an 'Invite to Flexible Working Appeal Meeting Letter', available within Section 5.0 'Supporting Links and Guidance'.</li></ul> <p>The appeal meeting must be held in person or via Teams, or whereby mutual agreement, by telephone.</p> <p>The individual can request to be accompanied by a work colleague, trade union (or an official employed by a trade union) or staff association representative, as appropriate, and is responsible for arranging their attendance. <b>Please note:</b> Where the chosen representative is not available, the individual may request a postponement of the meeting provided it is reasonable and the meeting takes place not more than five calendar days later, being cognisant of the two month statutory completion timeframe (see Step 6).</p> |
| 17. Appeals Manager confirms outcome of appeal   | <p>Following the meeting the Appeals Manager will provide the individual with confirmation of the outcome of the appeal.</p> <p><b>Appeal Upheld</b></p> <p>Where an appeal is upheld, the Appeals Manager will complete the 'Flexible Working Request – Outcome of Appeal' section of the 'Appeal Form', along with a 'Flexible Working Appeal Upheld Letter' and email this to the individual, copying in the line manager and HR Operations – Admin.</p> <p>The written decision must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• a description of the agreed working pattern,</li><li>• the date from which the new working pattern is to take effect.</li></ul>  |

## 7.0 Flowchart – Dorset Police (Cont'd)

17. Cont'd

HR Operations – Admin will:

- issue a variation to terms and conditions (officers) / variation to contract (employees) letter within one month of the effective date,
- notify the Payroll Team (for requests resulting in a salary adjustment),
- notify the Duties team, who will update the GRS system,
- record the outcome on the HR system,
- retain the request on the individuals HR record.

### Appeal Rejected

Where an appeal is rejected, the Appeals Manager will complete the 'Flexible Working Request – Outcome of Appeal' section of the 'Appeal Form' along with a 'Flexible Working Appeal Rejection Letter' and email these to the individual.

The written decision must include:

- the grounds for the refusal,
- an explanation as to why the grounds for refusal apply under the circumstances, and
- where applicable, part of the request that can be implemented or, where the department can offer some flexibility but are not able to agree the requested pattern.

**Please note:** The appeal process must be concluded no later than two months from the date the individual submitted their request, unless an alternative date has been otherwise agreed.

There is no further right of appeal.

18. Line management complete flexible working review

Flexible working arrangements are subject to review by the line manager:

- on a regular basis, where the request is a reasonable adjustment or a short term / temporary arrangement,
- at least annually.

The manager must meet with the individual as part of the review (either in person or via Teams), to discuss any concerns or benefits as a result of the working pattern, to ensure they continue to meet the needs of the organisation and the individual.

Where, as a result of the review, the pattern is identified as ineffective either for the Force or the individual, this should be

## 7.0 Flowchart – Dorset Police (Cont'd)

18. Cont'd

re-negotiated between the line manager and the individual, to identify a suitable alternative arrangement that is agreeable to both parties.

Where the individual requests a change to their working pattern as a result of the review process, a new Flexible Working Request Form will need to be submitted.

Where the Force requests a change to an individual's working pattern as a result of the review process, advice should be sought from HR Operations – Admin.

The line manager will complete a 'Flexible Working Review Form' (available within Section 5.0 'Supporting Links and Guidance') and forward this to HR Operations – Admin, for updating on the HR system and retaining on the individual's HR record.

Managers should contact [.HR Ops Dorset – Admin \(Dorset\)](#) if the situation they are managing does not appear to be straightforward.

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## 8.0 Monitoring and Review

Review and amendments will be coordinated by the Policy Unit.

The Alliance Head of Employee Relations is responsible for overseeing this step by step to ensure a consistent Force approach is maintained. Monitoring will be primarily carried out subject to force processes of continuing review and in line with force governance requirements.

This step by step will be reviewed annually subject to legislation / process changes.

**Please note:** Where legislation / guidance changes have occurred / scheduled to occur or operational needs demand it, ahead of the revised review date, Alliance People policies and associated procedures / step by steps will be applied in line with prevailing legislation / guidance.

We welcome any comments or suggestions you wish to share about the content or implementation of this procedure. If you would like to make contact to discuss further, please email: [.Policies@dorset.PNN.police.uk](mailto:.Policies@dorset.PNN.police.uk)

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## 9.0 Version History

**Version:** 1.0  
**Date:** 06/04/2024  
**Reason for**

**Amendments:** Initial document.  
**Amended by:** HR Strategy & Policy Lead (ER)  
**Approved by:** Board – See Governance  
**Date Approved:** 27/03/2024  
**Quality Assured:** Legitimacy Team

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## 10.0 Governance

**Present Portfolio Holder:** Alliance Head of People (HR Operations)  
**Present Document Owner:** Alliance Head of Employee Relations  
**Present Owning Department:** Alliance People Portfolio

**Name of Board:** Strategic People Board  
**Chief Officer Approving:** ACO (D&C) and ACO People, Director of People and Support Services (Dorset)  
**Date Approved:** 27/03/2024

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\*\*\*End of Document\*\*\*