

# Leavers

Procedure

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## Overview

### What is this about?

We value the contribution that all our officers and staff make and recognise that at some stage their service will come to an end. The following information explains how to leave the organisation.

### Who is this for?

This is for officers, special constables, and authority/police staff.

### Key information

* We want to know about any problems or concerns that are making people think about leaving the organisation. If there is any way we can retain people by making meaningful changes that would influence the decision to leave, then please speak to your line manager.
* To resign from the service the online Resignation/Retiral form needs to be complete. Further details on the processes and the timescales involved can be found on the Leavers mini site of the Intranet.
* Annual leave is pro-rated during the final annual leave year. If more annual leave has been taken than an individual is entitled to, we will deduct this from the final salary.
* We would like to know more about how our people found their time with us and encourage leavers to take the opportunity to take part in an Exit Interview.
* An exit survey will be issued to all leavers to provide us with valuable feedback on people’s experience of working with us.
* Officers and staff will be provided a Certificate of Service, which will include service with any other police force.
* All leavers should receive payment for pay awards implemented after their leaving date, where they have relevant employment covering the effective date of any pay award implementation, and their leaving date. Applications should be made within three months of the award, and in advance of the end of the financial year where possible. For payment to be made applicants must confirm bank details and address.

## Staff/Officer

### What you need to do:

* Let your line manager or another suitable member of your management team know about your intention to resign / retire.
* Complete the online Resignation/Retiral form and give the correct notice. In circumstances where you cannot access the online form because you are not at work, and will not return to work, you should email your line manager with details of your resignation or retirement.
* Make sure you have no outstanding TOIL, annual leave, flexi-time or rest day balances.
* Complete all SCoPE administration such as, overtime claims, accident forms, return to work interviews, appraisals etc.
* Return all uniform and equipment, including any ID and/or access cards, and tell us about any tools or equipment you have been provided as a reasonable adjustment.
* Take a moment to reflect on your time with us and let us know what we have done well and where we could improve.
* Make provision to settle any outstanding salary sacrifice agreements. Final salaries will be adjusted to recover any outstanding balances associated with salary sacrifice agreements from net pay. Where there is insufficient salary to settle all agreements, you will have seven days from leaving employment to settle outstanding amounts.

### Notice periods

Your notice period starts the day after the Resignation/Retiral form is submitted. If you are retiring, you should aim to give three months’ notice. This is to make sure the pension administrator has plenty of time to process your pension.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Rank/Grade** | **Notice Period** |
| Up to and including Grade 7 | Four weeks |
| Grade 8 -14 inclusive  | Eight weeks |
| Constable to Chief Superintendent | 28 days |
| Assistant Chief Constable or Above | Three months |

If you want to work a shorter notice period than outlined above, this must be authorised by a Head of Department/Divisional Commander and agreed prior to completion of the online resignation/retiral form. In the event this is not possible any amendments to a leaving date must be passed to People Direct.

### Withdrawing your resignation

In most cases, you cannot withdraw your resignation or retirement once it has been accepted. If you want to withdraw your resignation/retirement, police officers must write to the Superintendent, Resource Planning and Coordination Unit, as soon as possible. Authority/Police staff must write to their head of department. They will consider your request and inform you of the decision.

### Uniform and equipment

You will need to return all uniform, equipment, and assets as close to your leaving date as possible. You should return your ID and/or access card along with any telematics or car club cards and Police Notebooks to your line manager. Sliders should be returned to your Business Support Unit. All other uniform and equipment should be returned by completing Form (111-002) and making an appointment to go to your local Stores. Those who are unable to attend Stores in person should return the form with their uniform and equipment in line with local arrangements.

If you have been provided reasonable adjustments in the form of equipment or tools, you must email **[REDACTED]** with details of the equipment and its location.

### Exit interview/survey

An exit interview will be carried out by a suitable manager, usually the Area Commander/Head of Department. You can be accompanied to this interview if you want.

In addition, an exit survey will also be sent to an email address of your choice by our Shared Services Team. A hard copy is available if you need it and you can tell us your preference when you submit the Resignation/Retiral form.

### Officer retiral

The normal pension age in the 2015 Police Pension Scheme is age 60, however you are entitled to receive an immediate Police pension from age 55, reduced for early payment.

If you are an active member of the 2015 scheme and have previous membership in the 2006 Police Pension Scheme, these benefits are also payable from age 55.

If you are an active member of the 2015 scheme and have previous membership in the 1987 Police Pension Scheme, you may be able to access these benefits earlier than age 55, dependent on your age, service, and rank.

We do not automatically process your retirement based on your retirement age or length of service as there is no Compulsory Retirement Age within the 2015 Police Pension Regulations.

You must tell us that you intend to retire and may want to discuss your pension entitlement with the Scottish Public Pensions Authority (SPPA) before you submit your notice.  Ideally this should be submitted at least three months before your retirement.

### Staff retiral

The Local Government Pension Scheme is usually payable to members from Normal Pension Age which is linked to your State Pension Age. You can choose to retire and take your pension at any time between age 55 and 75. If you choose to take your pension before your Normal Pension Age it will normally be reduced, as it’s being paid earlier. If you take it later than your Normal Pension Age, it will be increased because it’s being paid later.

If you are made redundant or retired in the interests of business efficiency when you are 55 or over (or, in some cases, 50 or over), you will receive immediate payment of the pension you have built up – providing you have met the two-year vesting period. More detail on Voluntary Redundancy (VR) and Voluntary Early Retirement (VER) are available on our dedicated Intranet pages.

### Flexible retirement (Staff only)

The Scottish Police Authority does not have a general policy of exercising its discretion to allow members of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) to reduce grade or working hours and draw some or all their pension at the same time. However, it may exercise this discretion where a business case shows it is part of a planned strategy for reducing the workforce and is endorsed by the departmental budget holder. All requests will be considered, but they will not be agreed unless there is a clear business case that it is in the interests of the efficient delivery of the service. There is no right of appeal against decisions not to grant flexible retirement.

It should be noted that processes around flexible retirement can be lengthy, and applications must be made using form (122-005) at least six months before any implementation of flexible retirement date. To obtain estimates from your local pension provider please contact People Direct. Further information of flexible retirement is available on the [Local Government Pension Scheme in Scotland website](https://www.scotlgpsmember.org/your-pension/planning/taking-your-pension/#the-85-year-rule).

### Rule of 85 (Staff only)

If you were a member of the LGPS on or before 30 November 2006, you may be able to retire earlier than age 65 and receive your pension and/or lump sum in full. The SPA needs to agree to retirement before age 60. You should contact your LGPS fund directly for guidance on the application of the rule of 85 to your own circumstances. Further information on Rule of 85 is available on the [Local Government Pension Scheme in Scotland website](https://www.scotlgpsmember.org/your-pension/planning/taking-your-pension/#the-85-year-rule).

To obtain estimates from your local pension provider please contact People Direct in the first instance.

### Ill health retirement

If you are found by a medical expert to be permanently disabled and unable to do your role, we may decide to retire you on medical grounds. Redeployment, in line with skills, qualifications, experience and reasonable adjustments will be considered before we do this.

### References

You should contact People Direct to request a reference. Future employers can email Peopledirect@scotland.police.uk with requests. We will provide standard factual references confirming dates of service and job title.

### Attending court after leaving

If you must attend court because of working with us, we will pay any reasonable expenses incurred for up to six months after your leaving date. After six months the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) will pay. You should contact your Business Support Unit or equivalent, if you have one prior to making any travel arrangements for court dates, or your line manager if you do not.

To make a claim you must provide a copy of your citation, proof of expenditure and your bank details so that payment can be made.

Loss of earnings is not a reasonable expense, and any claim for lost earnings must be made through the court service.

## Manager

### What you need to do:

* Talk to your team member about their resignation/retiral exploring any underlying reason and whether solutions or alternatives exist.
* Check all outstanding balances to ensure that these are taken before the last day of service.
* Complete all SCoPE administration such as, overtime claims, accident forms, return to work interviews, appraisals etc.
* Ensure that all uniform, equipment, and assets have been returned including:
	+ Police Notebooks
	+ Mobile devices
	+ ID and/or access cards (including Enterprise Car Club membership card)
	+ Equipment supplied as a reasonable adjustment
	+ Equipment issued to facilitate home working.
* Arrange for an exit conversation to be carried out.
* Contact Enterprise to cancel the team member’s Car Club membership once they have left.

### Notice period

If a member of your team submits their resignation using the online Resignation/Retiral form, you will receive an email notification and should check that the correct notice period has been submitted. When retiring, they should aim to give three months’ notice. This is to make sure the pension administrator has plenty of time to process their pension.

| **Rank/Grade** | **Notice Period** |
| --- | --- |
| Up to and including Grade 7 | Four weeks |
| Grade 8 – 14 inclusive  | Eight weeks |
| Constable to Chief Superintendent | 28 days |
| Assistant Chief Constable or Above | Three months |

In circumstances where a team member is off work and unable to access the online form, they should submit their resignation in writing to you by email. This should be forwarded to Shared Services Team 2 who will process the form on their behalf.

### Uniform and equipment

Your team member must return their Police Notebooks, ID and/or access cards to you. Cards should be destroyed or returned to Administration, as per local processes.

Completed notebooks must not be retained by your team member unless they are essential to conclude an ongoing enquiry. They must be checked, signed, and dated by you, and stored in accordance with the Record Retention Procedure.

Your team member is responsible for returning all other uniform, equipment (including home working equipment) and assets to their local Stores or in line with local arrangements. A checklist form is provided within the forms section and should be completed and forwarded to Shared Services for filing.

You must check that **[REDACTED]** has been given the details of any equipment issued as a reasonable adjustment, and its location.

### Exit interview/survey

An exit interview should be arranged for all staff and officers. This should be carried out by a suitable senior manager, usually the Area Commander/Head of Department. Individuals may be accompanied to this conversation by any of the diversity and inclusion staff associations, trade unions or officer representatives such as the Scottish Police Federation.

They will also receive an exit survey which will be sent to an email address of their choice. They will be asked to make their selection when submitting their Resignation/Retiral form.

### Reference requests

Shared Services will provide all formal references to ensure these are true, accurate and fair. As a line manager you can provide a character reference, but you cannot represent the Scottish Police Authority (SPA) or Police Scotland by doing this and must not use either your work email or headed paper.

A character reference is a personal reference that discusses the candidate's personality. It won't necessarily discuss job performance but can discuss related experience. You should remember that although references are given in confidence, the recipient may need to disclose a reference under certain circumstances, such as a request for disclosure by an employment tribunal or under the Data Protection Act 2018.

## Resources

### Forms

* Leavers - Supervisory Checklist Form (122-003)
* Leavers Checklist for SPA Staff
* Flexible Retirement Request Form (122-005)
* Exit Interview Template (122-006)

### How to Guides

* Leavers – How to conduct an Exit Interview

### Related Procedures

* Allowances and Expenses (Officer)
* Allowances and Expenses (Staff)
* Capability (Attendance & performance) (Authority/Police Staff SOP
* Capability (Attendance & Performance) (Police Officer) SOP
* Ill health Retirement (Staff)
* Ill health Retirement and Injury on Duty (Officer)
* Overtime and Toil (Staff)

### Useful Links

* Airwave Terminal Return Form
* Leavers Support Hub.
* [LGPS Scotland (scotlgpsmember.org)](https://www.scotlgpsmember.org/)
* [Local Government Pension Scheme, (Scotland), Flexible Retirement guidance on actuarial reduction](https://pensions.gov.scot/sites/default/files/2020-05/LGPS_Scotland_Flexible_Retirement_Guidance.pdf)
* Notebooks National Guidance
* Online Resignation & Retiral Form
* [Police Pension Schemes – Reemployment Factsheet](https://pensions.gov.scot/sites/default/files/2022-10/Police_PS_Re_-_employment_factsheet_04102022.pdf)
* [Police Service of Scotland (Conduct) Regulations 2014](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2014/68/contents/made)
* SCoPE Leavers Administration Checklist
* [Scottish Public Pensions Agency](https://pensions.gov.scot/)
* [The Police Pension Scheme (Scotland) Regulations 2015](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2015/142/regulation/83/made)

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| 2.00 | Inclusion of new Leavers Checklist | 28/03/2018 |
| 3.00 | Policy Simplification Project. Procedure stripped back and written with customer focus to support modernisation and 2026 objectives. | 01/04/2019 |
| 4.00 | Introduction of chart to support rule of 85 understanding within Appendix B. Outstanding post publication queries rectified. | 20/01/2020 |
| 5.00 | New LGPS Scotland website launched allowing the removal of chart to support rule of 85. Text updated to remove extension of service requirements and incorporate provisions for back dated pay agreements, exit interviews made default rather than opt in. | 26/06/2023 |

**Feedback**

All Police Scotland People Policies and Procedures are subject to regular reviews. It is important that user feedback is considered when documents are reviewed.

If anyone wants to provide comment or make suggestions for improvements to this or any associated document, please email **[REDACTED]**.

Appendix A

How to conduct an exit interview

Anyone asked to conduct an exit interview needs to familiarise themselves with the process before doing so. These conversations are too important to be done in a rush or half-heartedly. The task is to find out why someone is leaving, and what the respective push and pull factors are regarding:

* The work itself
* The role of line managers/ supervisors
* Professional development and progression
* Organisation culture
* Any learnings about the work environment including any innovation which otherwise might be lost.

The interview structure and process should put the conversation centre stage, rather than take a transactional approach or tone. They should aim to:

* Give the individual who wants to leave a voice and be heard, to ensure that they remain ‘ambassadors.
* Initiate a feedforward process so that any relevant data is logged, any actions jointly agreed and evaluated in due course.
* Discuss alternative options where appropriate.

**Who should do them?**

Exit interviews should be carried out by a suitable senior manager, usually the Area Commander/Head of Department. Ideally this should not be the individual’s (current/last) line manager. Research tells us that perceptions and experiences of line management/supervision are a significant factor in voluntary resignations. To create conditions for the leaver to provide honest feedback about their reasons for leaving, independence of the person conducting the interview is critical.

Interviewers need to balance the collation of accurate information with a sensitive approach to listening, reflecting, and adapting the meeting as needed. This is because there will be varied reasons for leaving. Some people might be emotional requiring sensitivity, listening without judgment and acknowledging individual experience.

Key attributes for the host:

* Understanding of the meeting process.
* Active listening: showing engagement in the conversation, summarising and reflecting (not interruption, or assuming)
* Balancing a thorough approach to address all potential areas of concern with flexibility and adaptability should some areas need to be discussed in more depth and with priority.
* Being able to record the key issues discussed accurately during and immediately after the interview.
* Courage and authority to raise and refer any issues of concern such as disciplinary matters, failings in leadership/management.
* Ability to identify areas of good practice to support organisational learning.

#### Timing and Location

In most cases, it is preferable to schedule the meeting within 7-10 working days of notice being given to ensure that there is scope to initiate any actions and changes.

Face to face interviews is the most effective way to facilitate a meaningful exit interview and should be around an hour in length. Good practice would be to ask the individual for their preferred date, time, and location of interview. Use of video-conferencing technology may help facilitate a 1-1 conversation at a time and location preferred by the person which allows them to speak openly and freely.

#### Structure

The interview is a semi-structured meeting with a mix of open questions, and more specific prompts which focus on different areas such as the work itself, the line manager/supervisor and so on.

Without consistency, it is difficult to aggregate data. The meeting has an early prompt for possible solutions – this is important so that there is an opportunity to learn about what ‘good looks like’ which can inform any actions and changes.

#### Confidentiality and Distribution Plan

It needs to be clear to the individual who will have access to the data, in what form, and how any honest feedback will be protected. All data captured for tracking or workforce trends will be anonymised in line with the Equality and Diversity Employment Monitoring Procedure and this should be explicitly stated at the beginning of the interview with reference to the People and Development Privacy Notice. Once complete, Exit Interviews should be uploaded to People Direct for filing.

Appendix B

Questions and answers

**I am a police officer and I want to resign from the Service. What happens to my pension?**

Your pension is deferred in the scheme, when you resign, if you have over two years qualifying service. Further information on [opting out or leaving the police pension scheme can be found on the SPPA website](https://pensions.gov.scot/police/your-membership/opting-out-or-leaving-police-pension-scheme).

#### What happens if I re-join the Police Service as an Officer at a later date?

Re-employment following retirement from the Police Pension Scheme (PPS) can have certain consequences and impact on the payment of pension. These are primarily:

1. Withdrawal of Pension – “Abatement”

2. Protected Pension Age (PPS 1987 members only)

The Scottish Public Pensions Agency have a [re-employment factsheet that you can refer to](https://pensions.gov.scot/sites/default/files/2022-10/Police_PS_Re_-_employment_factsheet_04102022.pdf).

#### I am a retiring Officer; can I apply for an Authority/Police Staff vacancy?

Yes, you can apply for any externally advertised vacancy. There may be tax implications if you have accessed benefits from “the 1987” Police Pension Scheme Further information can be found on the Scottish Public Pensions Agency website, [Police Pension Schemes – Re-employment](https://pensions.gov.scot/sites/default/files/2022-10/Police_PS_Re_-_employment_factsheet_04102022.pdf).