



Telephone: 01953 424455

Date: 23 July 2026

Dear Member of Public,

RE: Freedom of Information Request (FOI/OPCCN/266)

I am writing in connection with your email dated 27 June 2026, in which you requested the following information:

- 1. Is the PCC aware of the drug and alcohol testing policy used by Norfolk Constabulary for its officers, police staff, and contractors? If so, does the PCC hold a copy of that policy, and has the PCC reviewed or approved it?**
- 2. Does the Norfolk Constabulary drug testing policy include the following safeguards:**
 - (a) Confirmatory laboratory testing (e.g. LC-MS/MS or GC-MS) before any adverse action is taken on the basis of an immunoassay screening result;**
 - (b) Review by an independent Medical Review Officer (MRO) or equivalent qualified professional;**
 - (c) Consideration of lawful explanations for a positive result, including the use of commercially available CBD products, prescribed cannabinoid-based medicines (e.g. Sativex, Epidiolex), or dietary sources;**
 - (d) Referral to Occupational Health before disciplinary proceedings?**
- 3. In the last three years, has the PCC received any complaints, representations, or correspondence from officers, staff, or members of the public regarding Norfolk Constabulary's drug testing procedures or outcomes?**
- 4. Has the PCC commissioned, funded, or overseen any substance misuse or drug testing services in the Norfolk area? If so, do the commissioning contracts or service specifications require the safeguards listed in Question 2?**

5. Is the PCC aware of any officer or staff member of Norfolk Constabulary who has been dismissed or subjected to disciplinary action based solely on an unconfirmed immunoassay drug screening result (i.e. without confirmatory laboratory testing)?

I have reviewed our records and can advise the following:

1. Due to the resignation of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Sarah Taylor on Thursday 4 June 2026, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk (OPCCN) does not currently have a permanent PCC in post. However, the OPCCN has an Acting Commissioner whilst the PCC elections take place on Thursday 16 July 2026. The Acting Commissioner is aware of the Managing Substance Misuse policy which is owned by Norfolk Constabulary's Professional Standards Department (PSD) and outlines the drug and alcohol testing procedures for police officers and staff. A copy of that policy is available for all police officers and staff. A draft version of the policy was shared with Norfolk's Independent Advisory Group for review and consultation before publication, and the policy is periodically reviewed by PSD and signed off by Norfolk Constabulary's Legal Services.

2. a) Confirmatory laboratory testing before adverse action is taken on the basis of an immunoassay screening result

The policy does not explicitly state that an initial immunoassay screening result must be confirmed by a specific confirmatory analytical method such as LC-MS/MS or GC-MS before disciplinary or other adverse action is taken. However, it does contain several safeguards:

- An external provider undertakes the "*collection, analysis and verification of results*" and testing is conducted in line with Home Office guidance and Police Regulations.
- Samples for controlled substances are split at collection and the individual has the right to obtain an independent analysis of the second sample.
- Flowchart 4a shows that where an officer requests independent analysis and that analysis is positive, ACU may then instigate criminal and/or disciplinary proceedings.

(b) Review by an independent Medical Review Officer (MRO) or equivalent qualified professional

The policy expressly provides that:

"Where initial testing indicates a Positive result, the screening provider will appoint a Medical Review Officer (MRO) to liaise directly with the donor for further clarification."

It further states that:

"The MRO will, in most cases, make contact with the donor to discuss the result so that all medical and pharmacological factors are explored."

The discussions between the donor and the MRO are described as confidential.

(c) Consideration of lawful explanations for a positive result, including CBD products, prescribed cannabinoid-based medicines, or dietary sources

The policy clearly requires consideration of lawful medical explanations for a positive result:

- Donors complete a questionnaire regarding medication before providing a sample.
- Officers are required to declare all medications they are taking.
- The policy recognises there may be legitimate reasons for a substance appearing in a sample, including lawful medicines.
- It acknowledges that legitimately prescribed medicines may produce non-negative results and provides an opportunity for such medication to be declared confidentially.
- The MRO is specifically tasked with exploring "*all medical and pharmacological factors*".
- The policy recognises that a positive result may be rebutted by medical evidence showing use of lawful medication.

(d) Referral to Occupational Health before disciplinary proceedings

The policy contains significant Occupational Health involvement:

- Individuals are encouraged to self-refer to Workplace Health, Safety, Wellbeing (WHSW) for support.
- Supervisors are encouraged to refer staff to WHSW where concerns arise.
- Positive results relating to legal substances that give cause for concern are referred to WHSW for evaluation and follow-up.
- Self-referred individuals are generally dealt with through welfare and support programmes managed through WHSW.

There is no explicit requirement that an Occupational Health referral must take place before disciplinary proceedings can begin.

3. No information held.

4. The OPCCN have not funded or commissioned any substance misuse or drug testing services for Workplace Drug Testing through our own commissioning/Ministry of Justice budgets.

5. No information held.

Yours sincerely

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk

Internal Review

If you think we have not supplied information in accordance with Section 1 (the General Right of Access) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, or you are dissatisfied with the way in which your request has been handled, then you should write within 40 calendar days of the date of the response to:

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Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk
Building 7
Falconers Chase
Wymondham
Norfolk
NR18 0WW

Telephone: 01953 424455

Email: opccn@norfolk.police.uk

If you are dissatisfied in any way with our response or the way we have handled your request, you can contact us by phone, email or in writing. We may, in the first instance, try and resolve your complaint informally. However, at any stage you can request, or we may decide to treat your complaint formally under our internal review process.

An internal review is conducted by the Chief Executive who will review the request and response, taking account of your complaint(s), and will respond in writing as soon as possible. The Information Commissioner's Office recommends that a response should be made in 20 working days. If we are unable to respond in this timeframe, we will inform you and provide a date by which you should expect to receive our response.

If, after the internal review, you remain dissatisfied then you can complain to the Information Commissioner's Office, the government regulator for the Freedom of Information Act. Details of how to contact the Information Commissioner's Office can be found at www.ico.org.uk