

## Electronic and Pocket notebooks – use and supervision

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## Policy Statement

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### Summary

West Yorkshire Police has established this policy procedure instructing officers to keep a pocket notebook as a memorandum of their personal observations and recollections. These observations should adequately and accurately record occurrences, duties performed and incidental expenses.

All police officers and police staff in operational roles will be issued with a handheld mobile device which will be used as their primary pocket notebook. In addition, a paper pocket notebook will be issued to cover major system failures whereby an alternative method is required to record relevant details.

This policy procedure aims to explain why pocket notebooks are kept, the replacement of pocket notebooks with electronic pocket notebooks, what type of content is required, responsibilities of supervisors, and how their issue and disposal is controlled.

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### Scope

This policy applies to all police officers, special constables, police community support officers and other identified staff roles where an electronic or paper pocket notebook has been issued.

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## Principles

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### General

- The following members of staff must keep, maintain and carry with them an electronic pocket notebook (EPNB) when on duty:
    - Operational officers up to and including the rank of Inspector;
    - Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs);
    - Special Constables (if issued an EPNB, otherwise it will be a paper pocket notebook);
    - Investigative Officers and other members of staff issued with a device in a defined role.
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### Exceptions

- There is no requirement to:
  - Carry either an EPNB or pocket notebook (PNB) if the individual's supervisory officer has agreed that it is inappropriate to do so while undertaking special operational duties; and
  - Maintain an EPNB or PNB as a matter of routine if the individual is

permanently engaged on office based duties or similar, e.g. training, station duties, administration or communications.

- However, individuals must make an entry if they become involved in any occurrence requiring the recording of evidence or facts. For example, operational incidents, discipline or welfare issues, and criminal or civil proceedings.

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#### **Integrity**

- EPNB and PNB must be kept clean. PNB entries must be clear and legible.
  - The Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) must be complied with to ensure the security and integrity of the handheld device.
  - All entries must be made at the time of the occurrence, or as soon after as is practical.
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## **Recording**

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#### **Summary**

Individuals must make entries in their EPNB in accordance with the Standard Operating Procedures and, where it is necessary to take their PNB into use, entries must be made in permanent ink.

Wherever practicable, the recording of information in the EPNB must comply with the former requirements of paper PNBs. The following basic format applies:

- In PNB, each entry must start with the day, date and year (underlined) on the first line and the scale of duty underlined on the next line. For EPNB, individuals must start and end shift on the device by clicking on shift and entering appropriate times;
- The time and place of starting and finishing each duty must be shown, together with the reason for any variation to duty e.g. time off or overtime worked;
- Rest days, sickness, leave and duties performed elsewhere must be recorded;
- Long periods of absence from duty must be shown in one block entry, recording the start and end dates of the period and the reason for absence;
- Block capitals must be used for surnames/family names;
- In PNB, corrections must be made by striking through the incorrect entry with a single line and intalling the correction – do not overwrite. The original entry must still be legible through the crossing out. For EPNB, the device allows for limited deletion at the time of an entry, otherwise there is no facility to overwrite or delete later. Entries are locked once they have been finished. If a correction is required, the incorrect entry must be set to 'Invalid' by clicking the three dots and 'Set Invalid', then entering the corrected entry;

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- In PNB, pages must not be removed and there must be no blank pages, lines or spaces between entries;
  - In PNB, any information inadvertently omitted must be added after the most recent entry and suitably cross-referenced and initialled. If individuals inadvertently:
    - Leave a line, they must strike through the missed line and sign their initials; or
    - Turn more than one page when completing an entry, they must draw a diagonal line through the blank page(s) and write the words “omitted in error” across the page(s). This must then be initialled;
  - On EPNB, any information inadvertently omitted must be added as soon as possible and suitably cross-referenced;
  - In PNB, individuals must rule off across the page at the end of their tour of duty.
  - On EPNB, devices are auto-synced (as long as the user has a signal). Officers must ensure to End Shift and the end of duty to ensure all data is synchronised.
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### Information to record

- The EPNB is the primary pocket notebook and individuals must use it for the recording of evidence and details of any other significant occurrence.
  - The ‘hard copy’ PNB must be used when the EPNB has failed, and the device does not allow an entry to be made or the operational situation is not appropriate for accessing the device.
  - Individuals may record other work related information at their discretion.
  - When appropriate, individuals must make specific reference to other official documents which are related to the incident such as incident logs or crime logs.
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### Student officers

- Student officers must keep their EPNB in a ‘diary’ fashion until the end of their probationary period, unless their supervisor allows otherwise.
  - For example, all incident details must be recorded in full and not simply refer to details held elsewhere (e.g. STORM, penalty notice reference, other officer’s EPNB/PNB etc.).
  - When student officers arrive at District, they must utilise their EPNB. The paper PNB will be safely retained and utilised in the event of a major technology failure.
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### Recording an incident

- All incidents requiring statements or intelligence reports must be recorded in an individual’s EPNB in the first instance, but if the individual makes a lawful arrest and transports the detainee to the cells to be booked in, they may write their statement as their first record of evidence providing that this fact is referred to in their EPNB.

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- As a minimum, this entry must include:
    - A timed entry regarding their attendance at the incident;
    - The time the statement was made; and
    - Any significant statements made by the suspect prior to detention being authorised.
  - Where possible, notes/statements must be made contemporaneously i.e. at the time of the incident, rather than working from memory.
  - Individuals must be mindful that the EPNB creates a timed date stamp at the point of making an entry.
  - Entries are individuals' first note of evidence and record the key details that may help them to recall the circumstances at a later date, in particular when giving evidence in court.
  - If an individual makes a lawful arrest and transports the detainee to the cells to be booked in before writing their statement, they may use their own CJA statement as their first record of evidence providing they refer to that fact in their EPNB/PNB.
  - If an individual confers with officers before making their entry, they must make a note to this effect and explain the rationale.
  - Individuals must consider disclosure rules when deciding what to record in their EPNB/PNB. In particular, there is a requirement in the investigation of a criminal offence to record and retain any relevant information.
  - If there is doubt about whether or not to record certain information, then the information must be recorded.
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## Supervision

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### General

- Individuals must produce their EPNB/PNB on demand of any supervisory officer.
  - EPNBs are remotely accessible, however supervisors are expected to check that employees are carrying their EPNBs when on operational duties.
  - Routine checking of EPNB/PNB by supervisors is encouraged, but is at their discretion. Visits must be recorded in EPNB/PNB.
  - Student officers must ensure that their supervisor checks their notebook at least once every week or more frequently if so required.
  - In every case where a pocket notebook is checked or examined, the supervisor must make an entry in the notebook on the next available line endorsing the time and place of the check and any action taken.
  - Remote checks of EPNBs are automatically logged in Pronto Manager, Physical checks can be recorded using a digital signature.
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## Use at court

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### General

- If an individual is attending court to give evidence, they must have with them any pocket notebook that contains original notes of the case.
  - Individuals must note that EPNBs retain information on the personal device for 30 days, after which the relevant entries will have to be downloaded to the device if it is intended to make reference to it at court.
  - Individuals must read over any relevant notes before giving evidence.
  - Reference to an individual's pocket notebook can only be made in the witness box with the consent of the court.
  - Individuals must only use their notebook where it is necessary to ensure accuracy, or when circumstances make it desirable.
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## Issue and disposal

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### Administration

- Issue of EPNBs will be in line with Standard Operating Procedures.
  - Administration units are responsible for the requisition and storage of 'paper' based PNBs, as they are controlled stationery and must be stored under lock and key before issue.
  - District Commanders or Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring that PNBs are retained and destroyed in accordance with these guidelines.
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### Issue

- Paper based PNBs will only be issued by supervisory officers. Individuals must not issue a PNB to themselves.
  - A new paper PNB will only be issued on production of the paper PNB an individual has in use. That notebook must be examined and endorsed after the last entry, and any unused pages must be ruled through and initialled.
  - The Force Training School will issue temporary paper PNBs to all new Constables, Special Constables, PCSOs, transferees and others whose role necessitates it. These will be collected in at the end of the training course.
  - Upon arrival at Districts or Departments, officers and staff will be issued with a paper PNB for use in the event of a major technology failure.
  - All officers and staff requiring an electronic PNB for their role will be issued them at the Force Training School.
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### Recording

- The supervisor issuing a paper PNB must complete the appropriate Form 115 (Personal Register of Pocket Notebooks and Receipt Books) for the individual to whom the paper PNB is issued.
- The new paper PNB will be endorsed with an official date stamp inside the

front cover, and initialled by the issuing officer.

- EPNBs will be issued by IT and details will be held on a central assets register.
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#### **Destruction**

- Entries made on paper based PNBs must be retained for seven years from the date of the last entry, unless they contain information that is current, pending, or which is subject to disclosure or retention under the Criminal Procedure & Investigation Act 1996 – Amended Code of Practice.
  - Where the owner of a paper based PNB or, in their absence, a supervisor is satisfied that the PNB does not need to be retained it must be submitted to a supervisory officer for destruction, and the Form 115 endorsed by that supervisor.
  - Where a notebook is to be retained beyond the seven year period then a note must be attached to the relevant Form 115 containing the reason for continued retention and the PNB number.
  - Electronic entries must be held and disposed of in accordance with MOPI. Responsibility for maintenance of electronically stored information rests with the Information Management department.
  - When an EPNB is for destruction, it must be returned to IT with a Service Manager reference number for wiping, reallocation or secure disposal.
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#### **Special circumstances**

- Where a member of staff is suspended from duty, leaves the Force, or dies, any PNBs in their possession must be returned to the relevant district or department, and securely stored in compliance with the seven year disposal rule.
  - Where it is considered appropriate, stored PNBs must be sealed. The Form 115 must be endorsed with the action taken.
  - EPNBs are managed centrally and the facilities uploaded onto the device will be removed as required by the Professional Standards Department.
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### **Lost or stolen**

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#### **Principles**

- Individuals must take care not to lose or have either EPNB or PNB stolen.
  - If they do, they must report it to their supervisor immediately.
  - EPNBs will be deactivated. See Standard Operating Procedures for more detail.
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## Additional Information

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<b>Compliance</b>	<p>This policy complies with the following legislation, policy and guidance:</p> <p>Criminal Procedure and Investigation Act 1996 – Amended Code of Practice Standard Operating Procedures – Samsung Galaxy Note 3 and Samsung Galaxy Note 8 Management of Police Information (MOPI) General Data Protection Regulations Mobile Data Devices policy</p>
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