

COVID-19 MESSAGE FROM ASCO Chair, DAVID PEDRICK-FRIEND and DCC RICHARD DEBICKI NPCC lead for the Special Constabulary

Police ask for the help of police volunteers to bolster police numbers

The Association of Special Constabulary Officers, National Police Chiefs' Council and the Home Office are asking employers to consider providing paid leave to Special Constables so they can support the police service in managing the impact of the Coronavirus.

In the wake of the national crisis created by Covid-19, it is expected that police forces across the UK will come under increasing strain as they try to maintain business-as-usual policing while managing rising levels of sickness and self-isolation of officers and staff.

Special Constables will be deployed in their local communities to support the day-to-day operations of their forces and, crucially, provide resilience at critical times.

The appeal is primarily to businesses which are already part of the national Employer Supported Policing Scheme (ESP), an agreement where Special Constable employees are provided with additional paid leave to allow them to undertake policing duties. But even employers who are not currently part of the ESP are being asked to show their support by joining the scheme and helping to meet this unique call to action from police and government. Chair of the National Police Chiefs' Council, Martin Hewitt, said: "Our Special Constables play a vital role in the police service, a service which will be placed under great strain over the coming months. "We appreciate that this would be placing a further burden on businesses who are already suffering the economic impact of this virus, and we do not make this appeal lightly. "Businesses who are able to release their staff to undertake these important roles will be supporting the national effort against Covid19 by helping us to maintain services and keep people safe. "This is part of our contingency planning for the coming weeks and months. "If you represent an ESP business willing to extend your existing commitment, or wish to join the scheme, please contact the ESP National Team on esp@dutysheet.com "

Special Constables deployed in the coming weeks will be supported in terms of schools and childcare, much like that provided to other emergency services workers – while the Home Office are also considering reimbursing those employers willing to provide paid leave for their Special Constable employees.

ASCO has been working with Policing Partners to provide a robust response to the part that the Special Constabulary will play to support regular officers on the frontline. Each of your parent forces will by now have established a COVID-19 Strategic Coordination Group (SCG). Special Constables should be tasked through their various Gold & Silver command structures to ensure effective, meaningful and safe deployment.

You may be concerned about your welfare on duty. Your force will have its own process in relation to PPE and your welfare whilst on duty. **You are, whilst on duty protected by police regulations for any injury or disease contracted.**

NPIA Circular 04/2010 is specific about the **loss of earnings** for Special Constables:

Regulation 5 of the Special Constables Regulations 1965 sets out that:

1. Where a special constable loses remuneration in his private employment, (including self-employed), in consequence of an injury received or disease contracted:
 - a. in the execution of his duty, or
 - b. while on duty or while on a journey necessary to enable him to report for duty or to return home after duty, he shall be entitled to an allowance by way of sick pay, as hereinafter provided.
2. The sick pay shall be payable for so long as the special constable continues to lose remuneration in his private employment or for a period of [28 weeks], whichever is the less; and, subject to paragraph (3) of this Regulation, the rate thereof shall be the rate of such loss of remuneration.
3. There shall be deducted from the sick pay an amount equal to the amount of any of the following to which the special constable is entitled, that is to say:
 - a. any sickness benefit under the Social Security Act 1975, or
 - b. any statutory sick pay under the Social Security and Housing Benefits Act 1982.

Furthermore, the Special Constables (Injury Benefit) Regulations 1987 make provision for enhanced benefits in case of death or total disablement resulting from an injury received by a special constable in the execution of duty similar to that made in relation to members of police forces by the Police (Injury Benefit) Regulations 1987

As you may already be aware DutySheet has developed and activated a new module called Self Isolation and Self Distancing which allows you to record your personal circumstances. This will be critical for Gold and Silver groups to manage availability and resourcing.

We are experiencing a health emergency where we must follow the Government's advice to give the NHS a fighting chance. It is imperative we all follow this guidance. We must stay as strong as we can for when our communities, and in particular the most vulnerable, will

need us most. Our overriding priority is to maintain a viable service to the public throughout the duration of the pandemic.

We all have a responsibility to look after one another, each other's families and wider members of society. Although you all want to help tackle COVID-19, no one should be in work, or come to work, if they have a **new continuous cough** or a **high temperature of 37.8c (100f) or more**.

Under 70 with an underlying health condition listed below (ie anyone instructed to get a flu jab as an adult each year on medical grounds):

- chronic (long-term) respiratory diseases, such as [asthma](#), [chronic obstructive pulmonary disease \(COPD\)](#), [emphysema](#) or [bronchitis](#)
- chronic heart disease, such as [heart failure](#)
- [chronic kidney disease](#)
- chronic liver disease, such as [hepatitis](#)
- chronic neurological conditions, such as [Parkinson's disease](#), [motor neurone disease](#), [multiple sclerosis \(MS\)](#), a learning disability or cerebral palsy
- [diabetes](#)
- problems with your spleen – for example, [sickle cell disease](#) or if you have had [your spleen removed](#)
- a weakened immune system as the result of conditions such as [HIV and AIDS](#), or [medicines such as steroid tablets](#) or [chemotherapy](#)
- being seriously overweight (a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or above)
- those who are pregnant

Further advice can be gained from the link below to Public Health England
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england>

Thank you for the overwhelming support that you are giving to support your local Force and the communities that you serve. ASCO is a member led organisation which is here for the welfare of its members and all special constables. By supporting each other and working together we will demonstrate the colossal value that Special Constables add to their communities and society particularly at such a critical point in our current worldwide emergency.

[Please look after yourselves and each other.](#)

If you have enquiries in relation to COVID-19 then email covid19@asco.police.uk

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