REPUBLIC OF KENYA

IPOA Independent Policing Oversight Authority

THE

INDEPENDENT POLICING OVERSIGHT AUTHORITY

PREVENTIVE SERVICES REPORT ON EFFECTS OF AILING OFFICERS IN THE NPS

2026



GUARDING PUBLIC INTEREST IN POLICING

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The thematic study was conducted in sampled police stations within **13** Counties namely; Elgeyo Marakwet, Kiambu, Kajiado, Kakamega, Garissa, Muranga, Nairobi, Machakos, Nakuru, Siaya, Meru, Kilifi, and Nandi. The study was carried out in **63** Police premises among them **55** Police Stations and **8** Police Posts, indicating the presence of sick (as indicated in the duty roster/sick register) officers. The findings indicated:

i. **Presence of Ailing Officers:** There was the presence of at least 1 Ailing Officers in 52 out of the 63 premises visited.
ii. **Lack of a policy or guidelines on the handling of Ailing Officers:** There was a lack of a clear guideline on how Station commanders are to handle and deploy Ailing Officers.
iii. **Inadequate counseling services:** The psychosocial services were offered by the National Police Service (NPS) chaplains and counselors recruited and trained by the NPSC or other organizations but were not regularly. Despite the NPSC hiring counsellors, little progress had been made in offering psychosocial services to officers in need.
iv. **Drug and substance abuse:** Officers struggling with drugs and substance addiction.
v. **Lack of training and awareness:** There was lack of adequate capacity building among officers.
vi. **Deployment of Ailing Officers:** Ailing Officers were deployed in areas like the report office, records office, crime office, gender desk, and manning of customer care desk.
vii. **Other factors affecting staff strength:** Besides the issue of Ailing Officers, other factors causing a strain on staff strength included the number of officers on interdiction/suspension, officers on desertion, officers with mental illnesses, and a number of officers with substance addiction.

Therefore, given the above, the Authority recommends;

i. **Development of a Clear Policy on Ailing Officers** - Establish formal guidelines on managing and deploying Ailing Officers, including their roles, working hours, and medical leave protocols.
ii. **Improved Medical and Mental Health Support** - Increase access to healthcare for police officers, ensuring timely medical interventions.
iii. **Enhancing Counseling Services** - Deploy more trained counselors to police stations, particularly those with a high number of affected officers.
iv. **Addressing Substance Abuse** - Implement rehabilitation programs for officers battling substance addiction.
v. **Balancing Workload and Personnel Distribution** - Reallocate resources to ensure that Ailing Officers do not cause a severe shortage in critical policing roles.
vi. **Review of Interdiction, Suspension, and Attachments** - Expedite disciplinary cases to reduce the number of officers on prolonged interdiction or suspension.
vii. **Training and Awareness** - Provide training for station commanders on handling Ailing Officers professionally and compassionately.

1.0INTRODUCTION

1.1 IPOA mandate

The Independent Policing Oversight Authority (IPOA) is a statutory body, established by Act No.35 of 2011 CAP 86 of the Laws of Kenya to provide for civilian oversight over the work of the Police. Section 6 of the IPOA Act mandates the Authority to carry out several functions including; monitoring and investigating police operations and making recommendations to the Service or any other State organs. Based on this, the Inspections, Monitoring and Preventive Services Directorate of the Authority planned and carried out a thematic study on the presence of ailing (as indicated in the duty roster/sick register) officers in sampled police stations between August and September 2024.

1.2 BACKGROUND

Through inspections, monitoring, and inquiries into various police inaction complaints by the directorate, rising concern about the effectiveness and efficiency of officers deployed at the Station level was noted. The directorate had received **54** cases of police inaction between 2023 and 2024. The main reason attributed to this inefficiency was inadequate capacity brought about by the presence of large numbers of sick (**as indicated in the duty roster)** officers in some Station's strength. Sick and indisposed officers could not be deployed to perform certain police duties without risking their health and safety. This meant that the rest of the officers were overworked thus significantly reducing police operations capabilities. The Authority had also noted a gap in the management of officers with medical conditions as there seemed to be no policy guiding the same. Therefore, the study sought to document the number of Ailing Officers in the sampled police premises and the impact of these numbers on service delivery.

1.3 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the thematic study were to:

i. Establish the number of Ailing Officers at the Station level vis a vis the station's Strength.
ii. Establish areas of Police operations where Ailing Officers are deployed and where they are not.
iii. Establish the main types of operations carried out at the Station level and how they are impacted by the presence of Ailing Officers in their strength.
iv. Establish challenges and proposed solutions to the problem of Ailing Officers.
v. Establish if there is a policy to guide Station Commanders on the deployment of Ailing Officers.
vi. Establish any other relevant information regarding Ailing Officers.

1.4 METHODOLOGY

The IMPS Directorate utilized various methods and techniques to collect data during the thematic study. The methods ranged from the utilization of face-to-face interviews, filling of structured tools, observation, and the perusal of police records.

1.4.1 Interviews

IMPS officers utilized interviews as a method of data collection to understand how the Ailing Officers have affected the operations of police work at the station level. The interviews were commonly with police commanders and other police officers of junior ranks.

1.4.2 Filling of Structured Tools

A Structured thematic study tool was utilized in the collection of data. It comprised various parameters that enabled IMPS officers to inquire about the establishment, strength vis a vis number of Ailing Officers per premise visited, the deployment of Ailing Officers, impact of the presence of Ailing Officers on staff strength among other factors.

1.4.3 Perusal of police records

Various police records were perused in the course of gathering information among them a duty roster/sick register. Copies of the same were obtained for analysis of data contained therein.

2.0 FINDINGS FROM THE STUDY

2.1 Personnel

The team sampled **63** police facilities spread across **13** counties. The table below shows the number of Ailing Officers per premise and the distribution of premises visited per county:

No.	Name of the Police facility	County	Establishment	Strength	Ailing Officers
1.	Tambach Police Station	Elgeyo Marakwet	-	29	3
2.	Buger Police Post	Elgeyo Marakwet	-	8	1
3.	Kapchelal Police Post	Elgeyo Marakwet	-	4	2
4.	Iten Police Station	Elgeyo Marakwet	137	95	4
5.	Kabulwo Police Station	Elgeyo Marakwet	39	10	2
6.	Isinya Police Station	Kajiado	63	70	6
7.	Kitengela Police Station	Kajiado	250	160	2
8.	Saka Police Station	Garissa	40	8	1
9.	Dujis Police Station	Garissa	30	13	2
10.	Balambala Police Station	Garissa	60	43	3
11.	Kihumbu-ini Police Station	Muranga	43	25	1
12.	Ndakaini Police Station	Muranga	62	39	1
13.	Samuru Police Station	Muranga	28	26	2
14.	Kirwara Police Station	Muranga	84	33	1
15.	Ngoliba Police Station	Muranga	102	63	4
16.	Makongeni Police Station	Muranga	141	115	6
17.	Kambirwa Police Station	Muranga	51	16	1
18.	Muranga Police Station	Muranga	200	100	5
19.	Kaweru Police Station	Muranga	87	31	2
20.	Kileleshwa Police Station	Nairobi	117	80	6
21.	Tala Police Station	Machakos	112	82	7
22.	Donyo Sabuk Police Station	Machakos	66	25	1
23.	KBC Police Station	Machakos	102	83	4

24.	Kibichoi Police Station	Kiambu	65	41	1
25.	Githunguri Police Station	Kiambu	87	56	0
26.	Thika Police Station	Kiambu	165	209	4
27.	Munyu Police Station	Kiambu		10	0
28.	Kiandutu Police Station	Kiambu	86	42	0
29.	Ikinu Police Station	Kiambu	71	32	2
30.	Ngewa Police Station	Kiambu	31	17	1
31.	Githiga Police Station	Kiambu	66	39	1
32.	Naivasha Police Station	Nakuru	398	227	0
33.	Kongoni Police Station	Nakuru	45	35	1
34.	Utheri wa lari Police Station	Nakuru	25	11	0
35.	Maimahiu Police Station	Nakuru	74	67	0
36.	Muniu Police Post	Nakuru	12	4	3
37.	Kibugua Police Station	Meru	78	33	0
38.	Chuka Police Station	Meru	119	97	2
39.	Lwala Kotiende Police Station	Siaya	55	17	1
40.	Usenye Police Station	Siaya	135	41	2
41.	Bondo Police Station	Siaya	150	59	3
42.	Bondora Police Post	Kilifi	15	9	1
43.	Rabai Police Station	Kilifi	108	78	0
44.	Kambe Ribe Police Station	Kilifi	30	19	4
45.	Mazaras Police Station	Kilifi	17	9	0
46.	Kokotoni Police Post	Kilifi	-	7	3
47.	Chasimba Police Station	Kilifi	52	38	2
48.	Banda La Salama P/Post	Kilifi	15	9	1
49.	Mariakani Police Station	Kilifi	119	70	2
50.	Kaloleni Police Station	Kilifi	115	36	2
51.	Gotani Police station	Kilifi	75	13	1
52.	Kabiyet Police Station	Nandi	56	42	1
53.	Kipkaren Police Station	Nandi	-	21	2
54.	Chepterwai Police Station	Nandi	-	14	1
55.	Sangalo Police Station	Nandi	-	9	1
56.	Kamasai Police Post	Nandi	-	5	1
57.	Kurgung Police Post	Nandi	-	5	1
58.	Lumakanda Police Station	Kakamega	99	35	0
59.	Panpaper Police Station	Kakamega	36	7	0
60.	Lugari Police Station	Kakamega	45	26	1
61.	Chekalini Police Station	Kakamega	36	9	2
62.	Matete Police Station	Kakamega	161	56	1
63.	Turbo Police Station	Kakamega	98	32	2

Table 1:Number of ailing officers per premise (Data obtained from the weekly duty roster

2.2 Deployment

Out of the **63** police premises that were inspected, only **17.5% (11)**[1] did not have the presence of Ailing Officers. The deployment of Ailing Officers was in areas like the report office, records office, crime office, gender desk, and manning of customer care desk. Ailing Officers were not deployed to perform certain duties that the Station Commander at their discretion believed were heavier duties such as carrying out beats and patrols, operations such as crackdowns, public order management such as riots and demonstrations, court orderlies, cell sentry, bank guards, traffic duties, attachment to VIP protection and driving.

The station commanders alluded that the presence of Ailing Officers had affected the operations of the station. It had led to understrength in the affected police premises. Some of the Ailing Officers who were assigned light duties were unable to perform optimally thus affecting efficient service delivery. Further, serviceable officers were overworked hence hindering the provision of quality services to members of the public. In some instances, the Ailing Officers were aggressive to their colleagues like in the case of mentally challenged officers. There was rampant absenteeism among the Ailing Officers, understandably so, to seek medical attention.

2.3 Policy and Guidelines

There was a lack of clear policy and guidelines on the deployment of Ailing Officers. Chapter 68 of the SSO stipulates a procedure in case of sickness. This procedure, the Station Commanders averred, was insufficient in offering guidance on the management of Ailing Officers. It for instance did not stipulate how they are to be deployed. Another provision that touched on the management of sick offers was Chapter 66 which allowed for visits to Ailing Officers either at their quarters or homes as an extension of welfare towards those affected. Appendix 59 (a) also stipulated that a sick register shall be maintained at Sub-county, Stations/posts. This was not the case as the premises visited did not maintain a Sick Register as they utilized a duty roster. These provisions were insufficient to provide appropriate guidance on the handling of officers with underlying medical conditions within the Service.

The management of such by Station Commanders was by way of accepted customary practices among in-charges and within the Service. For instance, the deployment of Ailing Officers was in areas reasonably considered as light duties. Additionally, the Ailing Officers were also allowed to work under flexible working hours.

2.4 Counseling services

60% (38)[2] of the visited Police premises had counseling services available to officers when in need. Station Commanders indicated that these services were available at the county and sub-county level. However, the service was rarely accessible.

[1] Githunguri Police Station, Munyu Police Station, Kiandutu Police Station, Naivasha Police Station, Utheri wa Lari Police Station, Maimahiu Police Station, Kibugua Police Station, Rabai Police Station, Mazaras Police Station, Lumakanda Police Station, Panpaper Police Station

[2]Isinya Police Station,Kitengela Police Station,Balambala Police Station,Kihumbu-ini Police Station,Ndakaini Police Station,Samuru Police Station,Mazaras Police Station,Kokotoni Police Post,Chasimba Police Station,Banda la Salama Police Post,Kirwara Police Post,Ngoliba Police Post,Makongeni Police Station,Kileleshwa Police Station,Tala Police Station,Donyo Sabuk Police Station,Mariakani Police Station,Kaloleni Police Station,Gotani Police Station,KBC Police Station,Thika Police Station,Munyu Police Station,Kiandutu Police Station,Bondo Police Station,Maimahiu Police Station,Kaweru Police Station,Muranga Police Station,Kambirwa Police Station,Chepterwai Police Station,Kibugua

The psychosocial services were offered by the National Police Service (NPS) chaplains and counselors recruited and trained by the NPSC or other organizations but were not regularly. Despite the NPSC hiring counsellors, little progress had been made in offering psychosocial services to officers in need. None of the facilities visited accessed regular psychosocial services. The station commanders recommended that there should be more counselors deployed to offer the services to officers especially those with underlying medical conditions and those struggling with substance addiction.

3.0 OTHER FACTORS AFFECTING STAFF STRENGTH

Other than the number of officers with medical conditions, other factors continued to put a strain on the count of NPS law enforcers available to render services to members of the public. Among such factors were officers with various forms of disability, officers on attachment, officers on dissertation or interdiction/suspension, officers with mental conditions, and officers struggling with drugs and substance addiction.

3.1 Interdiction/suspension

Of the **63** facilities visited, **14 (22%)** police stations had one officer each on interdiction/suspension while Mariakani Police Station had 2 bringing the total number of officers on interdiction/suspension from the sampled police premises to **16**.

No.	Name of the Police facility	County	No. of officers
1.	Kitengela Police Station	Kajiado	1
2.	Balambala Police Station	Garissa	1
3.	Samuru Police Station	Muranga	1
4.	Ngoliba Police Station	Muranga	1
5.	Muranga Police Station	Muranga	1
6.	Tala Police Station	Machakos	1
7.	KBC Police Station	Machakos	1
8.	Thika Police Station	Kiambu	1
9.	Naivasha Police Station	Nakuru	1
10.	Kongoni Police Station	Nakuru	1
11.	Chuka Police Station	Meru	1
12.	Usenye Police Station	Siaya	1
13.	Mariakani Police Station	Kilifi	2
14.	Lumakanda Police Station	Kakamega	1
15.	Matete Police Station	Kakamega	1

Table 2: Number of officers on interdiction/suspension per premise

3.2 Desertion

11 (17.5%) police premises had a total of **13** officers on desertion; **9** had one officer each while Matete and Kileleshwa had **2** each.

No.	Name of the Police facility	County	No. of officers
1.	Kibichoi Police Station	Kiambu	1
2.	Isinya Police Station	Kajiado	1

Police Station,Chuka Police Station,Lwala Police Station,Bondora Police Post,Rabai Police Station,Kambe Ribe Police Station,Githiga Police Station,Ngewa Police Station,Ikinu Police Station

3.	Ngoliba Police Station	Muranga	1
4.	Kileleshwa Police Station	Nairobi	2
5.	Naivasha Police Station	Nakuru	1
6.	Bondo Police Station	Siaya	1
7.	Chuka Police Station	Meru	1
8.	Chasimba Police Station	Kilifi	1
9.	Banda la Salama Police Post	Kilifi	1
10.	Mariakani Police Station	Kilifi	1
11.	Matete Police Station	Kakamega	2

Table 3: Number of officers on interdiction/suspension per premise

3.3 Disabilities

22 (35%) facilities had Persons Living with Disabilities as shown in the table below;

No.	Name of the Police facility	County	No. of officers
1.	Iten Police Station	Elgeyo Marakwet	4
2.	Kibichoi Police Station	Kiambu	1
3.	Isinya Police Station	Kajiado	1
4.	Kitengela Police Station	Kajiado	1
5.	Dujis Police Station	Garissa	1
6.	Balambala Police Station	Garissa	1
7.	Ngoliba Police Station	Muranga	4
8.	Makongeni Police Station	Muranga	3
9.	Kileleshwa Police Station	Nairobi	2
10.	Tala Police Station	Machakos	5
11.	KBC Police Station	Machakos	3
12.	Thika Police Station	Kiambu	3
13.	Naivasha Police Station	Nakuru	2
14.	Bondo Police Station	Siaya	1
15.	Chuka Police Station	Meru	1
16.	Usenye Police Station	Siaya	1
17.	Chasimba Police Station	Kilifi	1
18.	Mariakani Police Station	Kilifi	2
19.	Lugari Police Station	Kakamega	1
20.	Chekalini Police Station	Kakamega	1
21.	Kambirwa Police Station	Muranga	1
22.	Muranga Police Station	Muranga	2

Table 4: Number of officers with various forms of disabilities per facility

3.4 Mental illness

There was a total of **38** officers with mental illnesses distributed across **24 (38%)** facilities.

No.	Name of the Police facility	County	No. of officers
1.	Tambach Police Station	Elgeyo Marakwet	2
2.	Kibichoi Police Station	Kiambu	4
3.	Kitengela Police Station	Kajiado	1
4.	Dujis Police Station	Garissa	1
5.	Balambala Police Station	Garissa	3
6.	Samuru Police Station	Muranga	1

7.	Makongeni Police Station	KIambu	2
8.	Kileleshwa Police Station	Nairobi	1
9.	Donyo Sabuk Police Station	Machakos	1
10.	KBC Police Station	Machakos	1
11.	Bondo Police Station	Siaya	2
12.	Kongoni Police Station	Nakuru	1
13.	Chuka Police Station	Tharaka Nithi	1
14.	Bondora Police Post	Kilifi	1
15.	Kambe Ribe Police Station	Kilifi	4
16.	Kokotoni Police Post	Kilifi	3
17.	Chasimba Police Station	Kilifi	1
18.	Banda La Salama Police Post	Kilifi	1
19.	Kaloleni Police Station	Kilifi	2
20.	Githiga Police Station	Kiambu	1
21.	Chekalini Police Station	Kakamega	1
22.	Matete Police Station	Kakamega	1
23.	Turbo Police Station	Kakamega	1
24	Kaweru Police Station	Muranga	1

Table 5: Number of officers with mental illnesses per facility

3.5 Alcoholism and Other Substances

Notably, there was a high number of officers struggling with alcohol and substance addiction. **70** Police officers from **29 (46%)** facilities were said to have an alcohol addiction.

No.	Name of the Police facility	County	No. of officers
1.	Kibichoi Police Station	Kiambu	4
2.	Isinya Police Station	Kajiado	2
3.	Kitengela Police Station	Kajiado	2
4.	Dujis Police Station	Garissa	1
5.	Balambala Police Station	Garissa	1
6.	Kihumbu-ini Police Station	Muranga	1
7.	Samuru Police Station	Muranga	1
8.	Kirwara Police Station	Muranga	1
9.	Ngoliba Police Station	Muranga	2
10.	Makongeni Police Station	Muranga	1
11.	Kileleshwa Police Station	Nairobi	10
12.	Tala Police Station	Machakos	4
13.	Donyo Sabuk Police Station	Machakos	5
14.	KBC Police Station	Machakos	4
15.	Thika Police Station	Kiambu	3
16.	Munyu Police Station	Kiambu	5
17.	Naivasha Police Station	Nakuru	3
18.	Bondo Police Station	Siaya	2
19.	Maimahiu Police Station	Nakuru	3
20.	Kibugua Police Station	Meru	1
21.	Chuka Police Station	Meru	1
22.	Lwala Kotiende Police Station	Siaya	1
23.	Usenye Police Station	Siaya	1
24.	Ikinu Police Station	Kiambu	2
25.	Kabiyet Police Station	Nandi	1

26.	Chekalini Police Station	Kakamega	1
27.	Turbo Police Station	Kakamega	1
28.	Muranga Police Station	Muranga	3
29.	Kaweru Police Station	Muranga	3

Table 6: Number of officers with substance addiction per facility

3.6 Attachment

There was a total number of **95** officers on attachment distributed across **34 (54%)** police premises. Most of them were attached to various political leaders and VIPs as bodyguards.

No.	Name of the Police facility	County	No. of officers
1.	Iten Police Station	Elgeyo Marakwet	8
2.	Kabulwo Police Station	Elgeyo Marakwet	1
3.	Githunguri Police Station	Kiambu	2
4.	Isinya Police Station	Kajiado	4
5.	Kitengela Police Station	Kajiado	1
6.	Saka Police Station	Garissa	2
7.	Dujis Police Station	Garissa	3
8.	Maimahiu Police Station	Nakuru	2
9.	Chuka Police Station	Meru	1
10.	Rabai Police Station	Kilifi	5
11.	Kambe Ribe Police Station	Kilifi	2
12.	Mazaras Police Station	Kilifi	1
13.	Kokotoni Police Post	Kilifi	1
14.	Kirwara Police Station	Muranga	2
15.	Kileleshwa Police Station	Nairobi	4
16.	Donyo Sabuk Police Station	Machakos	1
17.	Thika Police Station	Kiambu	6
18.	Munyu Police Station	Kiambu	1
19.	Bondo Police Station	Siaya	1
20.	Kongoni Police Station	Nakuru	1
21.	Kibugua Police Station	Meru	2
22.	Chasimba Police Station	Kilifi	3
23.	Banda la Salama Police Post	Kilifi	2
24.	Mariakani Police Station	Kilifi	9
25.	Kaloleni Police Station	Kilifi	1
26.	Gotani Police Station	Kilifi	1
27.	Githiga Police Station	Kiambu	1
28.	Kabiyet Police Station	Nandi	2
29.	Kipkaren Police Station	Nandi	1
30.	Lugari Police Station	Kakamega	5
31.	Turbo Police Station	Kakamega	2
32.	Muranga Police Station	Muranga	11
33.	Kaweru Police Station	Muranga	1
34.	Ngoliba Police Station	Muranga	1

Table 7: Number of officers on attachment

4.0 CONCLUSION

The thematic study on Ailing Officers in police stations across 13 counties revealed a significant impact on police operations. A considerable number of officers were unable to perform essential policing duties due to medical conditions, mental illness, disabilities, or substance addiction. The absence of a clear policy on managing and deploying Ailing Officers has led to inconsistent practices across police stations, affecting service delivery, overworking healthy officers, and compromising public safety.

Additionally, factors such as interdiction, suspension, desertion, and officers on attachment have further strained police establishments, reducing the available workforce. The lack of accessible counseling services and structured psychosocial support exacerbates the issue, making it difficult for officers struggling with health conditions to receive adequate assistance.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Guided by the findings of this Study, the Authority recommends the following;

1. **Development of a Clear Policy on Ailing Officers**
    - Establish formal guidelines on managing and deploying Ailing Officers, including their roles, working hours, and medical leave protocols.
    - Ensure that police stations maintain a dedicated *Sick Register* separate from the duty roster.
2. **Improved Medical and Mental Health Support**
    - Increase access to healthcare for police officers, ensuring timely medical interventions.
    - Strengthen mental health support, including mandatory psychological evaluations and intervention programs for officers struggling with stress or mental illness.
3. **Enhancing Counseling Services**
    - Deploy more trained counselors to police stations, particularly those with a high number of affected officers.
    - Make psychosocial services more accessible and conduct regular mental health check-ups.
4. **Addressing Substance Abuse**
    - Implement rehabilitation programs for officers battling substance addiction.
    - Introduce random drug and alcohol tests to identify officers in need of help early.
5. **Balancing Workload and Personnel Distribution**
    - Reallocate resources to ensure that Ailing Officers do not cause a severe shortage in critical policing roles.

- Consider hiring additional personnel or restructuring shifts to prevent burnout among active officers.

6. **Review of Interdiction, Suspension, and Attachments**
    - Expedite disciplinary cases to reduce the number of officers on prolonged interdiction or suspension.
    - Assess the impact of officers on attachment and ensure a fair balance in police station staffing.
7. **Training and Awareness**
    - Provide training for station commanders on handling Ailing Officers professionally and compassionately.
    - Raise awareness on mental health, stress management, and work-life balance among officers.

By implementing these recommendations, the National Police Service can improve operational efficiency, enhance officer well-being, and ensure better service delivery to the public.

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GUARDING PUBLIC INTEREST IN POLICING