



**Safer Recruitment and People management
Policy on Recruitment of Ex-Offenders**

The Parochial Church Council of St John's Southbourne with West Thorney

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Introduction

This policy statement applies to all recruitment and selection processes where the PCC is the employer or recruiter. It applies to all roles where the Church of England's [Safer Recruitment and People Management Policy](#) indicates that an enhanced or enhanced plus DBS check is required.

Principles

The Code of Practice published under section 122 of the Police Act 1997 advises that it is a requirement that all registered bodies must treat DBS applicants who have a criminal record fairly and not discriminate automatically because of a conviction or other information revealed.

As an organisation assessing applicants' suitability for positions (that are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order, 1975 as amended, and where applicable Police Act Regulations as amended) we work closely with the organisation thirtyone:eight to process all our criminal record checks, using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) which complies with the DBS code of practice & Update Service. All applicants will be made aware of our use of criminal records checks at the start of the recruitment process & made aware of the existence of the code of Practise.

A copy of the code of Practice can be found at: -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-code-of-practice>

Information regarding conviction information

Within current legislation that came into force 29th May 2013 certain old and minor cautions and convictions are no longer subject to disclosure. In addition, employers will no longer be able to take an individual's old and minor cautions and convictions into account when making decisions.

All cautions and convictions for specified serious violent and sexual offences, and other specified offences of relevance for posts concerned with safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, will remain subject to disclosure. In addition, all convictions resulting in a custodial sentence, whether or not suspended, will remain subject to disclosure, as will all convictions where an individual has more than one conviction recorded.

Further guidance is available from the Disclosure & Barring Service regarding the filtering of old and minor cautions and convictions which are now 'protected' and therefore not subject to disclosure to employers.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-filtering-guidance>

Equal Opportunities

Applications are welcome from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records as we actively promote equality of opportunity for all. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications, and experience.

Our recruitment approach does not differentiate on grounds of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background. We undertake not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.

Having a disclosed criminal record will not necessarily bar a volunteer/applicant from applying/working at St John's but will be dependent on the nature of the position/role, and the circumstances and nature of the offences.

Implications of Failure to Reveal Information

Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant could lead to withdrawal of the offer of a post. In the case that disclosure information is received, the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers will be informed so information contained can be assessed, although this is not necessarily a barrier to the person undertaking the applied post.

We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of work (paid or voluntary).

Copies of documents referred to in this policy are available on request, and this policy sits alongside other Church of England policies and practice guidance relating to recruitment processes and safeguarding.

Process

Advertisements/posters will be explicit in stating whether a DBS will be required for the position. A disclosure is only requested where DBS eligibility criteria is met. For those positions where a disclosure is required, the level of check will be made explicit on the job advertisement/or in the volunteers Role Description.

Where an enhanced DBS check is part of the recruitment process, a Church of England Confidential Declaration form (CDF) must be completed which is referenced in all recruitment documentation on churchsuite.

CDFs will only be viewed by those who are part of the recruitment and selection process, including the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers who will be asked to assess any information disclosed. A privacy notice specific to the Confidential Declaration form is sent out via churchsuite along with the CDF form.

Unless the nature of the position allows for questions about an entire criminal record to be asked, we will only ask about "unspent" convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

All involved in recruitment are sign-posted to suitable training, including the Church of England Safer Recruitment module and DBS-specific training for those requiring it, including guidance in the relevant legislation, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

We will ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position.

Safer Recruitment Model for Volunteers

St John's has two safer recruitment flows for volunteers to join a team: -

5 STEPS - For anyone in regulated activity

1. Express an interest

Volunteer role description provided. Visit to the group.

Volunteers added to the Safer Recruitment Flow Chart.

2. Application

A short application form along with a confidential declaration form (CDF) will be sent via churchsuite.

The CDF is to enable a DBS check to be carried out at a later date.

3. Induction

Preparing for the role by reading some volunteer's documents.

4. Training

A link to safeguarding training sent via churchsuite – Basic & Foundation level.

Once completed applying for a DBS check & registering for Update Service.

5. Volunteering begins

Training & checks completed the role starts along with annual reviews.

Given a Volunteers Safeguarding Pocket Guide

4 STEPS - for those not volunteering in regulated activity but still needing a safer recruitment process

As above but OMITTING

2. Application stage

4. Part of the training - **applying for a DBS & Update Service**

Recruitment of Ex-offenders in our Staff and Volunteer Recruitment Processes

This policy will be incorporated from Step 1 onwards into our recruitment process, with a clear explanation of when a DBS check would be required as part of volunteering for a role in Church. We will follow the 'Process' section of this policy at Stage 2 with the Confidential Declaration Form and completed by Stage 4 if and when a DBS check is applied for.