



Guidance for a new or change to a police.uk domain name

VERSION: 1.0

DATE: 31st March 2025

CLASSIFICATION: Official

COPYRIGHT: Police Digital Service

DOCUMENT SIZE: 1012-Page Document

Document Information

Revision History

Version	Author	Description	Date
0.1	Michael Fidler	1 st Draft	13 th March 2023
0.2	Michael Fidler	2 nd Draft	14 th March 2023
0.3	Thomas Connor	3 rd Draft	10 th February 2025
0.4	Thomas Connor	Final Draft	25 th January 2025

Approvals

Version	Name	Role	Date
1.0	Andrew Douthwaite	CTO	28 th March 2025

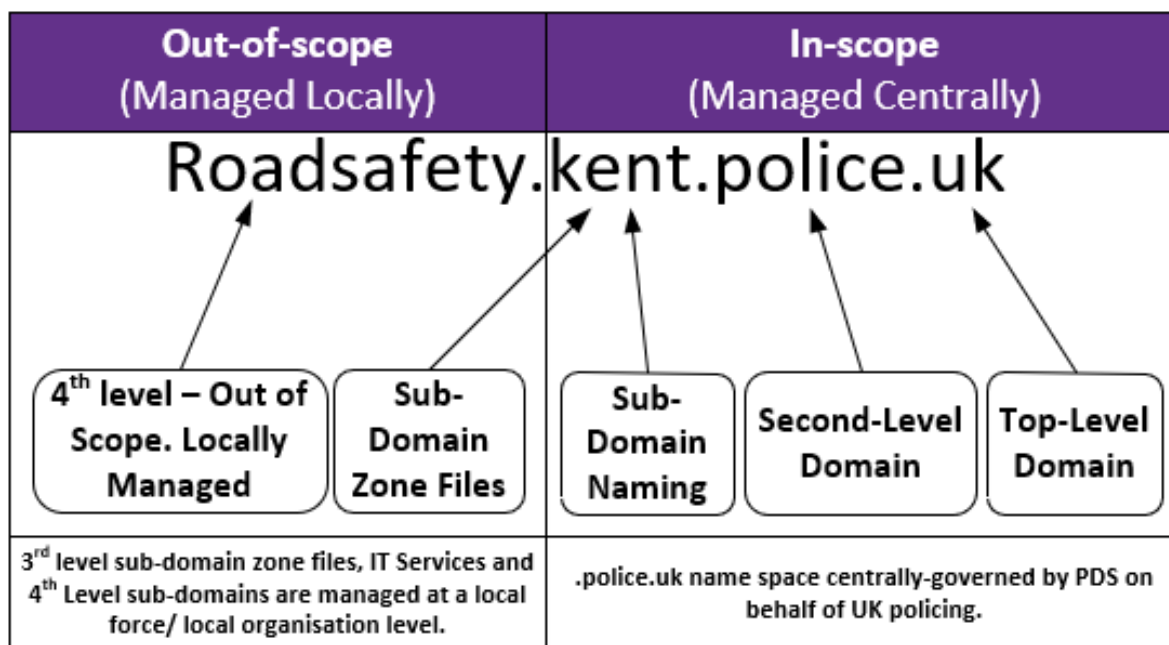
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Document Purpose

This document provides the guidance to apply for a new or to change an existing 3rd level .police.uk subdomain, such as pds.police.uk. This document therefore covers the changes that need to be made at the .police.uk second-level, which ‘point’ to the locally managed 3rd level.

To illustrate this more clearly, the following graphic details the elements of the policing DNS name space that are managed and governed by the Police Digital Service (PDS) and are within the scope of this guidance.



For the avoidance of doubt, this document does not cover applications for changes to be made below the 3rd level sub-domain level . As an example, this document and process would cover the creation or amendment of a nationally led initiative such as roadsafety.police.uk. It would not cover a locally run initiative such as roadsafety.kent.police.uk, which would be managed and administered by Kent Police.

It is worth noting that the management of the name servers and services provided with-in the sub-domain remain the responsibility of the local force/ local organisation and should be managed through a reputable organisation in a resilient manner.

Target Audience

The target audience are those within UK police forces or the wider UK policing community that have responsibility for managing and/or authorising changes to their police.uk DNS records.

Introduction

Domain names are a valuable asset and require long-term financial and operational commitment. They also present an opportunity for cyber attackers and should be well managed, secured and monitored.

From April 2025, the Police Digital Service (PDS) has taken ownership of the governance of the police.uk domain name space. Policing domain name governance was formerly owned and managed by the College of Policing (CoP). Requests from April 2025 should therefore be directed to PDS.

There are a number of reasons why UK police forces or UK policing bodies would wish to make changes or add new entries within the police.uk domain. This could include the creation of a new national initiative for which a national presence would add value, such as a website like missingpersons.police.uk, which has a national presence and benefits from clearly indicating that it is an official policing site, with an official and trusted police.uk address. This also goes some way to demonstrating why it is imperative that police.uk addresses are well managed, well controlled and well governed, to prevent anyone from outside of UK policing purporting to be an official policing body.

This guidance includes the need to:

- Create Records
- Change Records
- Delete Records

Requests fall into the following three categories:

DNS Type	Description
CNAME Records	Essentially a CNAME record maps one domain name (an alias) to another (the canonical name). CNAME records must always point to a domain name, never directly to an IP Address.
NS Records	An NS Record (or nameserver record) specifies the domain name of the name server servicing a particular domain. Multiple NS records are required to provide redundancy.

DNS Type	Description
TXT Records	These are used to associate text within the Domain Name System. These can be used to verify domain ownership for example.

Application Guidance for UK National Policing Domain Names

This section details the guidance that you should read and follow prior to applying for a 3rd-level UK policing sub-domain. The following are examples of UK policing 3rd-level sub-domain names:

- **essex**.police.uk
- **missingpersons**.police.uk
- **pds**.police.uk

Can your organisation get a UK policing Domain Name?

You can only apply for a UK policing domain if you are part of the 'UK policing community' with a valid requirement for a 3rd-level sub-domain. Examples of policing bodies that can apply include:

- UK Forces
- NPCC led UK National Policing Initiatives
- Bodies or organisations 'owned' by UK policing
- Cross-force collaborations
- Regional Organised Crime Units

Benefits of getting a UK policing Domain Name

One of the key benefits of having an immediately recognisable policing domain name is that it instils trust that the website or a service is delivered by an official and recognised UK policing body.

Most public sector organisations must use a .gov.uk or other government domain name for their websites, emails and services. UK policing is no exception and must use a .police.uk address.

UK policing domain names benefit from centralised governance, robust controls and are actively monitored as part of wider government cyber initiatives.

Requesting Temporary Policing Domain Names

Temporary policing domain names should generally be discouraged. Where there is a particular need, this requirement should be raised directly with the Police Digital Service to discuss further.

Get Permission to Apply for a new Domain Name

The Police Digital Service will check you have permission from a senior stakeholder in your organisation when you apply for a new UK policing domain name and will validate your request.

UK Police Forces

If you are applying on behalf of a UK Force (including 'units/bodies' attached to UK forces or regional collaborations) you must provide written permission from your Chief Information Officer (or near-equivalent such as: Chief Technology Officer; Assistant Chief Constable; Chief Operating Officer).

All other policing organisations or bodies

You must get written permission from your Chief Executive or 'similar' high-ranking officer.

In the event that your domain request relates to a national initiative, such as missingpersons.police.uk, the authorisation should come from the relevant NPCC portfolio lead.

Please use the template available from the PDS website titled **"Senior Stakeholder Approval Template for a police.uk Domain"** and attach this to your new police.uk domain request.

The role of a domain name administrator

The domain name administrator, not to be confused with the 'senior stakeholder', is the person who authorises any changes to an organisation's .police.uk sub-domain once it has been setup. They are responsible for knowing how to configure .police.uk domains correctly, or making sure that they have an IT team or IT supplier who can do this on their behalf.

The domain name administrator role is not a standalone full-time role and the person does not necessarily need to be technical. It is important however that there are primary and secondary e-mail addresses for the domain administrator(s) and that these are role-based as opposed to name based. For example: network_manager@force.police.uk; CTO@force.police.uk; servicedesk@force.police.uk. This ensures the ability to contact the appropriate individual even following a change in staffing.

You must identify a role within your organisation to manage the domain name prior to applying for a police domain name. This is essential to ensure effective ongoing communication, either for periodic updates or in the event of a service-related incident.

Changes to an existing police.uk domain name

Please note, changes to an existing domain, for example changes to name servers, can be authorised by your Domain Name Administrator where this information is held on file by

PDS. If the information is not held, or is out of date, the same authorisation via a Senior Stakeholder must be followed.

Selecting an Appropriate Registrar

A Domain Name Registrar is a company that manages the reservation of Internet Domain Names. Selection of a high quality Domain Name Registrar that meets the needs of your organisation and has experience with managing .gov.uk and .police.uk addresses is therefore essential.

When setting up a new domain, the domain name administrator must:

- choose a good registrar with appropriate security controls in place to mitigate the risk of DNS hijacking – refer to the [NCSC mitigation advice](#).
- refer to existing NCSC, Central Digital and Data Office (CDDO) and policing guidance in place at the time. (Cross-reference: [.gov.uk Registrant Information](#)).
- provide the role-based email contacts they would like to use as registrant addresses.
- make sure they have someone who is technically capable of managing the domain - this could be within the organisation or outsourced to the registrar or another supplier.

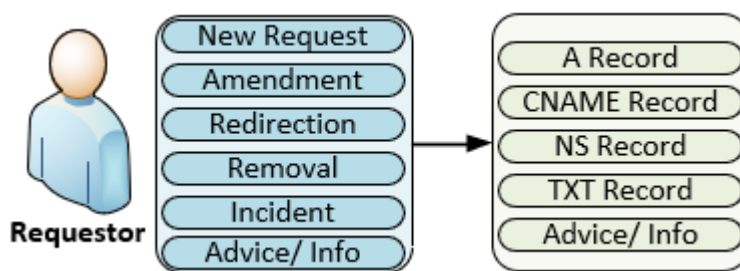
Maintaining a policing domain

After a policing domain is activated, the domain name administrator must, as a minimum:

- follow guidance to use their domain names properly.
- keep their registrar and Police Digital Services informed if the domain name administrator or contact details change.
- renew domain names if required beyond an expiry date being set.
- take steps to properly decommission a domain if it is no longer required.

Types of DNS Records Managed

The registrar of the requested 3rd level domain is responsible for the DNS records associated with the 3rd level domain requested, such as A records, CNAME, MX SRV etc. There may however be a requirement for DNS records for these domains at the police.uk level. As a minimum these will be the Name Server records (where requests will be sent for the domain when accessing resources), but specific TXT or CName records may also be required. If records are required at the police.uk level, a request must be made using the process defined in this document. If the registrar details held by PDS are up to date, Stakeholder approval will not be required, but if they are out of date, supporting Stakeholder approval must be provided. This highlights the requirement to maintain up to date registrar information with PDS.



Selecting a new policing domain name

Your proposed domain name must clearly describe your organisation or national policing initiative. Consider the users of the domain name and make sure the name is not too long or complicated.

Local forces or regional collaborations are discouraged from requesting names that could be used in future to identify national services or organisations. An example would be to request ERSOU.police.uk which is the name of the Eastern Region Special Operations Unit and not ROCU which is the general name denoting Regional and Organised Crime Units.

When you choose your .police.uk domain name you must make sure it is:

- Available - you can check if a domain name is registered.
- Descriptive.
- Unique.
- Not confusing for users.

Your domain name must:

- be between 3 and 63 characters long. *(Shorter names are recommended and preferred).*
- contain only alphanumeric characters (0-9 and a-z) and the '-' (dash) symbol.

Your domain name must not:

- be the same or substantially similar to any existing .police.uk domain name.
- use '&' (ampersands) or '_' (underscores) or spaces.
- include abbreviations like ltd, plc.
- include a postcode or other variable that may change.

You must use the full name of your organisation, policing initiative or an appropriate suffix or abbreviation. If you apply for an acronym, initialism or abbreviation, this must be descriptive, unique and clear to avoid user confusion. Applications for these terms will need approval from the PDS Naming and Approvals Committee. Commonly used abbreviations like NPCC, NPTC or PDS are acceptable as are abbreviations that are well-known by users.

Policing Naming and Approvals Committee

Requests for new or changes to policing domain names will be approved by the Policing Naming and Approvals Committee which sits within PDS. As part of the authorisation process, the committee may need to contact other police forces or organisations (eg. NPCC) who may have a vested interest before they make their final decision.

If you apply for a policing initiative, for example roadspolicing.police.uk, this will need to be approved by the NPCC lead before going to the Naming and Approvals Committee.

PDS may contact your Chief Information Officer or appropriate senior stakeholder to ratify your request before reviewing the .police.uk domain name application.

PDS will send your request to be reviewed by the Naming and Approvals Committee. The Committee sits once a week, and you will hear back following the committee review to let you know if it has been approved or rejected.

Emergency Changes and Incidents

There may be occasion, for example an unexpected event or incident, that requires changes within the policing name space much more quickly. In these situations, PDS should be contacted directly to agree an expedited route. This for example could result in an emergency sitting of the Policing Naming and Approvals Committee, or indeed resolution under Incident Management procedures, with a retrospective submission to the naming and approvals committee. This would be decided on a case-by-case basis in direct consultation with PDS.

Appeal a Decision on your application

You can appeal a decision if an application is rejected.

The appeals process will be conducted by PDS, who as and if required, will call upon subject-matter expertise within the policing community. As an example, if the appeal relates to an initiative around neighbourhood policing, the NPCC national lead for neighbourhood policing may be consulted.

Application Forms for a New Policing Domain Name

To apply for a new policing Domain, please ensure you have read the guidance above and complete the following two forms which are available on the PDS website.

- [Apply for or Amend a police.uk Domain.docx](#)
- [Senior Stakeholder Approval Template for a police.uk Domain.docx](#)

Once the above forms have been completed, please emailed to ['policedomains@pds.police.uk'](mailto:policedomains@pds.police.uk). Emails must be sent from either an existing police.uk or a gov.uk email address. All requests from other email addresses will not be actioned.