

police  
station  
visitors

Kit

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Guidelines

**altus**<sup>®</sup>  
GLOBAL ALIANCE

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If you have any questions that are not answered on the Altus website or in these guidelines, please send an e-mail to [idcindia@idcindia.org](mailto:idcindia@idcindia.org).

## **I. WHY USE THIS KIT WHEN VISITING POLICE STATIONS ?**

The Police Station Visitors Kit is designed to evaluate the degree to which a station is designed and operated to serve the public. This Kit enables people to follow a common set of guidelines for conducting a visit and answer the same set of questions to evaluate the station. In this way, a single station can be monitored over time through repeated visits, by the same or different individuals.

For both the government and the public, the Kit provides globally useful and low-cost indicators of key aspects of respectful and effective policing: the set-up and operation of a police station, and how a station serves the public.

Police accountability is not only about effective law enforcement but also an issue of relations with the public. No matter how effective and efficient the police are in law enforcement, if they cannot gain public acceptance, support and trust of the community cannot be established. Therefore, the visit and the Kit are designed to benefit both the police and the community.

For police institutions, the Kit can serve as a channel for approaching the communities served by the stations and obtaining feedback from the residents. By facilitating the visits, the police demonstrate their willingness to work with the community to identify problems.

For the community, the Kit is a useful tool for establishing a dialogue with police services. Upon request or by invitation, community organizations, NGOs, and other members of the public can organize visits to police stations. Thus, they can learn more about the daily operations of the police and highlight problems that make police- community relations difficult.

In addition, the Kit is not only designed to detect problems, but also to identify good practices carried out in police stations. Police services, governments, and civil society can use the Kit to identify and acknowledge police stations with good working practices, which can serve as an example for others to follow.

The five areas of police station assessment are based on international standards and agreements that are relevant to policing, especially those related to human rights and police accountability. As such, this Kit has been designed to connect the practical aspects of police stations and the general principles of human rights and police accountability standards. Breaking the assessment down into five areas and including a narrative report allows the monitors to identify both the strong and weak aspects of a police station.

## **II. INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE VISIT**

### **Setting up a visit:**

1. The team leader will be responsible for overseeing the visit and communicating the results of your visit to Altus.
2. Organize your visit in advance. Police officials should not be surprised by your visit. The police should understand that you will stay for approximately one hour and that you will need to see all parts of the station except the living quarters of the police staff.
3. Gather a team of 3 to 8 visitors from the area or city covered by the police station.

### **Before the visit:**

1. Meet together as a group before visiting the station. Review the general guidelines and the questionnaire. Settle any questions about the questionnaire before arriving at the station.
2. Call the police station to confirm your appointment on the day of the visit. If possible visit the Police Station to discuss changes in the Police Station with the station commander in context to the five categories listed in the PSVW filling forms, getting a response on all 20 questions. Otherwise interact with station commander on these questions during the visit.
3. Plan enough time for the visit itself and for the follow-up activities-- filling out the visitor's questionnaire and for sharing insights and impressions.

### **During the visit:**

1. As much as possible, keep pencils, paper, and the questionnaire out of sight. Do not complete the Questionnaire during the visit. However, do consult the questionnaire before leaving to make sure you will be able to answer all questions.
2. Do not worry if your visit to the station is guided and formal. Most visitors find that they can learn a lot about the orientation of the station even if the visit is choreographed. It is more important to remember and later record what you see and experience during the visit, rather than what you are told.
3. You can begin in any area of the station, but you should visit all areas.
4. Find opportunities to ask questions to both staff and other visitors to the station in order to clarify doubts about the services available. In particular ask the station commander how the station has improved or made changes on the 20 questions listed in the filling forms.

### **After the visit:**

1. Fill out the visitor's questionnaire immediately after the visit and before discussing your impressions with the group.
2. After each team member has completed the questionnaire, discuss the experience as a group. Compare your individual scores and discuss the reasons for assigning particular

- values to individual aspects of the station. Do not change any scores after discussion.
3. After discussion, each team member individually completes the observation areas grid.
  4. The team leader should prepare a narrative report based on the group discussion and according to the outline below. The narrative report is intended to convey any information not covered in the questionnaire.
  5. The team leader will visit the Altus website to upload the information on changes made on PSVW categories (20 questions) received from the station commander alongwith team member feedback and scores of all the visitors together with the narrative report.

### **A Note on Photography**

Ask about taking pictures when you arrange your visit. Be respectful of police requests regarding photography. Photography may not always be possible in a police station.

However, photos may communicate more accurately your experience of the station, whether positive or negative. If possible, digital photos may be included in your narrative report.

### **Writing the Narrative Report:**

The narrative report should be a brief sketch of what your team discovered during the visit. In addition to capturing the group's impressions of the station, try to write about the impact of the visit on the group.

The narrative report should follow the outline below:

1. What were the group members' impression of the police station? Did you think the station was responsive to the needs of different population groups such as poor, old, men-women, migrants etc. explain.
2. List and explain three things that impressed the group most about the police station.
3. List and explain three things that the group would like to see changed in the police station.
4. List any good practices you observed in the police station. (For instance: any initiatives with the community or any special programme)
5. List the gender-related good practices you observed in the police station. What improvement would you suggest for women in the police station?
6. If you have visited the police station earlier, what were the changes you could see/perceive?
7. Did the visit change the visitors' perception of the police station? If so, how?
8. Please describe/explain why you and the members of your team participated in PSVW?

### **Answers and Scores:**

When the report is complete, upload your scores and narrative report (including any photos) on our website, [www.altus.org/psvw](http://www.altus.org/psvw). On the website, you can see where other police station visits have been made on a global map.

If you have further questions about your visit, please e-mail at [idcindia@idcindia.org](mailto:idcindia@idcindia.org)