

INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING SCHEME

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

On appointment, or reappointment, all Independent Custody Visitors are required to sign the Memorandum of Understanding which summarises their agreed responsibilities and the Police Authority's expectations of what is expected of each Custody Visitor. The Authority may revise the Memorandum of Understanding from time to time as required.

Independent Custody Visitors are supplied with the full guidelines for the Independent Custody Visiting Scheme and there is an expectation that these guidelines will be fully complied with at all times. You should particularly note the following points which highlight what the Police Authority requires from each individual Custody Visitor.

1. APPOINTMENTS

Appointments are for an initial term of three years which is subject to a six month period of probation (which may be extended if required). Subject to continuing satisfactory performance and suitability, the Police Authority may re-appoint an Independent Custody Visitor for a subsequent term of three years, up to a maximum of four terms.

2. ANNUAL REVIEWS

All Independent Custody Visitors are required to participate in the Annual Performance Review process undertaken by the Panel Chair. The annual reviews are held to review the performance of each Independent Custody Visitor and to assess their willingness and ability to continue. In the case of the Panel Chair, the review process is undertaken by the Chairman of the Authority.

3. CHANGE OF CIRCUMSTANCES

You are required to notify the Police Authority of any change in circumstances which will affect your position as an Independent Custody Visitor e.g. if you are arrested and charged with a criminal offence, or become a magistrate, special constable, or police officer, or undertake any other work which may present you with a conflict of interest.

4. EXPENSES

Your work as an Independent Custody Visitor is entirely voluntary but certain reasonably incurred expenses, including travel may be claimed. Expense claims made on the appropriate form should be submitted monthly with necessary supporting receipts.

5. MISCONDUCT

By signing this Memorandum of Understanding, you are agreeing to have regard to and, so far as possible, abide by the standards and policies of the Police Authority's Independent Custody Visiting Scheme and to adhere to the Code of Practice and National Standards for the duration of your appointment(s) as an Independent Custody Visitor. The procedures for dealing with misconduct are set out in the Scheme Guidelines which include an appeal process.

6. IDENTITY CARD

Your identity card should only be used for the purpose of making custody visits. If it is used for any other purpose, it will be withdrawn and your appointment as an Independent Custody Visitor will be terminated.

7. VISITING IN PAIRS

You are required to make custody visits in pairs at all times. There are no exceptions to this requirement, and Police custody staff have been advised that they should not allow anyone who is unaccompanied to make a custody visit.

You can only make a custody visit when accompanied by another accredited Independent Custody Visitor. No more than two people should make a custody visit together.

8. NUMBER OF VISITS

You will be expected to make a minimum of eight and a maximum of sixteen visits per year. Visits will be allocated to you on a quarterly basis, to be carried out within a one week time frame for urban stations and a one month time frame for rural stations. It is up to each pair to arrange between themselves a mutually convenient time to visit. If you are unable to carry out any visits assigned to you, you should ensure that the Scheme Administrator, or the Chairman of the Independent Custody Visiting Panel, is notified as soon as possible.

9. MEETINGS AND TRAINING

The Independent Custody Visiting Panel meets four times a year to discuss visits made. In addition, one day training events are arranged, normally once a year. Independent Custody Visitors are expected to attend the one day training and at least 3 of the Panel Meetings per year.

10. IMPARTIALITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

You must not involve yourself in individual cases, or give advice to detainees. You must maintain the confidentiality and/or any personal details of both detainees and other Independent Custody Visitors.

11. DOCUMENTATION

You are required to complete a report form for every custody visit made (even when there is nobody in custody) and submit the top copy promptly to the Chief Executive of the Police Authority.

12. PERSONAL DETAILS

You are required to inform the Chief Executive of the Police Authority promptly of any change of address or telephone number.

13. QUERIES

Queries on any aspect of the scheme should be made initially to the Scheme Administrator on 01202 or 01305 223966.

UNDERTAKING

In signing this Memorandum of Understanding I undertake to be bound by its terms and consent to be bound by the Dorset Police Authority Independent Custody Visiting Scheme Guidelines.

Name: _____ (Block Capitals)

Signature: _____

Date: _____