

Applying to be a West Yorkshire Police Special Constable

Information and Guidance

Application Form guidance

The Special Constable application form is completed online by clicking on the appropriate link. The form can be daunting with a lot of questions to answer but you will be given clear, straightforward instructions.

Give yourself plenty of time to complete the form as you are unlikely to complete the form in one sitting, however it must be completed before the recruitment advertising window closes. It is recommended that you fill out the form in shorter bursts to ensure you complete it to the best of your ability and check that you're happy with each section. Remember to save the form on a regular basis!

Whilst most of the questions are about information relating to you and your background, there is a particular section that is assessed to see if you pass the application shortlisting stage. In this section you will be asked to complete 2 competency-based questions covering the competencies of Professionalism and Working with Others. These are both very important competencies for a Special Constable and you will find further details in the Personal Qualities of the Policing Professional Framework.

Here are some top tips for successfully completing the application form:

- Answer the question – this sounds simple but you may give an excellent response but if it doesn't answer the question being asked, you are unlikely to score well.
- Ensure you give **specific** examples if asked to do so.
- You do not have to use the same example for each question.
- Examples can be from your work, college, university or personal life, sports or social activities or anything you might have done in the community.
- Additional prompt sub-questions are given for each question, for guidance.
- Be careful to say what **you** did, not **we**. If you are giving an example where other people were involved, be sure to evidence your contribution.
- Spelling and grammar is important – be careful not to overlook this.

Assessment Centre guidance

If you pass the shortlisting stage, you will be invited to an assessment centre. The assessment elements themselves take approximately 2 hours to complete however you will be on site for nearer 3 hours to allow for registration, briefings and rest breaks between elements.

The assessment consists:

- one written exercise
- a competency-based structured interview
- a situational judgement test (SJT)

In the written exercise and SJT, you will play the part of a newly-appointed Customer Services Officer at a retail and leisure complex called The Westshire Centre, a fictional place created for the assessment process only.

Prior to the assessment centre, you will be sent an Information for Candidates document and a Westshire Welcome Pack in order that you can familiarise yourself with what the assessment will look like, and what will be expected of you so that you can prepare accordingly.

Other Application stages

If you are successful at the assessment centre, then next stages will be the physical fitness test, the medical and the background checks.

- **Fitness test:** whilst you are not expected to be an athlete, you will need to demonstrate a good level of fitness and pass the fitness test. The test is a bleep test whereby you will be asked to run along a 15 metre track (this is known as a shuttle run) in time with a series of bleeps. If you arrive at the end line before the bleep sounds, you will need to wait for the bleep before resuming running and adjust your speed. The timing between bleeps is slow at first but the bleep becomes faster as the test progresses and it becomes more difficult to keep up at the required speed. You will run until you can no longer keep up with the set pace. You will need to reach a minimum of 4 shuttles at endurance level 5.4 to pass. If you are unsuccessful on your first attempt, we will give you the 2 further attempts, with time to improve your fitness in between.
It is worth starting your training now! Further information is provided on the College of Policing's website by clicking on the relevant link at the bottom of this document.
- **Medical:** at this stage you will be asked to attend a medical appointment at the West Yorkshire Police's Occupational Health Unit. At the appointment you will be asked about your previous vaccinations and your height, weight and blood pressure will be checked, as well as your eyesight and colour vision. They will also take a sample of your urine. You will be expected to perform a lung function test and a hearing test. You may also be required to be medically examined. A drugs test will also be undertaken.
- **Background checks:** the final stages of the process include vetting and reference checks. You will be asked to provide the relevant information during the application process.

Appointment and Training

If you successfully complete all stages of the recruitment process, you will be asked to state your preferred Districts that you would be willing to serve in (Bradford District, Calderdale District, Kirklees District, Leeds District, Wakefield District).

You will then be offered appointment and your training will be arranged. For recruit applicants (i.e. those who have not previously been a Special Constable or currently serving as a Special Constable in another Police Force), we have a variety of course dates, offering training courses either on our regular programme or via a more intensive training programme over a shorter time period. You will be given further details and asked what your preferred training option would be during your application.

Please note that if you are offered appointment as a Special Constable and have committed to a course programme, it is expected that you will attend every element on the relevant dates as indicated, as there is very little flexibility to attend on different dates. If you anticipate this to be an issue, please let us know as soon as possible.

Biometric Vetting

Before you start your induction and training, you will be asked to make an appointment with the West Yorkshire Police Regional Scientific Support Unit for biometric vetting. You will provide a DNA sample and undertake a Livescan Fingerprint search.

Employer Support Policing

The Employer Supported Policing (ESP) Scheme is an initiative to help employers understand how they can support their staff who work for them to volunteer as a Special Constable. It is an active and powerful partnership benefitting employers, their staff and the Police Service to work proactively by releasing Special Constables to volunteer in local communities. By working together to support Special Constables in their public duty, the community benefits from increased public safety and confidence.

Organisations can promote Employer Supported Policing by actively encouraging their staff to volunteer as a Special Constable, and in many cases allowing additional leave for Special Constable training and/or duties. The positive publicity for such an innovative scheme can be incredibly valuable for all concerned in showing an employer's commitment to their staff, their customers, their corporate responsibilities and the community.

ESP is already recognised by many employers across England and Wales, with new ones regularly joining the Scheme. The majority of police forces (including West Yorkshire Police) support their staff to volunteer as part of ESP.

If your employer is not currently part of the ESP Scheme but would like further information and/or an application to register as part of the Scheme, please email: specials&volunteers@westyorkshire.pnn.police.uk

Business Interests and Precluded Occupations

There are a number of jobs that are considered incompatible with the role of a Special Constable. Please click on the link below for further information:

<https://www.westyorkshire.police.uk/jobs-volunteer/special-constables/special-constable-precluded-occupations/special-constable-precluded-occupations>

In addition to this, you may have a Business Interest (including unpaid or voluntary work) with which West Yorkshire would not consider it appropriate that a Special Constable be involved in. You will be asked to submit any details in the application form.

Future Applications

If you are successful at all recruitment stages and are offered an appointment as a Special Constable, please be aware that you would be ineligible to apply for the role of Police Constable or Police Community Support Officer until you have completed 2 years' service from your start date as a Special Constable.

If you currently have an ongoing application for the role of Police Officer or Police Community Support Officer with which you wish to continue, you will not be able to continue with this application to become a Special Constable.

Links to other useful information

West Yorkshire Police Special Constables:

<https://www.westyorkshire.police.uk/jobs-volunteer/special-constables>

Policing Professional Framework (PPF):

<https://www.westyorkshire.police.uk/jobs-volunteer/special-constables/policing-professional-framework-ppf/policing-professional-framework-ppf>

Our Values:

<https://www.westyorkshire.police.uk/our-values>

The College of Policing Code of Ethics:

<http://www.college.police.uk/What-we-do/Ethics/Ethics-home/Pages/Code-of-Ethics.aspx>

Inclusion and Equality:

<https://www.westyorkshire.police.uk/about-us/inclusion-and-equality/inclusion-and-equality>

West Yorkshire Police and Crime Plan 2016-2021:

<http://www.westyorkshire-pcc.gov.uk/our-business/the-police-crime-plan.aspx>

Physical Fitness Test:

<http://www.college.police.uk/What-we-do/Standards/Fitness/Pages/MSFT-practice-recruits.aspx>