



# Persons at Risk (Policy only)

**OFFICIAL**

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<b>Department of Origin</b>	Investigations
<b>Policy Holder</b>	D/Ch Supt Head of Investigations
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<b>Related Information</b>	<a href="#">Named Suspect Policy</a> <a href="#">Threats Management &amp; Threats to Life Policy</a> <a href="#">Crime Allocation Policy.pdf</a> <a href="#">Victim Care Operational Guidance 2015</a> <a href="#">Victims-Code_Nov-2020</a> <a href="#">Vul and Int Witnesses Police Guide</a>
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**Contents**

Persons at Risk (Policy only) .....0  
Publication Scheme Y/N .....0  
Department of Origin .....0  
Policy Holder .....0  
Author .....0  
Related Information .....0  
Date Approved at BMG .....0  
This Version .....0  
Date of Next Review .....0  
Policy .....2  
    Statement .....2  
    Aims .....2  
    Objectives .....2  
    Application and Scope .....2  
    Outcome Evaluation .....3

# Policy

## Statement

The intimidation of witnesses and other individuals devalues the Criminal Justice process. Merseyside Police Force is committed to identifying and providing appropriate support to those persons who are suffering intimidation at any level and in any form. This approach supports delivery of our Community First in fighting crime and protecting communities and the Government's commitment to improving protection for witnesses and people at risk. This may, for instance, include family members of offenders at risk of retribution.

## Aims

The main aim of this policy is to provide a framework for recognising and meeting the needs of persons at risk as well as ensuring that all those officers and staff that come into contact with those persons are aware of their responsibilities and the measures available for protection.

This policy is underpinned by procedures designed to provide clear, definitive and unambiguous direction for all those involved in its operation.

## Objectives

This policy has a broad objective to improve confidence in the criminal justice process and encourage witnesses to come forward to give evidence. It will outline objectives to protect those at risk who are not necessarily witnesses.

- a) Ensure that those persons who suffer intimidation as a result of their involvement in the criminal justice process are provided with appropriate measures for their protection at the earliest opportunity.
- b) Ensure that all those who are involved in the criminal justice process are equipped to recognise and evaluate intimidation.
- c) Define the roles and responsibilities of those who come into contact with intimidated persons.
- d) Promote greater co-operation between those agencies who can provide a service to intimidated witnesses.

## Application and Scope

All police officers and police staff, including the extended police family and those working voluntarily or under contract to Merseyside Police must be aware of, and are required to comply with, all relevant policy and associated procedures.

This policy document sets out principles to help guide decision making and is in some parts quite prescriptive. However, it is vital that officers and staff have the freedom to innovate, exercise discretion and take risk-based decisions centred on the needs of the victim and the merits of each

case. There may be occasions when a member of staff is considered to have acted outside of policy but if they have done so with honesty, integrity and professionalism, to make the best decision for the community we serve, they will be trusted and supported. On occasions when this is the case, the rationale for it must be properly recorded.

This policy particularly applies to frontline officers and staff and those who have responsibility for victims and witnesses. The Chief Officer lead for Persons at Risk is the Assistant Chief Constable, Operations Support.

## **Outcome Evaluation**

Outcomes should reflect specific objectives and be measured against those objectives on a routine annual basis. Responsibilities and activities involved in measurement will be included in a separate deployment plan monitored on an ongoing basis by the Head of the Persons at Risk Unit.

Policy compliance monitoring will be undertaken on a routine basis at supervisor level.