

Crime and Policing Act 2026: New powers, new risks - what police forces need to know now

Change now in force	Practical effect	Immediate policing risk	Action for forces
1. Warrantless entry to search for and seize stolen goods	Allows officers to enter premises without a warrant where stolen goods have been electronically located, such as by GPS tracking, and urgent action is required.	Likely to attract early scrutiny around necessity, proportionality, PACE compliance and Article 8 ECHR.	Ensure officers record why a warrant was not practicable and why entry was necessary and proportionate.
2. ASB changes, including vehicle seizure and related powers	Strengthens operational responses to persistent anti-social behaviour, including changes to vehicle seizure and ASB information-sharing.	Risk of inconsistent threshold decisions and challenge where powers are used without clear evidence or partnership ownership.	Brief neighbourhood teams and supervisors on evidential thresholds, proportionality and recording requirements.
3. Trespass with intent and facilitating begging for gain	Introduces replacement offences relevant to street-based conduct and acquisitive or exploitative behaviour.	Potential overlap with safeguarding, homelessness and vulnerability issues if enforcement is not carefully framed.	Align enforcement with safeguarding routes and local authority partnership processes.
4. Intimate image abuse and technology-enabled offences	Commences offences and mechanisms relating to intimate image material, image generators and online take-down processes.	Investigations will require careful digital capture, victim safeguarding and preservation of online evidence.	Update investigation guidance and ensure officers know how to secure digital evidence promptly.
5. Protest-related offences and public order powers	Brings into force offences and powers relating to concealment of identity, pyrotechnics, memorials, protests outside homes and	High likelihood of challenge around necessity, proportionality, freedom of expression and assembly.	Ensure public order commanders and legal advisers are briefed on thresholds and recording requirements.

	cumulative disruption.		
6. Digital information and DVLA access	Extends or clarifies access to online information and driver licensing data for law enforcement purposes.	Risk of data protection challenge if access, retention or use is not properly documented.	Review governance for digital requests, audit trails, retention and DPA 2018 compliance.
7. Weapons and firearms-related provisions	Includes provisions relating to sound moderators and wider offensive weapons controls now being phased in.	Operational confusion may arise where some weapons reforms are live and others still await further commencement or guidance.	Separate live powers from provisions still awaiting commencement in officer briefings.