

Information about our victims' right to review scheme

June 2026

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What is the Victims' Right to Review?

The IOPC Victims' Right to Review (VRR) scheme was launched in 2020. It allows victims to ask for a review if we have made an initial decision not to refer an investigation report to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). The types of decisions that can be reviewed under the scheme are limited.

The VRR scheme was created in response to feedback from victims. Additionally, in 2026, the IOPC's VRR scheme was placed on a statutory footing by the Crime and Policing Act.

This leaflet explains who can request a review, how to request a review and what happens afterwards.

Who can request a review?

At the end of our investigation, we will tell you if the VRR scheme applies to you. You can then decide whether to request a review. Our [VRR policy](#) includes full details about when the scheme applies.

In some circumstances, someone may be able to apply for a review on your behalf. We may need your written permission for this.

When can I request a review?

The VRR scheme applies to independent, managed and directed investigations. At the end of an investigation, we decide whether the case should be referred to the CPS. The CPS then looks at the evidence and decides whether anyone should be charged with a criminal offence.

When we decide not to make a referral to the CPS, in certain situations, this decision can be reviewed under the VRR scheme.

There are some circumstances where the VRR scheme does not apply and you do not have the right of review. These circumstances are set out in our [VRR policy](#).

If we made a referral to the CPS and the CPS then decides not to charge anyone, then the CPS VRR scheme will apply instead. You can [read more about the CPS scheme on their website](#).

How do I apply for a review?

You can request a review in writing, by letter or email. If you need additional support, or you are unable to submit a request in writing, please contact us by telephone and we will help you.

There is a 28-day time limit for requesting a review. The 28-day time limit starts from the date of the letter we send telling you about your right to review.

You don't need to explain why you are requesting a review. However, you can tell us your reasons if you wish. You must do this within the time permitted so we can take this information into account. If you request a review and want to provide your reasons later, please explain this when you make your request.

In some cases, we may ask you to make your request for a review more quickly. This is because there are time limits on charging certain offences.

Only in exceptional circumstances will we consider a review request after the 28-day limit. We will refuse any review requests made more than three months after the date of our letter informing you of your right to review.

If we do not receive a VRR request within three months, we will confirm our proposed decision and let you know.

What happens next?

All requests are reviewed by someone who had no direct involvement and no conflict of interest with the investigation. They will be the same grade or senior to the person who made the original decision.

Our reviewer will consider the case afresh. They will reach a view on:

- whether our investigation report indicates that a criminal offence may have been committed by the person whose conduct was investigated
- whether the matter should be referred to the CPS

We aim to complete reviews within 28 calendar days of the date of your request, or sooner if we need to consider time limits which affect charging. If there is any delay completing your review, we will let you know.

What happens after the review?

There are two possible outcomes of a review:

1. If there is no indication of a crime, or there are reasons not to refer the matter to the CPS, the proposed decision not to make a referral to the CPS will be confirmed.
2. Where there is an indication that a criminal offence may have been committed, we will consider making a referral to the CPS.

We will explain our decisions to you in writing, or by other means if you need additional support.

There is no right to appeal or review the VRR decision. The only way to challenge the outcome of the VRR is to seek a judicial review through the courts. If you are considering this, you should seek legal advice.

Information and feedback

If you would like to provide us with feedback or are not happy with the service you have received from us, you can contact our Complaints and Feedback Team on 0300 020 0096.

You can also visit our website for further information:

www.policeconduct.gov.uk/contact-us/feedback-about-our-service

Useful contacts

There are several organisations that may be able to provide you with advice and support.

Help with legal issues

Citizens Advice Bureau

Assistance with legal problems. 034 4411 1444

For your nearest office visit: www.citizensadvice.org.uk

INQUEST

A charity working with bereaved families following deaths in custody in England and Wales to provide independent, free, confidential legal advice and support.

020 7263 1111

www.inquest.org.uk

Civil Legal Advice

Free legal advice if you are eligible for legal aid. Their website includes a free legal aid eligibility assessment tool.

034 5345 4345

www.gov.uk/civil-legal-advice

The Law Society

Information about local solicitors. 020 7320 5650

<https://solicitors.lawsociety.org.uk/>

Support organisations

Cruse Bereavement Care

Help and support for people dealing with bereavement. 080 8808 1677

helpline@cruse.org.uk

www.cruse.org.uk

The Samaritans

Confidential emotional support. 116 123 (available 24 hours)

jo@samaritans.org

www.samaritans.org

Brake

A road safety charity offering support to people bereaved or seriously injured by road crashes, and their carers.

080 8800 0401

help@brake.org.uk

www.brake.org.uk

Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide

Support for people bereaved through suicide.

030 0111 5065

uksobs.com

Victim Support

National charity helping people affected by crime.

080 8168 9111

www.victimsupport.org.uk

Muslim Community Helpline

Support, counselling referrals and practical help to members of the Muslim community.

020 8904 8193 or 020 9908 6715

ess4m@btinternet.com

www.muslimcommunityhelpline.org.uk

Switchboard LGBT+ helpline

Support for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people, and their families and friends.

030 0330 0630 (10am to 10pm everyday)

chris@switchboard.lgbt

www.switchboard.lgbt

Jewish Bereavement Counselling Service

Confidential bereavement counselling for the Jewish community.

020 8951 3881

enquiries@jbcs.org.uk

www.jbcs.org.uk

Victims' Code

The full Code of Practice for Victims of Crime, and supporting public information, is available online at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-code-of-practice-for-victims-of-crime

Criminal injuries compensation

You may be able to claim compensation if you were the victim of a violent crime.

www.gov.uk/claim-compensation-criminal-injury

Contact us

Phone: 030 0020 0096

Email: enquiries@policeconduct.gov.uk

Website: www.policeconduct.gov.uk

X: @policeconduct @IOPC_Help

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To find out more about our work or to request this report
in an alternative format, you can contact us in a number of ways:

Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC)
10 South Colonnade Canary Wharf London E14 4PU

Tel: **0300 020 0096**

Email: enquiries@policeconduct.gov.uk

Website: www.policeconduct.gov.uk

Text relay: **18001 020 8104 1220**

We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh, no delays will be experienced
Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn y Gymraeg, ni fydd oedi mewn ymateb

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