

FAQs

What type of behaviour or activity could be considered suspicious?

Some examples of suspicious behaviour or activity include:

- Hiring large vehicles or similar for no obvious reasons
- Buying or storing a large amount of chemicals, fertilisers or gas cylinders for no obvious reasons
- Taking notes or photos of security arrangements, or inspecting CCTV cameras in an unusual way
- Looking at extremist material, including on the so-called Dark Web, or sharing and creating content that promotes or glorifies terrorism
- Someone receiving deliveries for unusual items bought online
- Embracing or actively promoting hateful ideas or an extremist ideology
- Possessing illegal firearms or improvised or home-made weapons - possibly using household items - or showing an interest in obtaining them
- Holding passports or other documents in different names, for no obvious reasons
- Anyone who goes away travelling for long periods of time but is vague about where
- Someone carrying out suspicious or unusual bank transactions

How sure do I have to be before passing on my suspicions?

An honest held belief that something is occurring or you have a belief someone is acting suspiciously.

If my information turns out to be incorrect will I have wasted police time?

You may feel it's probably nothing, but unless you trust your instincts and tell us we won't be able to judge whether the information you have is important or not.

Remember, no piece of information is considered too small or insignificant. Our specially trained officers and police staff would rather take lots of calls which are made in good faith, but have innocent explanations, than not getting any at all.

How do I report suspicious behaviour or activity?

You can quickly report online via www.gov.uk/ACT or you can call the police in confidence on 0800 789 321. Remember, in an emergency you should always call 999.

What if something is happening and I need urgent assistance?

If it is an emergency you should call 999.

However, if it is not an emergency but the situation requires police attendance, then you may be advised by the ATH call handler to contact 101 who will be able to send local officers to the scene more quickly.

Who will take my call or read my online report?

A Counter Terrorism Police Officer or a trained member of police staff will review your information within two hours.

What sort of information will the police need from me?

We will need as much detail as possible, this could include the clothing someone was wearing, their age, height, ethnicity and actions for example.

Information such as their name, place of work, car registration number can all help the police to identify the individual and look into the matter.

Do I have to give my name or any personal details?

No, it is entirely up to you if you wish to leave your contact details.

Is it confidential?

Yes, all of the information you provide is treated in the strictest confidence. You don't have to give your details unless you wish to do so.

What if I am concerned that someone will find out I have contacted the police?

We can reassure you that all calls and information are treated in the strictest confidence and will not be made public.

We understand that people might have reservations about contacting police, either because their friends or family may find out, or their suspicions may prove to have innocent explanations.

Will my call be traced or recorded?

Your call will not be recorded. If you wish to leave your details you can do so.

How long will reporting take?

It will depend on how much information you are able to provide when you contact us.

What will happen with the information?

Our specially trained officers and police staff who take the calls will assess and evaluate the information you pass on before deciding on what action to take.

Will I be given an update?

Unfortunately we are unable to provide updates due to data protection issues.

If the police need to speak to me again, how will they contact me?

We will only get in touch with you if we need to ask you further details about the information you have provided. You will have the option to provide your contact details.

Will I need to give a statement?

In a case where you are giving information and wish to leave your contact details, you may be asked to provide a statement however this will depend on your wishes.

Does the hotline have a language line?

If you have difficulties speaking English, you can ask a friend who can speak English to contact us on your behalf. However, we will need to take into consideration the type of call and the privacy and level of information being divulged.

I suffer from hearing loss, how can I pass on information which I think may be important?

Yes, you can also contact the hotline online via www.gov.uk/ACT.

Can I report my suspicions over the phone rather than online?

Yes, if you would prefer to report information over the phone rather than online, you can call the police in confidence you on 0800 789 321.

Will I get a reward if I pass on information to the hotline?

You will not get a reward if you pass on information to the hotline.

If I don't want to contact police is there anyone else I can talk to?

Family or trusted friends can report on your behalf but we will need to confirm the details provided with you.

You can also report crime or information online or via Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111
Always remember, if it is an emergency, call 999.