

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

Area	Key change still to come	What is awaited	Why it matters for policing
Stalking protection orders	Courts will be able to make SPOs on conviction, acquittal or successful appeal, rather than only following a police application to the magistrates' court.	Further commencement, court process detail and practical guidance for police, prosecutors and public protection teams.	This could materially change SPO strategy, particularly at the end of criminal proceedings and in cases where a restraining order may not provide the same positive requirements.
Stalking statutory guidance and "right to know"	Statutory guidance is expected on multi-agency stalking responses and on the process for considering disclosure of identifying information to victims.	Publication and commencement of guidance, with forces required to have due regard to it once in force.	Forces will need defensible decision-making around victim safeguarding, perpetrator management, digital aliases and disclosure risk.
Respect Orders and ASB framework	Further detail on the operation of Respect Orders, youth injunctions, housing injunctions, ASB data provision and related guidance.	Further regulations, statutory guidance and local implementation detail.	Civil orders with criminal consequences will require consistent evidence thresholds, proportionality assessments and partnership processes.
Drug testing on arrest	Expansion of testing beyond Class A drugs.	Regulations specifying the additional controlled drugs and operational scope.	Custody teams should prepare, but the wider regime should not be treated as fully operational until the substances are specified.
Spiking and VAWG-related reforms	Further implementation of offences and investigative expectations relating to spiking, intimate image abuse and technology-enabled harm.	Commencement, charging guidance and operational guidance where relevant.	Investigators will need clear evidence-gathering routes, digital capture processes and victim safeguarding arrangements.

Child criminal exploitation	New measures intended to strengthen disruption of exploitation and coercive control of children by criminal groups.	Further commencement, safeguarding guidance and multi-agency implementation detail.	Forces will need to align enforcement with safeguarding duties, youth justice practice and partnership disruption plans.
Knife, crossbow and online weapons controls	Online weapons content regime, remote sale and delivery controls, age verification requirements and bulk sale reporting duties.	Further regulations, content removal processes, guidance and enforcement arrangements.	Digital investigators, neighbourhood teams and trading standards partners will need clear referral and enforcement routes.
SIM farms, electronic devices and serious crime tools	Measures targeting articles used to facilitate serious crime, including SIM farms and electronic devices used in vehicle theft.	Further commencement and operational guidance on seizure, retention and evidential handling.	Officers will need clarity on identifying prohibited articles and preserving evidence for organised-crime investigations.
Police misconduct, appeals and barred lists	Changes to chief officer appeal rights, barred-list arrangements and related professional standards processes.	Further commencement, regulations and guidance for PSD, HR and legal teams.	Forces will need to update misconduct workflows, appeal decision-making and employment-risk processes.
Firearms officer anonymity	Anonymity for firearms officers subject to criminal proceedings up to the point of conviction.	Further commencement and procedural guidance on court, media and disclosure handling.	Legal, PSD and communications teams will need consistent processes for identity protection and public reporting.
Confiscation and proceeds of crime	Changes to confiscation and asset recovery provisions.	Further regulations where provisions have been commenced for regulation-making purposes only.	Financial investigation teams should avoid changing POCA workflows until the operative detail is confirmed.
Terrorism and national security	Further police, border force and national security	Further commencement, regulations and specialist operational guidance.	Specialist teams will need to track commencement separately from mainstream policing powers.

	measures within the wider Act.		
Corporate criminal liability	Implementation of corporate liability reforms that have attracted wider commentary outside the policing context.	Further commencement and guidance.	Less immediately operational for frontline policing, but relevant to investigative strategy and organisational defendants.
