

**Special Constabulary Policy**

**Version 1**

**2023**

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| The PFEW Policy Department has embarked on a concerted effort to formulate and/or revise policy documents, titled "Policy Refresh", on key topics concerning its members.    These strategic documents are evidence-based, aligned with PFEW's Business Areas, as well as championed by National Board members.    It is aimed for PFEW to maintain clear policy positions on key topics, that allows members to have clarity on PFEW's official position statements that are backed by evidence.    If you have any comments or queries, please direct them to [Bahar.Munim@polfed.org](mailto:Bahar.Munim@polfed.org) |
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**SPECIAL CONSTABULARY POLICY**

**Policy Principles and Rationale**

A policy is required to introduce the Special Constables to the Police Federation of England and Wales (“PFEW”). This represents the wishes of the wider membership.

**Objectives of this Policy**

* To ensure parity of treatment between the existing PFEW membership and Special Constables.
* To be able to inform and assist branches in any discussions about the inclusion of Special Constables in PFEW membership.
* To effectively communicate and inform Special Constables of their rights as detailed in this policy.

**Background**

At the PFEW Annual Conference in 2014, a motion was passed in favour of allowing Special Constables to join the PFEW as full subscribing members.

**Policy Statement**

PFEW believes that all members should be treated equally and given access to the same core services. This approach will include Special Constables now that they are eligible to be members of the Federation.

It is important to PFEW that this policy draws parity with its current membership. It is not to create a reduction or different level of membership. The Special Constabulary are designed to support their regular police colleagues and are not there to replace them.

To access the full range of PFEW core services, Special Constables will be required to pay the same rate of subscription to the voluntary fund as regular officers.

It is envisaged that the subscription payable to the PFEW would be met by the relevant force’s Chief Constable. At the Chief Constables’ Council meeting in October 2021, it was agreed following a vote that subscriptions for Special Constables should be paid as expenses. However, this agreement is not mandatory. PFEW maintains its position that Special Constables should be reimbursed for the cost of Federation membership.

PFEW believes that the benefits paid because of injury or death on duty should reflect their actual length of service and should not be calculated to an arbitrary 10-year service limit.

Once a Special Constable becomes a subscribing member, they will have access to the voluntary funds and legal support. A Special Constable who is subject to an investigation should be made aware of the risks (legal or financial) if they are not a subscribing member, and such members would be advised to seek legal support at their own cost.

To ensure full parity of treatment and reimbursement with regular officers, Special Constables should be granted the same expenses (when appropriate) as their regular colleagues. Such reimbursement extends beyond the items defined within the Home Office guidance ‘*Special constables: expense and allowance rates’* published on 1 April 2022, and applies to, for example, safety equipment – including glasses/spectacles.

PFEW will work with Forces and key [stakeholders](#Stakeholders) to provide guidance and feedback on this policy.

PFEW maintains the following regarding the introduction of Special Constables to the Federation:

1. Full subscription rate for all members.
2. Special Constables can benefit from the same student officer discount as regular officers.
3. The implementation of the student rate would be:
   1. Any new service Special Constables (excluding re-joiners) will benefit from a 12-month reduction.
   2. Any Special Constables with more than one year’s service go straight to the full rate.
   3. Any Special Constables with part of a year’s service receive a reduction until the first anniversary of their joining the force.
4. The subscription rates will be reviewable after a 12-month period, in line with this policy.

**Evidence**

There were 9,174 Special Constables (in headcount terms) in the 43 police forces in England and Wales on 31 March 2021. Special Constables contribute 186,000 hours per month on average to policing in England and Wales[[1]](#footnote-1). This shows that Special Constables are committing these voluntary hours every year and demonstrates the value they provide.

**Other staff association or union membership**

For those who are both a special constable and a police staff member, they will be entitled to be members of both the Police Federation and other staff association or union for the respective parts of their work in policing. Individuals will be subject to conduct and discipline standards with regards to both Police Regulations and Police Staff Standards of Professional Behaviours as set out in the Police Staff Handbook.

The Police Federation and staff association or unions shall work together in representing police workers who fit within this category.

In cases of investigation:

* The individual will be encouraged to inform their representative bodies of the investigation.
* Individuals will be represented by the organisation for which they hold membership in the role being investigated.
* If Members wish to continue being represented, they must be open and transparent in their communication with organisations in relation to disclosure, as information sharing is imperative between their representatives.
* Regarding fees and payment, the representative bodies will meet their own costs/fees and any issues will be resolved between them and their respective lawyers.

**Scope of the Policy**

This policy applies to all Special Constables, and additionally any other PFEW members who support and/or engage with Special Constables.

**Key Stakeholders**

* [The National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC)](https://www.npcc.police.uk/)
* [The Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC)](https://apccs.police.uk/)
* [Home Office, UK Government](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/home-office)
* [PFEW Membership](https://www.polfed.org/)
* Local Branch Chairs and Secretaries
* [Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire Service (HMICFRS)](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/)
* [College of Policing](https://www.college.police.uk/)
* [Police Superintendents' Association (PSA)](https://www.policesupers.com/)
* [Association of Special Constabulary Officers (ASCO)](https://polfed.sharepoint.com/sites/Policy-POLFEDHQ/Shared%20Documents/General/04%20POLICY%20CAPTURE/Policy%20refresh%202020/Special%20Constables/asco.police.uk)

*Note: This is not an exhaustive list.*

Approved by National Board on: **May 2023**

Review: **May 2024**

1. [Police workforce, England and Wales: 31 March 2021 - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-england-and-wales-31-march-2021/police-workforce-england-and-wales-31-march-2021) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)