



AVON & SOMERSET

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Avon and Somerset Probation Board is committed to positively assisting current employees to best achieve a healthy balance between their personal and work commitments. All benefits are available to all staff regardless of their age, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion or belief, gender or transgender.



STAFF BENEFITS

The staff who work for the Avon and Somerset Probation Area are our most valuable asset and we offer the following range of benefits to all our staff.

FLEXIBLE WORKING

Avon and Somerset Probation Board is committed to positively assisting current and potential employees to best achieve a healthy balance between their personal and work commitments. As an organisation we recognise that this is in the best interests of service delivery. This is because employees supported in this way are likely to be more effective in delivering the required high level of service. All flexible working requests will be considered. Possible types of flexible working arrangements include:

Flexible Full Time Working

Working full-time hours per week where there is some flexibility agreed over start and finish times. There may be a core time stipulated when the employee must be at work.

Flexible Part Time Working

Working less than 37 hours per week with reduced daily hours or full daily hours on less than 5 days per week where there is some flexibility agreed over start and finish times. There may be a core time stipulated when the employee must be at work.

V-Working

An arrangement where, by agreement, the employee works reduced hours or variable hours on a temporary basis.

Variations on Standard Shift Working

Variation from the normal 3 shift working pattern might be the introduction of 12 hour shifts e.g. 1900-0730 and 0700-1930 with a minimum 30 minute unpaid break. Other variations might include a split shift approach.

Team Based Rostering

Staff take responsibility and ownership for duty rotas and shift patterns within a framework which stipulates a minimum number of different shift patterns (i.e. nights, weekend shifts and late shifts) that individuals must work.

Annualised Hours

Where an employee's hours are defined on an annual basis, where there may be significant variation in weekly, monthly or quarterly hours but payment of one twelfth of the annual salary is made each month.

Term-time Only

Where an employee works during school term times only and is required to take their paid annual leave during school holidays. Salary is paid on the same basis as for annualised hours.

Job Share

Where two or more employees share a full time or part time post.

Home Working/Hot Desking

Where an employee works some of their hours at home or operates on a mobile basis where it is not necessary for them to have a permanent base and where shared desks (hot desking) is appropriate.

Compressed Week/Fortnight Working

Where an employee works their normal hours over 4 days rather than 5 days per week, or over 9 days rather than 10 days per fortnight

ANNUAL AND SPECIAL LEAVE

Annual Leave Entitlement

Employees benefit from a generous leave entitlement of a minimum of 27 days per year pro rata.

Career Break and Unpaid Leave

Employees have the opportunity to take a period of leave from six months to five years subject to eligibility. The Scheme is available to employees for childcare, adoption, care of elderly relatives and other reasons.

Maternity Leave

Eligible employees are able to take up to 26 weeks ordinary maternity leave with the option to take a further unpaid 26 weeks as additional maternity. Subject to eligibility, in addition to statutory maternity pay, employees will also receive 90% of a weeks pay for the first six weeks and half pay for weeks seven to eighteen.

Paternity Leave

Following the birth of a child, eligible employees have the right to take paid leave to care for their new child and the mother. Maternity Support leave of up to 10 Days with pay shall be granted to the child's father, or partner, or nominated carer of the expectant mother at or around the time of birth, on the basis that this entitlement is subsumed within statutory paid Paternity Leave and subject to eligibility

Special Leave

The purpose of this policy is to recognise that staff have responsibilities and commitments outside of work. The following list includes types of reasons when Special Leave can be taken;

Special Leave for the purpose of adjustment to disability

- Disability Adjustment

Special Leave without notice

- Compassionate / Bereavement
- Dependants / Caring
- Domestic Emergency

Special Leave with notice Religious Observance

- Medical Screening
- Fertility Treatment
- Blood / Bone Marrow Donation
- Examination / Study
- First Day / Half Day
- Extended Leave
- Jury Service, Court / Tribunal Attendance
- Voluntary Public Service
- Service in Non-regular Forces
- (Pre-retirement Leave – pending development of separate policy)

SUPPORT GROUPS

Black and Asian Workers Group (BAWG)

The aim of the group is to ensure that all minority-ethnic staff feel supported within the workplace, and to provide a supportive and confidential environment where personal and service issues can be discussed. All Asian, black and minority ethnic staff within the Avon and Somerset Area are eligible to join. Members of this forum are invited to be part of the consultative framework for service delivery, planning and staffing matters.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered Group (SPECTRUM)

The aim of the group is to ensure that all gay, lesbian, bi-sexual and transgender staff feel supported within the workplace, and to provide a supportive and confidential environment to discuss personal and service issues. All gay, lesbian bi-sexual and transgender staff within Avon and Somerset area are eligible to join. Members of this forum are invited to be part of the consultative framework for service delivery, planning and staffing matters. This group is linked to the national group of Lesbians and Gays in Probation (LAGIP).

Employee Disability Forum

The aim of the group is to ensure that all disabled staff feel supported within the workplace, and to provide a supportive and confidential environment where personal and service issues can be discussed. All disabled staff within the Avon and Somerset Area are eligible to join. Members of this forum are invited to be part of the consultative framework for service delivery, planning and staffing matters.

Staff Representation

Staff have the option to join a Trade Union and be represented through UNISON or the National Association of Probation Officers (NAPO).

There is also the opportunity to become a member of the Staff Consultation Forum for staff who do not wish to become a member of a Trade Union.

Mentoring

The Avon and Somerset Probation Area operates a monitoring scheme as part of its policy to improve staff recruitment and retention, especially among under represented groups. Mentoring by properly trained and supported mentors is provided to people within 3 broad categories:

- People in the community who have expressed an interest in joining the Probation Service
- New members of staff, including Trainee Probation Officers and anyone returning to the Service after a significant absence

Existing staff who are in transition from one post to another, are considering leaving the Service, or are wanting it as an aspect of general career development.

SERVICE REWARDS

Local Government Pension Scheme

The Local Government Pension Scheme is a first class final salary pension scheme, which provides guaranteed benefits based on your length of service in the pension scheme and your final year's salary. Annual pension is fully inflation proofed and there is a tax free lump sum death gratuity which amounts to two year's salary.

If you change employment, your pension rights are normally transferable to the pension scheme arranged by your new employer. Your contribution is between 5.5% and 7.5% of pay depending on your salary. However you would pay less Income Tax and National Insurance meaning the net cost is considerably less. For more information about the Pension Scheme please contact the Human Resources Department.

HEALTH AND WELFARE

Benenden Healthcare

As employees of the Avon and Somerset Probation Service we have the opportunity to join Benenden Health Care from as little as £1.25 a week. Membership can also include family members and friends. If you would like some more information or would like to join, please contact Benenden at www.benenden.org.uk or call 0845 052 5731.

Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)

The Employee Assistant Programme is a freephone helpline for confidential help and advice on any problem for employees of Avon and Somerset Probation. This service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and also provides support for staff, their partners and children up to 21 years of age. EAP can provide support on financial, legal, relationship, family care, or work related issues and medical advice in terms of health and travel. Avon and Somerset Probation Service covers the cost of up to six face-to-face counselling sessions.

Gender Advisory Bureau

The Gender Advisory Bureau provides support and advice for trans employees of Avon and Somerset Probation.

Occupational Health Service

Occupational Health Service helps to promote and maintain employee health and gives independent medical advice. Their role is to advise on matters of health to ensure that work does not make employees unwell or exacerbate existing medical conditions.

Free Eye Test

Anyone who uses a computer for a proportional part of their working day is entitled to a free eye test. ASPA is introducing a new system which allows staff to claim their eye tests when they need to, free of charge. The voucher is redeemable at any Spec Savers store in the UK and entitles you to one free eye test and VDU Glasses if you require them. You are entitled to one voucher every two years.

OTHER SCHEMES AND DISCOUNTS

Child Care Voucher Scheme

Staff can elect to substitute part of their salary for electronic childcare vouchers up to a value of £50 a week. These are redeemable vouchers that parents/child-carers can use to pay for childcare services from a wide range of registered childcare providers. The benefit of this scheme is that the cost of the vouchers is exempt from both tax and National Insurance contributions meaning it can provide a saving of between £816 and £1,066 per year.

**For further information on any of the
above benefits, please contact the Human
Resources Department
(Contact details below)**

Contact Us:

By Post

Avon & Somerset Probation Area
Human Resources Department
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