

I am writing in response to your letter of 1st May 2025 following our recent communication around the judgment by the Supreme Court in *For Women Scotland vs Scottish Ministers* [2025].

On the 22nd May the NPCC published draft interim guidance on searches of members of the transgender community, as well as searches carried out by transgender police officers.

It makes clear that thorough police searches, such as those which expose intimate body parts, should be carried out by police officers of the same biological sex as the detained person.

The guidance sets out where very limited exceptions can be requested by the transgender community where they ask to be searched by someone of their lived gender. Police will endeavour to accommodate such requests where this is operationally viable.

Our aim is to ensure we are implementing the law in a pragmatic and consistent way that treats people with fairness, dignity and respect. An equality impact assessment has been carried out in the development of the new guidance which considers all protected characteristics.

This guidance reflects working practice which already happens every day across policing, where officers and detainees make requests about searches for a multitude of reasons.

This is a complex and sensitive area of policing which will greatly benefit from a clear national position and guidance. We have moved at pace to develop this interim guidance, as it is important that officers and staff have guidance on how searches should be conducted in light of the Supreme Court judgment.

Chief officers are considering other policies and practices following the Supreme Court decision. An interim update from the Equality and Human Rights Commission on the provision of toilets and changing rooms has been circulated to forces. Our work in all these areas will also inevitably be guided by the response of other public bodies and will be developed in consultation with our key stakeholders, networks and associations.