

# **Role Description**

## **Independent Custody Visitor**

Independent custody visitors are volunteers from the local community who visit police stations, unannounced, to check on the welfare of people detained in police custody. We welcome volunteers from a variety of backgrounds and sections of the community, aged 18 years and above. Due to the independent nature of the role, our members must have no direct involvement in the criminal justice system. For example, serving police officers, PCSOs and special constables are excluded from the role, in order to maintain an independent oversight. Other professions, such as solicitors, magistrates, appropriate adults and probation officers may be excluded, to prevent possible conflict of interests for the individual and to maintain the independence of the scheme as a whole.

These visits must be done in line with the scheme guidelines – checking that the conditions the detainee is being kept in is suitable, they are being kept healthy with food and drink and they understand their rights and entitlements. They should also check on the products available to the detainees and the state of the building. On arrival at the police station, independent custody visitors should be promptly escorted to the custody area. They may occasionally be denied immediate access to visit the cells for safety or operational reasons and they must respect that custody suites can be very busy and challenging places for officers to work. Interviews with detainees are carried out in police cells within sight, but out of hearing of the escorting custody officer. When undertaking visits, strict rules of professionalism and confidentiality apply.

Our scheme members are required to complete police vetting and to attend panel meetings and training sessions as required.

Any issues that arise must be mentioned to the Scheme Manager as well as being recorded on the visit record sheet so that they are aware and something can be done.

An Independent Custody Visitor (ICV) must attend as many training sessions and meetings as possible so that they can ensure they are carrying out their duties as set out in the scheme's guidelines.

### **Key duties and responsibilities:**

Between yourselves and the other ICVs, you must arrange visits, in accordance with the rota and other arrangements made by the Scheme Manager of Independent Custody Visitors (North and South Bank).

You must keep the Scheme Manager and/or other Custody Visitors informed of any problems or changes which may affect your ability to carry out the visiting rota as soon as practicable.

You will carry out visits to designated custody suites in line with the ICV Scheme, Home Office guidelines, national standards and your training. You must record every visit on an online form.

As an ICV, you can claim expenses, to do this, you must complete and submit expense claims at least once every 3 months (quarterly). Please note that the mileage rate payable is in line with HMRC guidance for volunteers.

You will attend Panel meetings of Independent Custody Visitors and the joint meetings of Independent Custody Visitors/Scrutiny group.

If you are to change your contact details or incur any changes which may affect your ability to carry out your role impartially, you must inform the Scheme manager as soon as practicable.

You must not disclose details about any detainee you have spoken to, to any person, except those concerned with their detention, and you must not disclose details of any person you have met in custody on social media, to the press or any other media outlet.

### **To qualify to be an ICV there are some requirements:**

- Must be over 18
- Must live or work in the Humberside area
- Must have the time and ability to be flexible to conduct visits at any time in the day/night
- Must be able to work with fellow ICVs to conduct visits
- Must be able to maintain confidentiality
- Must be able to complete visit forms with enough detail (online forms)
- Must have an email address