



Vetting – What you need to know

Guidance for everyone applying to work with or within West Mercia Police.



What is vetting?

Vetting is a set of thorough information and security checks. They help us confirm your identity, integrity and suitability to access police systems, sensitive information, our buildings and assets.

Everyone working in or directly with policing goes through a vetting process, it helps keep the public safe. It's also designed to protect you by helping us ensure you have a safe, trusted environment to work in.

Why do we do vetting?

Everyone is entitled to a police service they can rely on, one that is:

- Open and transparent.
- Honest and accountable.
- Fair and objective.
- Acting in the public interest.
- Demonstrating integrity and leading by example.

These expectations sit at the very heart of our Code of Ethics, and vetting ensures everyone in our organisation upholds these values.



**THE VETTING PROCESS HELPS
KEEP THE PUBLIC SAFE**

Vetting helps us protect:

- Sensitive police information.
- Our equipment.
- Our buildings and infrastructure.
- Our assets and systems.

It also provides reassurance to those we serve that people in a position of trust have undergone appropriate checks.

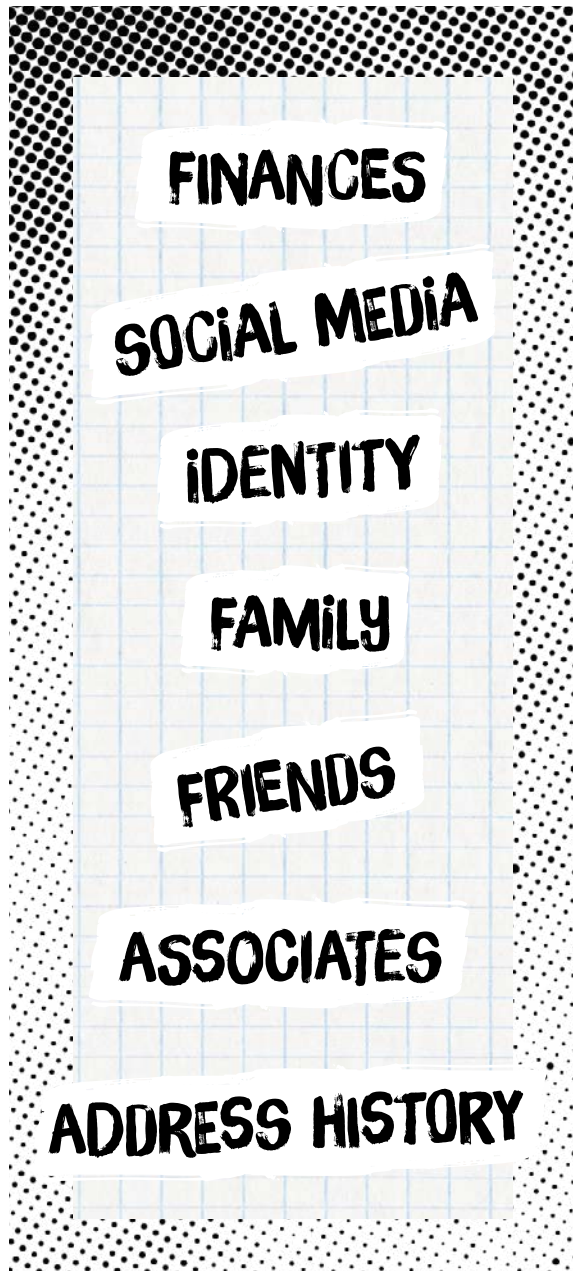
Who needs vetting?

Everyone who requires access to our information, sites, systems or assets needs to go through a vetting process. This includes:

- Police officers.
- Police staff.
- Special Constables.
- Volunteers.
- Contractors.
- Temporary and agency workers.
- Partnership works.

When does vetting happen?

Vetting is carried out before you start working with or for us. However, it's a continuous process; and if your personal circumstances change checks are carried out again. You will also take part in an Annual Integrity and Vetting Review (AIVR) each year.



What does vetting involve?

We carry out checks on:

You

- Identity.
- Police-held information.
- Financial history.
- Address history.
- Open-source and social media checks.
- Character references.
- International checks with Interpol.

Your connections

We also carry out checks on the people you know. This includes:

- Your family.
- People you live with.
- Friends and associates.

What if you have a previous conviction or caution?

A previous conviction does not automatically mean refusal. Each case is considered individually, including:

- The type and seriousness of conviction/caution.
- How long ago it was.
- How old you were at the time.
- Whether it was isolated or part of a pattern of behaviour.

What if you've lived out of the UK?

If you have been living outside the UK for more than 12 months, you must have returned to the UK and lived here for the following minimum periods before you can be considered for vetting:

- Non-police personnel vetting (NPPV) – Three years
- Recruitment Vetting (RV) – Three years
- Management Vetting (MV) – Five years
- Developed Vetting (DV) – Ten years

Applicants may still be considered if they have spent around 12 months abroad but maintained clear UK residency, such as keeping a UK bank account or permanent UK address. In these cases, the period overseas may be treated as an extended holiday, as this demonstrates an intention to return to the UK.

What financial checks do we do?

Financial vulnerability can increase risk, so we look at whether financial commitments are being met and managed responsibly. Your vetting may be affected if you:

- Have any unsatisfied County Court Judgement (CCJ)
- Have recently completed bankruptcy or a Debt Relief Order (within the last three years).

If you've faced financial challenges but are working to resolve them, please tell us. We take circumstances into account.

Should you tell your family?

Checks are carried out on your family and associates as part of your vetting so you must be open about any relevant information relating to them. If you are able to it's better to have a conversation with them about this ahead of your vetting. You need to be aware:

- We cannot and will not share third-party information about your family and friends with you.
- We can discuss any information you share with us.
- Some associations may present a high level of risk and could affect the outcome of your vetting, even if it's been honestly disclosed.

What happens next?

If approved: Your vetting case officer will inform HR. You must notify the vetting team of any changes in your circumstances.

If your clearance is declined: Your vetting case officer will explain the appeal process. We aim to make this as fair, transparent, and supportive as possible.



BE HONEST TAKE YOUR TIME
DECLARE ALL POLICE CONTACT
DECLARE ALL POLICE CONTACT

IF YOU'RE UNSURE WHETHER TO DISCLOSE SOMETHING – DISCLOSE IT.

Top tips for a smooth vetting process

Be honest: If you're unsure whether to disclose something – disclose it.

Honesty is essential, and withholding information can lead to your vetting being declined, even if the issue itself would not have been a problem.

Take your time: Read each question carefully. If you don't have the information asked for, explain why – don't leave gaps.

Declare all police contact: This includes past convictions or cautions, contact as a victim, witness or suspect as well as any criminal associations. It is standard for vetting to follow up with you on these elements – this is routine and not an immediate cause for concern.

Talk to your family and friends

If you feel able to, speak to your family and anyone you live with before you submit your vetting form. As part of your vetting checks are carried out on family members and co-residents, and because we legally can't disclose third-party information to you, vetting can sometimes be declined based on these checks without us being able to explain why. Being open with those around you can help avoid surprises and make the process smoother.

Bring the right documents

For interviews or identity checks, ensure your documents are:

- Up to date.
- In the correct format.