

Diocesan Policy on the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

Principles

As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, the Diocese of Portsmouth complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.

The Diocese of Portsmouth is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.

This policy should be made available to all Disclosure applicants at the outset of the recruitment process. The appointing body should also make Disclosure applicants aware of the existence of the DBS Code of Practice.

We actively promote equality of opportunity for all, with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. In selecting people we assess their skills, qualifications and experience.

Procedure

A DBS check is only requested after a risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a DBS check is required, all recruitment information will contain a statement that a DBS check will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position.

Where a DBS check forms part of the recruitment process, all applicants must also complete a Confidential Declaration Form. This information should be given to the designated person within the appointing body who should guarantee that the information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.

For positions that involve work relating to vulnerable groups, applicants are required to provide details of convictions and cautions, with the exception of those that are protected under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2013.

Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to a withdrawal of an offer of employment or voluntary position.

The appointing body should ensure that all those who are involved in the recruitment process are capable and competent in recruitment matters and seek the appropriate guidance from the Diocese in regard to assessing the relevance and circumstances of offences.

At interview, or in a separate discussion, an open and measured discussion should take place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position.

Before withdrawing an offer of employment or voluntary position, the appointing body in liaison with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser will undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a DBS Check with the person seeking the position.

Appeals and Complaints Procedure

If an applicant for a disclosure is unhappy about the way the Diocese has processed a DBS check or how a risk assessment has been made, the appeal or complaint should be made in writing, stating their name, address, the nature of the appeal, the date of the disclosure document concerned, the details of the appointing body and any other relevant information to:

The Bishop of Portsmouth, Bishops Grove, 26 Osborne Road, Fareham, Hants, PO16 7DQ

The Bishop will conduct an independent assessment of the issues in question. The appeal/complaint will be dealt with within six months. The adjudication will be sent to the applicant and the appointing body with a copy to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser for information.