



Home Office

# Criminal casefiles: forms, standards, and file structure

Version 1.0

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# About this guidance

This guidance tells criminal investigators in Immigration Enforcement (IE) and suitably trained and accredited criminal investigators within the Home Office about the forms they need to complete when preparing a criminal casefile for prosecution in England and Wales.

This guidance tells you:

- the purpose of each of each of the forms or standards submitted to CPS and the courts in the course of a criminal prosecution
- about Government Security Classifications Policy (GSCP) and non-disclosable chequered banding on forms or standards
- about further sources of information on case file preparation including the National File Standard, the Directors Guidance on Charging 6th Edition, the Attorney Generals Guidelines on Disclosure 2024

The Home Office has a duty to safeguard vulnerable people and promote the welfare of children for more information see: [Vulnerable people and children](#).

Criminal Investigators in Immigration Enforcement must be aware of their obligations under the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and Part 3 of the Data Protection Act 2018 see: [Data Protection](#).

## Contacts

If you have any questions about the guidance and your line manager or senior caseworker cannot help you or you think that the guidance has factual errors then email CFI Operational Guidance Team.

If you notice any formatting errors in this guidance (broken links, spelling mistakes and so on) or have any comments about the layout or navigability of the guidance then you can email the Guidance Rules and Forms team.

## Publication

Below is information on when this version of the guidance was published:

- version **1.0**
- published for Home Office staff on **26 February 2025**

## Changes from last version of this guidance

- re-named from previous document 'Manual of Guidance and MG Forms'
- full revision of document to shift focus of product from the Manual of Guidance 2011 to take in a variety of current sources
- changed references from Government Protective Marking Scheme to current Government Security Classifications Policy

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# Criminal case file forms or standards

This page tells criminal investigators in Immigration Enforcement (IE) and suitably trained and accredited criminal investigators within the Home Office about the criminal casefile forms and what you use them for in England and Wales.

If you work in Scotland, files are submitted electronically via the Specialist Reporting Agencies Website (SRAWeb) in Standard Prosecution Report (SPR) format.

For Northern Ireland, you must use the procedures currently in place in those locations. See PPS NI file submission protocols

## Background of the Manual of Guidance forms

The National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC), the Home Office, and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) agreed the standardised format and structure of criminal case files and set this out within a document called the Manual of Guidance (2011). This formed the basis of the 'national file standard' and provided a number of Manual of Guidance (MG) forms numbered sequentially for officers to use in the submission of casefiles for prosecution.

The Manual of Guidance is no longer the most current source of information for the National File Standard and although still available the NPCC have placed an embargo on the Manual of Guidance being updated.

A new system called the Digital Case File (DCF), is now being rolled out across the criminal justice system, when fully implemented it will effectively integrate the MG forms into the case management systems that law enforcement, CPS and the courts use. This will have a wide range of benefits including increasing file quality, ensuring full disclosure, and simplifying processes.

However, it is still some way from full adoption and implementation. In the interim officers are advised to continue to use the existing MG forms system. During this interim period officers can access the most recent National File Standards in the CPS document [Charging \(The Directors Guidance\) – sixth edition 2020, incorporating the National File Standard.](#)

The National File Standard tells you which forms are included for various case file types depending on type of offence, for example, summary or indictable, and how this may differ depending on the defendant's plea, for example, guilty or not guilty. It also advises how to prepare, process, and submit prosecution files for use by:

- Home Office
- National Crime Agency
- police officers
- police staff
- CPS prosecutors

Although the National File Standards are instructive, they do not give detailed instruction on the practical use of each of the MG Forms as that is covered in the Manual of Guidance. The Manual of Guidance can still be accessed, however officers should adhere to more recent instructions such as [the Director's Guidance on Charging](#) and the [Attorney Generals Guidelines of Disclosure - 2024](#).

The Manual of Guidance is split into 3 sections – sections 1 and 2 are effectively replaced by the previously referenced documents as well as the [Code for Crown Prosecutors](#) which is another document issued by the Director of Public Prosecutions advising procedures for CPS Crown Prosecutors to follow.

Section 3 sets out instruction on what each of the MG Forms is and detailed notes on how to fill in each of them and will be of particular use to officers undergoing training or who are new to criminal investigation casework. A summary of these forms is given in this document for your ease of reference.

For more information, see:

- [The Prosecution Team Manual of Guidance 2011 \(Incorporating National File Standard 2015\)](#)
- [Attorney General's Guidelines on Disclosure 2024](#)
- [Charging \(The Director's Guidance\) - sixth edition, December 2020, incorporating the National File Standard](#)
- [The Code for Crown Prosecutors 2018](#)
- [Charging and case preparation - College of Policing Approved Professional Practice \(APP\)](#)

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# Protective marking and unique reference numbers (URNs)

This page tells criminal investigators in Immigration Enforcement (IE) and suitably trained and accredited criminal investigators within the Home Office about the Government Security Classifications Policy (GSCP) for use on documents and MG forms and using unique reference numbers (URNs) in prosecution cases.

## Protectively marking documents and data protection

You must protectively mark documents containing sensitive or personal information to make sure the information is only released to those with the authority to see that information.

Officers are also reminded of their responsibilities to manage data in line with guidance on Data Protection.

For more information see: Data Protection Policy: Criminal and Financial Investigation, Immigration Enforcement

## Casefile forms or standards

All the casefile forms or standards:

- are numbered
- have MG at the beginning of the form name
- have a GSCP marking of 'official', 'official – sensitive', 'secret' or 'top secret'

Note that secret and top secret documents should not be transmitted electronically and where needed hard copies should be provided in accordance with their handling instructions.

Some casefiles forms have chequered banding on the forms this denotes that they are not disclosable to the defence and may contain sensitive information when completed.

For more information see: [Government security classifications](#).

## URN for case files

Criminal investigators must give each case its own pre-trial information unique reference number (PTI URN) for the investigation. On Clue the PTI URN is located on the case screen.

The Crown Prosecution Service will not give written advice unless you give them a URN for the case.

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# Casefile forms or standards

This section tells criminal investigators in Immigration Enforcement (IE) and suitably trained and accredited criminal investigators within the Home Office about each of the Casefile forms or standards and what you use them for in a criminal casefile in England and Wales.

The MG forms still in use are set out in this section. These are the most current versions of the forms; you must make sure you use these versions and not any older versions saved locally.

The National File Standard as contained in the [Charging \(The Director's Guidance\) - sixth edition, December 2020, incorporating the National File Standard](#), Annex 5 sets out which forms are needed in the following case file types:

- Charging Referral
- Guilty Anticipated Plea (GAP) Initial Hearing Police Charged
- Not Guilty Anticipated Plea (NGAP) Initial Hearing Police Charged (including custody cases)
- GAP Initial Hearing CPS Charged
- NGAP Initial Hearing CPS Charged
- Crown Court Cases Initial Hearing CPS Charged
- Post Initial Hearing GAP cases where a NG plea was entered
- Post Initial Hearing NGAP Cases
- Post Initial Hearing Crown Court Cases

Annex 4 provides further detail over what information is required by CPS for a charging decision. You must prepare each case individually and use the appropriate forms.

Although these forms are mainly used during particular stages in your investigation you can use them at other times, if necessary, depending on what is happening in your investigation. You may not need to use every form suggested.

The table sets out the name of each MG Form as well as their reference and what they are used for:

Form or standard name	Manual of Guidance reference	Purpose and when to use
Special Measures Assessment	MG02	Use this form to tell the CPS if a witness might need 'special measures' when giving evidence in a case. The prosecutor uses it when making an application to the court for special measures to be allowed.

Form or standard name	Manual of Guidance reference	Purpose and when to use
Pre Charge Decision Request	MG03	<p>Use this form to make referrals to CPS for charging advice and decisions. You, as the investigator, complete the form and your supervisor signs it.</p> <p>It must contain key information and evidence from the investigation. The lawyer records their advice and decisions on the form and returns it to you.</p> <p>The police sergeant authorising a charge against a suspect will ask to see the authorised charging decision.</p>
Further Report to CPS for Charging Decision	MG03A	<p>Use this form after the CPS issues an action plan asking for more information or clarification.</p> <p>This further report records additional work you have done.</p> <p>The supervising officer must sign it before you send it back to CPS.</p> <p>The lawyer records their advice and decisions on the form and returns it to you.</p>
Charge Sheet	MG04	<p>The custody sergeant uses this form to record:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the specific offence and offences that a suspect has been charged with</li> <li>• their reply after charge</li> <li>• the grant of unconditional bail following charge</li> </ul>
Bail – Grant or Variation	MG04A	<p>This form is used this form to record the granting of bail, what the conditions are, what they are needed for, and any changes to the bail conditions.</p>
Bail – Request to Vary Conditions	MG04B	<p>A suspect can use this form to request for their bail conditions to be changed or lifted. Either you, as investigator, or the subject's legal representative can complete it.</p> <p>You must give it to the custody sergeant for a decision. If the defendant has already been to court and is on court bail, they must apply direct to the same court to ask for changes. The defendant can ask the court or their legal representative how to do this</p>

Form or standard name	Manual of Guidance reference	Purpose and when to use
Bail – Security and Surety	MG04C	<p>Use this form to record details of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a person acting as a surety</li> <li>• the security taken by the custody officer (usually cash or other assets)</li> <li>• other police bail conditions</li> </ul> <p>A surety is somebody who vouches for the defendant and who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is prepared to put up an amount of money or assets, called a ‘security’, to make sure of the defendant’s cooperation</li> <li>• must make sure that the suspect returns to the police station or court as instructed</li> <li>• if the person fails to attend, forfeits the security</li> </ul>
Written Charges – Youth	MG04D	<p>Use this form to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• notify a youth has been charged with the offences listed on the form</li> <li>• give details of the first court appearance</li> </ul>
MG04D PG: Written charges parent guardian	MG04D PG	<p>Use this form to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• notify a parent or guardian by post, that a youth has been charged with the offences listed on the form</li> <li>• give details of the first court appearance</li> </ul>
Written Charges – Adult	MG04E	<p>Use this form to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to notify an adult defendant by post, that they are being charged with the offences listed</li> <li>• give details of the first court appearance</li> </ul>
No Further Action (NFA) Letter	MG04F	<p>Use this form to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• inform a suspect that no further action is being taken about the matter they were arrested for</li> <li>• make sure it is signed by the supervising officer or police sergeant</li> </ul>
Offence Report (sometimes called a Police Report)	MG05	<p>Use this form to give details of the case for the first court hearing at a magistrate’s court because:</p>

Form or standard name	Manual of Guidance reference	Purpose and when to use
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• it forms the basis of the prosecution case if there is a guilty plea</li> <li>• it includes any orders on conviction</li> </ul> <p>Complete it before the first hearing so that you can give it to the defence as part of the advanced information they are entitled to before the first hearing.</p>
Case File Information	MG06	<p>Use this form to give the prosecutor all relevant background information so that they can review the case effectively, it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• contains details of sensitive information that must not be disclosed to the defence</li> <li>• helps Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) lawyers to make decisions which meet evidential and public interest tests</li> <li>• gives target dates for further evidence to be obtained</li> <li>• records the reasons for charging decisions in line with the director's guidance on charging</li> </ul> <p>CFI officers should be aware that local arrangements may be in place with the CPS for the disclosure of information required on the MG6 for charging decisions.</p> <p>For more information see <a href="#">Director's Guidance On Charging - sixth edition.</a></p>
Interview Briefing	MG06A	<p>Use this form to record any pre-interview briefing given to a suspect's solicitor or legal representative. This form must not be given to a suspect who is not represented by a solicitor or legal representative.</p>
Officer / Staff Misconduct Record	MG06B	<p>If you are an official witness in a case, you must use this form to tell CPS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• if you have a criminal conviction or caution</li> <li>• if you have been charged with a criminal offence</li> <li>• are the subject of an adverse judicial finding</li> <li>• list misconduct outcomes and planned hearings</li> </ul>

Form or standard name	Manual of Guidance reference	Purpose and when to use
Schedule of Relevant Non-Sensitive Unused Material	MG06C	<p>Use this form to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• list all relevant non-sensitive unused material, in detail</li> <li>• give its location</li> </ul> <p>The disclosure officer completes it. The prosecutor will then record on the form if the material:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• can be disclosed to the defence</li> <li>• can be inspected by the defence</li> <li>• cannot be disclosed at all</li> </ul>
Schedule of Relevant Sensitive Unused Material	MG06D	<p>Use this form to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• list only relevant, sensitive unused material, in detail</li> <li>• provide its location</li> <li>• provide the reason it is considered to be sensitive</li> </ul> <p>The disclosure officer completes it. The prosecutor records on the form if they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• agree that the material is sensitive</li> <li>• need to make a public interest immunity application to the court</li> </ul>
Disclosure Officer's Report	MG06E	<p>Use this form to tell the prosecutor about any sensitive or non-sensitive material that undermines the prosecution case or assists the case for the defence, it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tells the prosecutor about any unused material that must be disclosed under paragraph 7.3 of the code of practice, and lists it, for more information, see: CPIA Code of practice</li> <li>• provides the CPS with the disclosure officer's certification</li> </ul>
Remand Application	MG07	<p>Use this form to ask the CPS to make an application for a remand in custody or on conditional bail. It tells the prosecutor why you are making the application.</p>
Breach of Bail	MG08	<p>Use this form to give the prosecutor details of:</p>

Form or standard name	Manual of Guidance reference	Purpose and when to use
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the original charges</li> <li>• the conditions of bail</li> <li>• how these conditions are believed to have been breached</li> </ul> <p>The prosecutor uses the form to tell the police what happened in court, so they can record the breaches on the Police National Computer (PNC).</p>
Witness List	MG09	<p>Use this form to give the CPS and witness service information about, and contact details for, each witness.</p> <p>It tells the prosecutor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how many statements there are for each witness</li> <li>• if a copy has been provided</li> <li>• details of witnesses who are victims or intimidated witnesses</li> </ul>
Witness Non-Availability	MG10	<p>Use this form:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to give the prosecutor:</li> <li>• dates of when witnesses are not available</li> <li>• the reasons why</li> </ul>
Witness Statement	MG11 MG11 M MG11 M Cont	<p>Use this form to give a witness's evidence in writing. It records:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consent for medical records to be used</li> <li>• willingness to attend court</li> <li>• the need for special measures for vulnerable or intimidated witnesses</li> </ul> <p>You can write victim personal statements (VPS) on an MG11.</p> <p>You must also use a MG15 for statements recorded in audio or visual format in addition to the MG11.</p> <p>There are different versions of the form:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MG11 electronic version which contains MG11 continuation forms – these are blank – you use these to produce a typed copy of a handwritten statement</li> </ul>

Form or standard name	Manual of Guidance reference	Purpose and when to use
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MG11M and MG11M continuation – these are used for handwritten statements; they have lines for you to write on</li> </ul> <p>A separate witness advice section – to be handed to the witness. If you take a statement from a witness, you must make sure you give them this leaflet.</p>
Exhibit List	MG12	<p>Use this form to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• list exhibits that will be produced as evidence in a case</li> <li>• tell the prosecutor where the exhibits are if a copy has not been provided</li> </ul>
Conditional Caution	MG14	<p>Use this form to record details of a conditional caution, including the offences and the conditions imposed on the offender. The offender must sign the form to show that they have accepted the caution and the conditions</p>
Interview Record	MG15 MG15 Cont  MG15M MG15M Cont	<p>Use this form to produce a written record of an interview:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• with a suspect (audio or visual)</li> <li>• with a vulnerable or intimidated witness (visually recorded)</li> </ul> <p>Use local procedures to get audio or visual interviews typed up. MG15M is for handwritten versions.</p>
Bad Character or Dangerous Offender Information	MG16	<p>Use this form to tell the prosecutor about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a suspect's relevant previous offences (bad character) that could be introduced at trial</li> <li>• any dangerous offender information, which might affect sentencing</li> </ul>
Offences Taken into Consideration (TIC)	MG18	<p>Use this form to list other offences that the defendant has agreed to have taken into consideration when appearing at court on other charges.</p>
Application for Compensation	MG19	<p>Victims can use this form to give details about their loss, injury or damage. The prosecutor will use the form to make an application for compensation in court.</p>
Further Evidence or	MG20	<p>Use this form to give the prosecutor further information or evidence for a case list. List what</p>

<b>Form or standard name</b>	<b>Manual of Guidance reference</b>	<b>Purpose and when to use</b>
Information Report		further evidence or information is being provided.
Submission of Work for Scientific Examination	MG21	This form must accompany evidence or samples sent for forensic testing, it provides an audit trail and gives details of specific points needed to prove the case, and it gives the scientist target dates to complete the examination.  The forensics company may also require their own forms to be completed.
Submission of Additional Work for Scientific Examination	MG21A	Use this form to tell the forensics company about extra work needed after the MG21 has already been sent.
Streamlined Forensic Report – Initial Investigation	MG22A	An Initial Forensic Investigation Report can be used when there is a request for an initial assessment of scenes or forensic exhibits that may help an enquiry, interview or strategy.  Note MG22 series forms are only filled in by experts completing forensic reports and are not filled in or amended by law enforcement officers. Owing to this, templates are not provided.
Streamlined Forensic Report (SFR) – Forensic Results (Stage 1)	MG22B	This form is used to report key forensic information or a result from the initial analysis / comparison / data or database hits.
Streamlined Forensic Report (SFR) – Forensic Issues (Stage 2)	MG22C	This report is used to provide further evidence on identified and/or disputed forensic issues emanating from the Stage 1 court case management process. Stage 2 forensic evidence provides stronger and relevant forensic evidence to address the specific case issues that have been raised.
Streamlined Forensic Report (SFR) – Crime Scene Investigation / Forensic Examination Statement	MG22D	This is an abridged Crime Scene Investigation or Forensic Examination statement providing the information relating to the forensic results in the SFR Stage 1 process.  This is in statement form and can be disclosed if it contains important contextual information, which helps to clarify the issues in the case.



Section 3 of the manual of guidance tells you in more detail how to complete each form.

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