

Dated: 13/08/2025

POLICY TITLE: Elimination Fingerprints and DNA – Police Personnel

OWNING DIRECTORATE: Forensic Services

AUTHOR: Head of Forensic Services

CONTACT DETAILS: 101

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT: Complete

AIM OF POLICY: To obtain fingerprint impressions and DNA samples for elimination purposes from all police officers and front-line police staff. The elimination of police personnel fingerprints and DNA at an early stage of an investigation, thus reducing time spent investigating legitimate contamination.

REASON FOR POLICY: Elimination of fingerprints and DNA left at crime scenes or transferred to exhibits by police personnel.

Biometric Vetting

The Police Regulations 2003 allows the taking of fingerprints and DNA as a condition of appointment without breaching Article 8 of the Human Rights Act (HRA).

Biometric vetting checks will be undertaken on those candidates who have reached the stage of being conditionally offered an appointment. Biometric vetting will apply to prospective Police Officers, Special Constables and relevant Police Staff who will be involved in the collection and processing of items from scenes of crime, suspects and/or victims and volunteers.

As part of the pre-employment checks, Talent Acquisitions and People Department will arrange for candidates to attend a custody suite to have their DNA samples taken using a Police Elimination Database kit and fingerprints taken using Livescan. Fingerprints will be searched against local and national fingerprint databases on Ident1 and DNA against the National DNA Database (PED). Any results from these searches will be sent to the Vetting Unit for further investigation.

On appointment Talent Acquisitions will notify the Fingerprint Bureau and DNA Unit of the successful candidate's collar number to allow for the fingerprints to be loaded onto the Police Elimination Database (PEDB) on Ident1 and the DNA profile onto the Contamination Database (CED) within the NDNAD. The purpose of the CED is to preserve the integrity of forensic DNA evidence and databases by identifying and preventing the addition of DNA profiles derived as a result of contamination from individuals involved in the DNA process chain. The CED is managed nationally by the Home Office.

If unsuccessful in their application, Talent Acquisitions will notify the Fingerprint Bureau and DNA Unit who will arrange for the samples to be destroyed.

Elimination Fingerprints

All such impressions are securely stored within the Northumbria Police Fingerprint Bureau, separately from the main collection. All applications to use these impressions for any purpose other than elimination purposes will be made to the Deputy Chief Constable via the Professional Standards Department.

People Department will notify the Fingerprint Bureau whenever an individual leaves Northumbria Police. The Fingerprint Bureau will retrieve and destroy any elimination impressions held for the individual and will issue a certificate of destruction if requested.

DNA Elimination Database

The NDNAD stores all such profiles on a separate database (CED).

In respect of police officers, special constables and police staff involved in any part of the forensic evidence process, the DNA profile will be continually checked against DNA profiles taken in accordance with the Police and Criminal Evidence (PACE) Act 1984(a) and profiles recovered from scenes of crime.

People Department will notify the DNA Unit whenever an individual leaves Northumbria Police. The DNA Unit will make arrangements with the NDNAD to have the profile destroyed, once twelve months has elapsed, as per Police Regulations. In the case of staff who transfer to another force, the DNA Unit will notify the NDNAD of the changes once notified by Talent Acquisition.

SOURCE DOCUMENT: Human Rights Act 1998. Data Protection Act 2018. College of Policing Circular 3/2012 and the Vetting APP (7.33.2)

GROUPS AFFECTED: All police officers and police staff

ACCESS AND DISCLOSURE RESTRICTIONS: None