

Health standards for constables

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Policy statement and principles

What

This policy outlines the application of medical, psychological and physical standards to determine that constables are fit for work duties.

Why

We are committed to ensuring our people remain fit for work and life. The application of health standards helps constables to maintain a level of fitness that will promote their resilience and reduce injury and illness throughout their Policing career.

This policy also meets the requirements of section [72](#) of the Policing Act 2008 for the Commissioner to prescribe the standards of health required of Police employees who are constables (as defined by section [4](#) Policing Act 2008) to ensure they are fit to competently perform their duties and any other duties that may reasonably be required of them from time to time.

How

Standards are developed using a scientific approach, where the physical demands of the workplace are first measured and then tests are constructed and validated based on these demands.

This policy describes:

1. Medical, psychological and physical standards
2. The support available to help constables prepare to meet the standards
3. How a constable's fitness compared with the standards is tested
4. The process to follow if the standards are not met.

Consultation

In setting these health standards for constables, the Commissioner has consulted (as required by section [72](#) (3) of the Policing Act 2008) with:

- New Zealand Police Association
- Police Leaders' Guild
- Public Service Association
- the Government Superannuation Fund Authority.

References

- [Policing Act 2008](#)
- [Health and Safety at Work Act 2015](#)
- [A Review of the New Zealand Police Physical Competency Test, University of Otago, February 2011](#)
- [Police deployability](#)
- [STG required physical fitness policy](#)
- [Employee health monitoring](#)
- [Police drug and alcohol policy](#)
- [Wellcheck support policy](#)
- [Trauma support policy](#)
- [Wellness Hub \(user guide\)](#)

The standards

Health standards are applied according to work duties. As such, rank is used to determine which standards apply. Unless otherwise stated, the standards outlined in this policy apply to the constable, sergeant and senior sergeant ranks. Additional standards may apply to specific workgroups (e.g. AOS).

Work duty requirements by rank are described here.

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[Duties by Rank 01-06-2021_0.pdf](#)

78.67 KB

Refer to the [STG required physical fitness policy](#) for the additional standards that apply for members of the Special Tactics Group (STG).

Medical standard

To meet medical standards, constables must be healthy and free from medical conditions that would prevent them from competently performing their duties.

The medical standard is not upheld via a set of tests, but by a constable's diligence to maintain and monitor their own health by using available information and services, including:

- GP visits (recommend annual)
- [Health Analysis Test](#) (HAT - recommend every two years)
- [Wellness Hub \(user guide\)](#)
 - Wellbeing scorecard (based on individualised responses)
 - Police-specific and topical articles
- Physical Competency Test (PCT) and its pre-test screening process.

Constables are required to disclose to their supervisor any injury or condition that may prevent them from being able to competently perform their duties and obtain appropriate medical clearance where required.

Visual standard

Constables need to have good eyesight and must be visually competent to drive Police vehicles safely during the day and at night in adverse weather and at high speeds. They are also required to perform a range of visual tasks, integral to the role.

Visual aids

Constables' visual aids prescribed by an authorised optometrist must be:

- contact lenses, or
- framed spectacles with case hardened or plastic lenses.

If tinted lenses are necessary, they must be either:

- brown or grey tint in the photochromatic glass series, or
- brown or grey fixed tinted lenses with a luminous transmittance factor not less than 35 percent.

Psychological standard

To meet psychological standards, constables must be mentally fit to competently perform their duties.

Psychological health measures aggregate multiple factors, usually through a structured interview or survey directed by an appropriate qualified professional. Common aspects of such measures include:

- presence of verbal, numeric and abstract reasoning; calm under pressure; adjust to improve; clear boundaries; resilience; perspective; receive and provide assistance; connect with others; self-aware; autonomous thought; perseverance; solution-seeking; proactive; observant; positive outlook; time-conscious; responsible
- minimal presence of major psychological disorders, anxiety, depression, substance abuse, disordered interpersonal

relationships, impulsivity, aggression.

Physical standard

Physical standards by rank

Rank	Physical standard
Constable Sergeant Senior sergeant	<p>These employees are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - required to demonstrate they are fit to competently perform their duties and other reasonable duties by passing the Physical Competence Test (PCT). - encouraged to participate in a Health Analysis Test (HAT). <p>AOS members must also pass the Cooper Test.</p> <p>STG tactical operators need to meet the standards of the STG required physical fitness policy.</p>
Inspectors and higher ranked constables	<p>These employees are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - required to maintain a standard of appearance and physical fitness to competently perform their duties and other reasonable duties as required - encouraged to pass the Physical Competence Test and participate in a Health Analysis Test (HAT).

Support and preparation

There is support available to help constables to maintain a level of fitness that will promote their resilience and reduce injury and illness throughout their Policing career.

Wellness Hub

The online Safer People [Wellness Hub](#) (refer to this [user guide](#) to register) helps busy people stay well while juggling the demands of work and personal life. The hub lets staff build a personalised profile and benefit from relevant health and wellbeing tips and articles, workouts and interactive challenges.

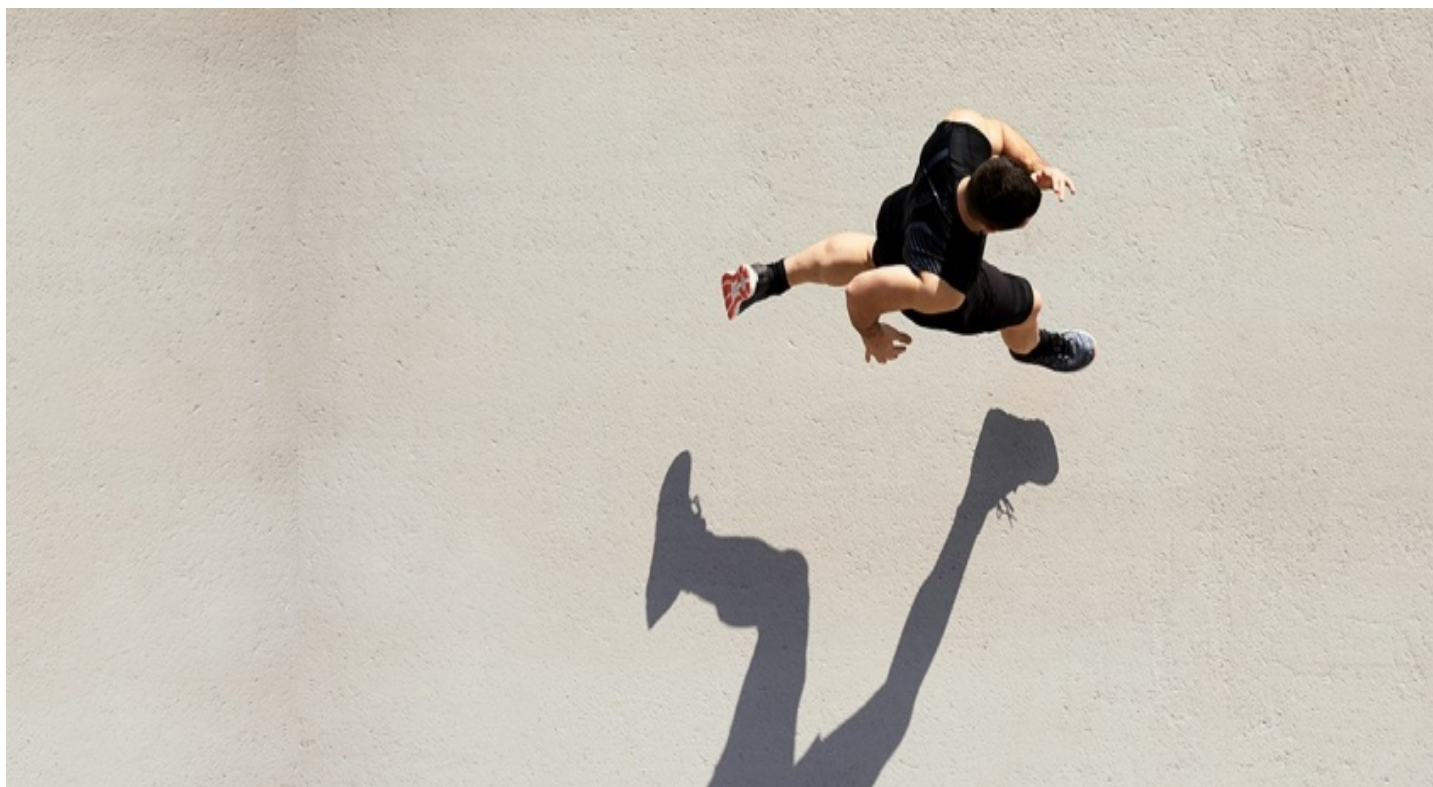
Psychological health

Make use of [Wellness Services](#) to help build your emotional resilience in order for you to manage the demands of your role.

Complete the Continuing Education Programme (CEP) [Resilience](#) and [Reflective Practice](#) online courses to learn how to boost your resilience, be adaptable and manage stress in your personal and professional life.

Preparing for PCT

Access the [Wellness Hub](#) and use the [Preparing for your PCT](#) programme. Contact your [Physical Education Officer \(PEO\)](#) if you need help to make a plan.



Managing health concerns

Identifying health problems

Everybody has a responsibility for their health and wellbeing. Supervisors have a responsibility to ensure the holistic health and wellbeing of their employees, and the impact on their ability to perform duties.

Refer to your GP and have a discussion on how your health impacts upon your work and home life, and what steps you can take to address it. You can also reach out to our [Safer People team](#), who can assist.

Medical concerns

If you are concerned about coping with the physical requirements of a PCT or remedial programme because of a medical condition:

- consult a registered medical professional, and

- where appropriate, obtain a medical recommendation for alternative duties, which would result in PCT deferment
- complete rehab until medical clearance is achieved.

Refer to [When the standards are not met](#) for timeframes and next steps.

Remedial programme

Remedial programmes are fitness and health programmes designed by PEOs to suit medically fit individuals to prepare for PCT in instances where their certification has expired.

Refer to [When the standards are not met](#) for timeframes and next steps.

Any constable, at any time prior to their PCT expiration date, is encouraged to contact their district PEO for training advice and support where needed.

Privacy

When we provide you with services, we will respect your rights to privacy and confidentiality. Please refer to our [Privacy of Personal and Health Information](#) guide for further details.

Paying for medical treatment and examinations

If you are instructed to see a doctor by a District Commander or Director, then Police will cover the costs incurred.

For work-related injury or illness, refer to [ACC Partnership programme for work related injuries](#).

For non-work-related injury or illness, you are responsible for fees arising from medical attention.

RNZPC Health Clinic

The [Health Clinic](#) is available to recruits and employees who attend training courses at the Royal New Zealand Police College.

Those on courses will:

- be charged for treatment for illness-related services and non-work-related ACC services provided at the Health Clinic
- have free work-related ACC services at the Health Clinic
- must pay all prescription charges except work-related ACC charges.

Testing

Overview of available tests

Health testing for constables, sergeants, and senior sergeants

Type of test	When testing occurs
Medical examination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prior to PCT if there is a cardiac risk or any injury/illness that is likely to impact on performance in the PCT. - At any time to demonstrate fitness to competently perform duties.
Psychological evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At any time to demonstrate fitness to competently perform duties.
Physical competency test (PCT)*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prior to graduation (recruits) and operational deployment. - Every two years. - Annually for AOS members.
STG fitness test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annually for STG tactical operators - this is substituted for the PCT
Cooper test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annually for AOS members - on same day as PCT.
Health assessment test (HAT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Every two years (optional).

Note: *You will be eligible to sit the PCT up to six months prior to your PCT being due. Should you fail to sit the PCT prior to your due date, you will be deemed non-deployable.

Health testing for Inspectors and higher rank

Type of test	When testing occurs
Medical examination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prior to PCT if there is a cardiac risk or any injury/illness that is likely to impact on performance in the PCT. - At any time to demonstrate fitness to competently perform duties.
Psychological evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At any time to demonstrate fitness to competently perform duties.
Physical competency test (PCT)*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Optional. However, encouraged to maintain a standard of appearance and competently perform duties. - Annually for AOS members.
STG fitness test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annually for STG tactical operators.
Cooper test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annually for AOS members - on same day as PCT.
Health assessment test (HAT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Every two years (optional)

Note: *You will be eligible to sit the PCT up to six months prior to your PCT being due. Should you fail to sit the PCT prior to your due date, you will be deemed non-deployable.

Additional health-related tests and health monitoring

Reason for test/monitoring	Policy
Exposure to hazards and risks associated with specific work duties	Employee health monitoring
To protect the wellness of all Police employees, as well as the integrity, reputation and effectiveness of Police	Police drug and alcohol policy
Exposure to higher psychological risk due to the ongoing nature of the work	Wellcheck support policy
Exposure to higher psychological risk following a critical incident	Trauma support policy

How the tests are conducted

Medical and psychological examinations

Referral for an examination may occur during recruitment, prior to a PCT, as part of a planned return to work following an illness, injury or critical incident, or as a result of an employee seeking assistance from the [Safer People team](#).

An appropriately qualified health professional assesses the constable's medical or psychological health by examination and will advise on the constable's ability to competently perform their duties. The cost of the medical clearance will be as described in [Paying for medical treatment and examinations](#).

Physical competence test (PCT)

Constables must [register](#) a booking in MyPolice - My Learning to take their PCT up to six months prior to the expiry of their current certification. Failure to complete the PCT prior to the expiry date will result in the constable being deemed non-deployable.

PEOs follow the [standard operating procedures](#) to conduct the PCT.

Constables appearing to have a medical or physical condition that could place them at risk in a PCT will be instructed by the Physical Education Officer to [obtain a medical clearance](#) from their health professional before they attempt the PCT.

After completing a [pre-test medical & health risk screening](#), constables will complete a PEO-directed warm-up, which will include a refresh and practice of each of the PCT skills prior to formal assessment. This is to minimise risk and keep the constables safe in the testing environment.

In the physical competence test participants complete a 400-metre course of tasks in this order:

- pushing a car trailer 10 metres
- carrying a car wheel assembly 10 metres
- running 200 metres
- walking along a five-metre right angle beam, 0.5 metre off the ground
- jumping a 1.8-metre long jump
- climbing over a 1.0-metre low fence
- running around cones
- crawling under low hurdles
- climbing through a 1.3-metre high window
- climbing over a solid 1.8-metre-high wall
- dragging a body 7.5 metres
- climbing a 2.2-metre high wire fence.

Alternative to climbing wall

Instead of climbing over the wall, the participant may choose to run up to the wall, touch it with both hands in the middle of the wall and then run to the next task, if aged:

- 50 years or over

- between 45 and 50 years and have approval on medical grounds from the Director: Safer People.

If you are considering the alternative option for the wall climb on medical grounds, speak directly with your district PEO in the first instance who will provide guidance on making this application.

Cooper test

For those required to pass the Cooper test, it is scheduled and completed alongside (i.e. same day, nearby venue) the PCT.

Health analysis test

The health analysis test (HAT) is a set of tests administered by Police [Physical Education Officers](#), the [Medical Services team](#) or Police contracted external providers, to:

- assess constables' physical health
- give constables a confidential indication of their physical health.
- provide guidance and advice, including recommendations to consult with a health practitioner.

Test results

Medical and psychological examinations

Medical and psychological examination results are confidential and will not be disclosed to others without consent, unless there is a duty of care obligation to disclose.

The medical examination results are graded as follows.

M1	Medically fit for duties of the rank.
M2	Medical condition but fit for duties of the rank.
M3	Restricted duties, temporary and reviewed in six months.
M4	No significant progress in medical condition.

Physical Competence Test (PCT)

Completion requirements of the PCT and Cooper's run test:

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 [PCT and Cooper Qualification 01-06-2021_0.pdf](#)

220.27 KB

The following grades apply to the PCT.

Grade	Description
P1	Exceeded the qualification standard as detailed in PCT and Cooper Qualification by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - men: under two minutes or 30 seconds under their age time - women: under two minutes and 25 seconds or 30 seconds under their age time.
P2	Met qualification standard as detailed in PCT and Cooper Qualification . Note: Constables who perform an alternative to climbing wall and complete the course in the prescribed time are graded P2.
P3F	Failed. Improvement is required within three months.
P3R	Remedial PCT practice.
P4	Has failed to pass the PCT despite remedial efforts.

Certification and allowance

A constable who successfully passes a PCT is certified and entitled to claim for a PCT Allowance. A PCT pass result is current from when the PCT is successfully completed, and it expires on the next due date.

Health analysis test

PEOs will discuss the results with the participant and advise on suggested action, if required.

When the standards are not met

We are committed to ensuring our people remain fit for work and life. We provide [support and preparation](#) for all constables to be fully fit for deployment so they can always perform their jobs safely.

If you have not met the required medical, psychological or physical standards, then engage with your supervisor and our Safer People team to make a plan for your recovery and return to work.

Factors to consider

The Commissioner may take any of these factors into account (as directed by sections [72](#) and [74](#) of the Policing Act 2008) when deciding if a constable is fit to perform their duties, and the action to be taken if they are not:

- the constable's recent PCT results and motivation to pass the PCT (only for those who must pass PCT)
- performance in remedial programmes
- [medical examination](#) results
- psychological assessment of the constable's fitness to perform their duties
- a report from the constable's manager on the constable's fitness to perform their duties.

Failure to pass PCT

Recruits

If an injury or medical condition prevents a recruit from attempting a mandatory PCT:

- consult a registered medical professional
- only attempt the PCT once medical clearance has been obtained
- complete the PCT prior to graduation.

If a recruit does not pass their scheduled PCT during the standard recruit training period:

- they may (weather depending) be assessed on a weekly basis within the standard recruit training period until the required PCT standard is achieved
- they will not graduate unless, under exceptional circumstances, the Director of Training approves deferral of graduation conditional upon passing the PCT within a reasonable timeframe.

Constables

Constables can complete their PCT six months prior to the expiry date. Early completion does not reduce the certification period, which is taken from the existing expiry date.

Constables are encouraged to start training early and complete their PCT well before their certification expires, so if they fail to pass, they can immediately engage with their district PEO for training advice and support, and attempt the PCT again prior to their expiry date.

The following table outlines the action to take if PCT certification has expired.

Condition	Action	Timeframe
PCT certification not achieved.	Complete a remedial programme and PCT. Note: This step can be repeated if the constable's health and progress towards physical goals are improving.	At the discretion of the supervisor in consultation with Safer People (e.g. PEO, RTW) with a review at least every 3 months.
Constable does not engage with PCT and/or remedial programme, or they are not achieved within allowable timeframe.	Supervisor discusses concerns with constable and notifies constable's District Commander or Director, who asks the Constable for an explanation. Note: Constable is given opportunity to add their own comments to the notification. If there are outstanding health concerns, consult Safer People to outline appropriate health assessments and remedial actions for approval by the DC/Director.	Within two weeks of occurrence.
Reason for PCT disengagement/failure is NOT medical, psychological or physical.	The District Commander or Director can: - direct the constable to attempt a PCT or remedial programme - in discussion with HR Advisory, potential to commence a process as per the Disciplinary policy	Immediately.
Reason for PCT disengagement/failure is medical, psychological or physical.	Refer to Medical concerns . If a Medical professional recommends deferment of PCT: 1. Full recovery expected - Constable's District Commander or Director may approve the deferment. 2. Full recovery doubtful - Director Safer People may arrange a medical and/or psychological examination and, upon receipt of the report, will advise the constable's District Commander or Director on next steps.	Up to 3 months (can be extended up to 6 months further upon advice from Director: Safer People).
Rehab complete.	Once medical clearance is obtained, book a PCT immediately, to be attempted within 3 months.	Within 3 months.