

Notes for a person under Suspension

Reasons for Suspension

A volunteer can be suspended from their involvement in Scouting for a number of reasons, which can be found in [Policy, Organisation and Rules - rule 16.4.2.2.](#)

Purpose of Suspension

Suspension of any involvement in Scouts is a neutral act and is intended to protect Scouting and all the individuals concerned. It allows time and space for any necessary investigation to take place, in as fair and objective manner, as possible, by preventing situations which could give rise to further concerns or allegations, which could potentially cause further compromise.

Suspension Process

The suspending Commissioner will usually tell the person directly that they are being suspended and confirm this in writing.

It may be necessary to inform other Scout volunteers about the suspension, but these will be kept to the minimum that circumstances allow. The suspending Commissioner will maintain a review of who is to be informed and to what extent confidentiality can, or should, be maintained. If the matter becomes common knowledge, it may be desirable for the responsible Commissioner to provide an accurate statement of the facts for public information. If at all possible, the suspended person will be informed of this statement beforehand.

Further details about the process can be found on the [Suspension Process webpages.](#)

During the suspension

A suspended volunteer must not participate in any activity connected with Scouting, whether or not young people are present, including administrative tasks and uniform or badges may not be worn. This includes not using electronic communication such as text, email, social media, for Scouting purposes.

Access to Scout premises is not permitted and if the suspended person needs access for a specific purpose (for example to collect personal belongings or to complete an ID check in order to obtain a disclosure) then this may be allowed under certain circumstances. This is a decision for the suspending Commissioner and specific permission, must be received. If the suspended person's child is in Scouting, the suspending Commissioner may be able, in some circumstances, to allow them to attend specific events (for example to see the child receive an award). The exact nature of what will be allowed is a matter for the suspending Commissioner and they must receive the Commissioner's specific permission. Details about what the suspended person must not do can be found in [Policy, Organisation and Rules – rule 16.4.2.7.](#)

Support available

During suspension, social contact with Scout volunteers and friends is not precluded unless this is likely to be prejudicial to an investigation, or would subject them to unfair or undue pressure. Social contacts must not be used to circumvent the purposes of suspension, for example by attending Scout activities or entering Scout premises. The suspending Commissioner will offer to appoint a Scout volunteer to give

direct personal support for as long as is judged appropriate by the suspending Commissioner (this is termed the “liaison person”). The liaison person will not be involved in any way with the allegation, or with any subsequent Scout investigation, and will not play any part in the process of suspension. The liaison person should not be expected to enter into any legal, financial or personal commitment, for example bail, surety, binding over, or be involved in court proceedings.

If appropriate, the suspending Commissioner will advise of the terms and conditions of eligibility for claims of financial support for out-of-pocket legal costs. [Guidelines are issued to County/Area Commissioners by Headquarters on request.]

Being suspended can be a difficult time and details of other organisations that can provide support can be found on the [supporting our members webpage](#).

Ending suspension

Experience has shown that any disciplinary, legal or judicial processes that may result from an allegation can become drawn out over a long period of time and so we are not able to provide a timeline for any suspension. When investigation has been completed, a decision on re-instatement, cancellation or exclusion will be made. The decision might be made by headquarters or by the suspending Commissioner together with the Appointments Advisory Committee depending on the circumstances. For full details of possible outcomes please refer to [Policy, Organisation and Rules- rule 16.4.2](#)

In cases where suspension is related to the failure to have a valid disclosure, the suspension will be ended automatically once a valid disclosure has been obtained and the vetting process is complete. At this point the suspending Commissioner will be informed. In cases where suspension includes aspects of safeguarding, any person returning to Scouting after a suspension will be required to undertake a disclosure check following the usual process relevant to the country in which the person is Scouting.

In all cases the period of suspension will not come to an end until the suspended person receives formal notification in writing.

Employment issues

If your suspension from Scouting might impact on your employment, it may be possible for you to obtain a letter or information from Scouting to explain the nature and reason for the suspension to your employer. Providing such letter or information will depend on the circumstances and, in some instances, any legal considerations.

Sources of legal advice

When appropriate the Association recommends that independent legal advice is taken at an early stage, not least because the information which now follows may require updating from time to time:

- You have the right to obtain professional legal advice from a solicitor at your own expense at any time.
- Limited free legal advice is also available through the Citizens Advice Bureau.
- If you are taken to a police station under arrest, or are arrested at a police station, you have the right to consult privately with a duty solicitor, who will give you independent legal advice, free of charge.

- Should you attend a police station voluntarily, or be under police caution, you are entitled to obtain free and independent legal advice if you wish and you also have the right to speak to a solicitor on the phone.
- Some household insurance policies, and membership of some motoring organisations, include a degree of free legal advice. However, before relying on this, the policy holder or member needs to establish clearly the nature and extent of such cover at the earliest time.

The Association cannot provide legal advice or representation to an alleged offender (or complainant) where an allegation of a serious disciplinary or criminal offence has been made.