

Independent Custody Visitors

checking that people held in custody are treated fairly

What do Independent Custody Visitors do?

Summary

Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs) make unannounced visits to the Island's custody suites to ensure that the people being held there are being treated in accordance with the law.

A custody suite is a facility where people who have been arrested are held securely. Guernsey has custody suites at the police station, the airport and the harbour.

Independent Custody Visitors must maintain their independence and impartiality. They do not take sides but merely look, listen and report back.

ICV visits are welcomed by the police as the feedback helps drive improvements.

There are six ICV in total.

Responsibilities

You will be:

- Arriving at the police station, airport or harbour unannounced
- Inspecting the facilities and filling in a detailed form
- Sending the form to the Committee for Home Affairs.

How do you get appointed?

Appointment process

From time to time, the Committee for Home Affairs advertises for new Custody Visitors to replace people who have stood down.

To apply, you complete an application form and will be called for an interview if you get shortlisted.

What skills do you need?

Skills

No formal qualifications are required for this role. You simply need to be fair and objective.

You need to be able to communicate effectively with a wide range of people and to write accurate reports.

You will need to have a thorough understanding of detainees 'rights and police responsibilities and will receive training to achieve this.

What support or training is there?

Support and training

You will be invited to a one-day information and training day.

Because all visits are made in pairs, in early months you will be paired with a more experienced Visitor.

Further training sessions will be held periodically to keep your technical knowledge up to date.

You will be supported by a senior Home Affairs officer who will arrange the training, schedule the visits and gather the inspection reports.

What's the time commitment?

Time commitment

You will visit a custody suite once a month in a pair with another Custody Visitor.

The timing of the visit is up to you and your colleague. Each visit will take about 45 minutes minimum, up to possibly 90 minutes, depending upon the number of detainees.

During the visit you complete the paperwork and arrange for it to be sent it to the Committee for Home Affairs.

Do you get paid?

Remuneration

There is no salary, it is a voluntary role to assist your community. Reasonable expenses will be reimbursed.

Rewards and downsides

Rewards

Your inspection reports will be a vital source of information and may result in changes being made to protect the welfare of detainees and staff.

Downsides

You need to be able to politely stand your ground in an intimidating, and sometimes challenging, environment.

Where can I find out more?

More information

Go to www.gov.gg/IndependentCustodyVisitors and follow the links for an information booklet and an application form.

Download this information

To download all of the information about Independent Custody Visitors as a PDF, click the PDF symbol on the right of this page.

Corrections

This description of the role of Independent Custody Visitor has been researched by Women in Public Life volunteers. If you spot an error, please do let us know by emailing hello@womeninpubliclife.gg.

Questions?

If you have a question about being an Independent Custody Visitor that isn't answered on this page, email us at hello@womeninpubliclife.gg. We'll research the answer and then publish it here to help inform others who might be curious about the same thing.