



Home Office

Threat to life policy

This guidance is based on the [Association of Chief Police Officers \(ACPO\) guidelines](#).

This guidance is based on the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) guidance

Threat to life policy

About this guidance

<p>About this guidance</p> <p>What a threat to life is</p> <p>What to do if you receive a threat to life</p>	<p>This guidance tells criminal investigators in Immigration Enforcement Criminal and Financial Investigation (CFI) teams about Home Office policy when there is a threat to human life, the legislation used to identify a threat to life, and the action you must take.</p> <p>The guidance tells you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• what a threat to life is• what the Home Office's threat to life policy is• the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) threat to life policy• the legislation that identifies a threat to life• what you must do if you receive a threat to life <p>For general information on ACPO, see related link.</p> <p>Changes to this guidance - This page lists the changes to this guidance, with the most recent at the top.</p> <p>Contacts - This page explains who to contact for more help or advice.</p> <p>Information owners - This page tells you about this version of the document and who owns it.</p> <p>Safeguard and promote child welfare – This page explains your duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and tells you where to find out more.</p>	<p>In this section</p> <p>Changes to this guidance</p> <p>Contact</p> <p>Information owner</p> <p>External links</p> <p>Association of Chief Police Officers</p> <p>Links to staff intranet removed</p>
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Changes to this guidance

<p>About this guidance</p> <p>What a threat to life is</p> <p>What to do if you receive a threat to life</p>	<p>This page lists changes to 'Threat to life policy' guidance, with the most recent at the top.</p> <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Date of the change</th><th>Details of the change</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>06 March 2015</td><td>Change request:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• minor housekeeping changes</td></tr><tr><td>14 January 2014</td><td>Six month review by the modernised guidance team:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Minor housekeeping and plain English changes throughout.</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>For previous changes you will need to access the archived guidance. See related link: Threat to life policy – archive.</td></tr></tbody></table>	Date of the change	Details of the change	06 March 2015	Change request: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• minor housekeeping changes	14 January 2014	Six month review by the modernised guidance team: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Minor housekeeping and plain English changes throughout.		For previous changes you will need to access the archived guidance. See related link: Threat to life policy – archive .	<p>Related links</p> <p>See also</p> <p>Contact</p> <p>Information owner</p> <p>Links to staff intranet removed</p>
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What a threat to life is

<p>About this guidance</p> <p>What a threat to life is</p> <p>What to do if you receive a threat to life</p>	<p>This section tells criminal investigators in Immigration Enforcement Criminal and Financial Investigation (CFI) teams what the definition of a threat to life is.</p> <p>A threat to life happens when, because of a deliberate intention or the criminal act of another, the Home Office, police or another law enforcement agency identifies a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• real and immediate threat to a loss of life• threat to cause serious harm• threat of injury to another <p>A threat to life also includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• serious sexual assault• rape <p>For the purposes of this policy 'real and immediate' means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a risk that is reasonably assessed to be real• the potential assailant has the intention and current ability to carry out the threat <p>The Home Office has adopted the Association of Chief Police Officers' (ACPO) national threat to life policy, see related link.</p> <p>The Home Office threat to life policy is based on article 2 of the Human Rights Act 1998, which enshrines the right to life in British law.</p> <p>British and European legislation places an obligation on the Home Office, police and other law enforcement agencies, to take all reasonable steps to protect a person whose life is in 'real and immediate' danger from the criminal acts of another.</p>	<p>In this section</p> <p>The Human Rights Act and the threat to life</p> <p>Downloads</p> <p>Links to staff intranet removed</p> <p>External link</p> <p>Human Rights Act 1998</p> <p>Association of Chief Police Officers</p>
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	<p>There is a public expectation for all law enforcement agencies to take all reasonable steps to protect life and if they fail to effectively take reasonable steps it may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• lead to a loss of life• cause serious injury to another• undermine public confidence in them and in their ability to manage serious issues <p>The objectives for the Home Office threat to life policy are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• protect the life of any intended victim (s)• preserve the lives of all others involved• prevent serious injury• make sure the public is safe• maintain the safety of all those involved in attempting to reduce the risks• protect intelligence sources• provide a standardised national framework for dealing with these incidents with other law enforcement agencies and across police force boundaries	
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The Human Rights Act and the threat to life

<p>About this guidance</p> <p>What a threat to life is</p> <p>What to do if you receive a threat to life</p>	<p>This page tells criminal investigators in Immigration Enforcement Criminal and Financial Investigation (CFI) teams how to identify a threat to life and applying article 2 of the Human Rights Act 1998.</p> <p>When the ‘right to life’ applies</p> <p>A threat to life is considered to be one that you could apply article 2 of the Human Rights Act 1998 to, for more information, see related link.</p> <p>It states:</p> <p>‘Everyone’s right to life shall be protected by law. No one shall be deprived of his life intentionally save in the execution of a sentence of a court following his conviction of a crime for which the penalty is provided by law’.</p> <p>Deprivation of life shall not be regarded as inflicted in contravention of this article when it results from the use of force which is no more than absolutely necessary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• in defence of any person from unlawful violence• to effect a lawful arrest or to prevent the escape of a person lawfully detained• in action lawfully taken for the purpose of quelling a riot or insurrection <p>When the ‘right to life’ does not apply</p> <p>The ‘right to life’ is absolute, but there are situations when it does not apply.</p> <p>A person’s right to life is not breached if they die when a public authority uses necessary force to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• stop them carrying out unlawful violence• make a lawful arrest	<p>External links</p> <p>Human Rights Act 1998</p>
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• stop them escaping lawful detainment• stop a riot or uprising <p>The force used by a public authority must be absolutely necessary and strictly proportionate.</p> <p>For more information on the Human Rights Act 1998, see related link.</p> | |
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What to do if you receive a threat to life

<p>About this guidance</p> <p>What a threat to life is</p> <p>What to do if you receive a threat to life</p>	<p>This page tells criminal investigators in Immigration Enforcement Criminal and Financial Investigation (CFI) teams about what you must do if you receive a threat to life.</p> <p>If you receive either information or intelligence which suggests there is a threat to human life, you must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• make a written record of a threat in either your:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ daybook○ official note book• include the following details:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ date and time you received the threat to life○ who provided the information about the threat to life○ how you received the information <p>You must be able to show you acted logically and considered what the next sequence of events might be. Below is a list of points you must consider in relation to a threat to life.</p> <p>The victim(s) You must consider whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the victim can be identified by either:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ their name○ their description○ membership of a group• anyone else may be affected and does it depend on how close they are, such as:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ family members○ children○ close associates living elsewhere• the victim has the ability to retaliate	<p>Related link</p> <p>Links to staff intranet removed</p>
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The potential assailant

You must consider if the potential assailant:

- can be identified by their:
 - name
 - description
 - membership of a group, or
 - method of attack
- is capable of carrying out the threat and if they have:
 - a history of violence
 - access to firearms or other weapons
 - access to the victim
 - the physical ability
- intends to carry out the threat, and whether:
 - they have carried out any preparatory acts
 - they have made previous threats
 - you are meant to believe the threat
- has any motivation to carry out the attack, for example, whether:
 - there is financial incentive
 - they have a grudge against the victim
 - they have suffered loss or injury

Other factors

You must also consider:

- if the place for the attack can be identified by name or description or if you can deduce it
- what the timescale is for the potential attack or if it depends on an event
- if there are any conditional factors, for example, is the attack possible or does it depend on the victim or potential assailant doing, or not doing, something
- if the intelligence has been evaluated:
 - if so, check what the 5x5x5 intelligence rating is, for more information about this

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	<p>rating, see related link: Manual of standards - Recording and dissemination of intelligence material</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• what the risks are to the source of the intelligence• if there is an evidential allegation of crime that can be openly investigated <p>This list is not exhaustive but if you consider these points it will help you make a realistic assessment of the threat.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Official sensitive – do not disclose – start of section</p> <p>The information in this page has been removed as it is restricted for internal Home Office use only.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Official sensitive – do not disclose – end of section</p> <p>The criminal and financial investigation SIO will then decide the appropriate action to take in response to the threat.</p>	
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Contact

[About this guidance](#)

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This page explains to criminal investigators in Immigration Enforcement Criminal & Financial Investigation (CFI) teams about who to contact if you need more help with a question about the Home Office's threat to life policy.

If you have read this guidance and still need more help, you must first ask your line manager. If they cannot answer your question you can contact:

Official sensitive – do not disclose – start of section

The information in this page has been removed as it is restricted for internal Home Office use only.

Official sensitive – do not disclose – end of section

Changes to this guidance can only be made by the guidance, rules and forms team (GRaFT). If you think the policy content needs amending you must contact the policy team, using the related link: Email: Criminal investigation operational guidance who will ask the GRaFT to update the guidance, if appropriate.

The GRaFT will accept direct feedback on broken links, missing information or the format, style and navigability of this guidance. You can send these using the related link: Email: guidance, rules and forms team.

In this section

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External links

Links to staff intranet removed

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This page tells criminal investigators in Immigration Enforcement Criminal & Financial Investigation (CFI) teams about this version of the Home Office's 'Threat to life policy' guidance and who owns it.

Version	5.0
Valid from date	06 March 2015
Policy owner	Official – sensitive: information removed
Cleared by director	Official – sensitive: information removed
Director's role	Official – sensitive: information removed
Clearance date	22 July 2013
This version approved for publication by	Official – sensitive: information removed
Approver's role	Official – sensitive: information removed
Approval date	03 February 2015

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