

Parish of St Barnabas, Policy for Fair Recruitment of Ex Offenders policy

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

We make every subject of a DBS Disclosure aware of the existence of the Code of Practice and make a copy available on request.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working with us. It will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of your offences.

A Disclosure is only requested after a thorough assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a Disclosure is required, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered a position.

Where a Disclosure is to form part of a recruitment process, we encourage all applicants called for interview to provide details of any unspent criminal record at an early stage in the application process.

Unless the nature of the position allows the Parish of St Barnabas to ask questions about your entire criminal record, we only ask about "unspent" convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

Where the nature of a position does allow us to ask questions about your entire criminal record excepting any "protected" information we will ask you to complete a "Self Disclosure Form" before asking you to apply for a DBS disclosure. (Further information about what information should be disclosed is available from DBS in their 'DBS Filtering Guide', <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-filtering-guidance/dbs-filtering->

guide). This enables us to discuss with you at an early stage any information which may cause you to be unable to progress to confirmation in role. We request that this information is sent under separate, confidential cover to the person within the organisation who is responsible for processing your DBS disclosure application and we guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of a recruitment process.

Where a caution, conviction or additional information is disclosed by you or on a DBS disclosure your consent will be sought to forward a copy of the document to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team (DST).

The DST will make contact with you to discuss the information and the circumstances in which the caution, conviction or concern arose. The DST may need to speak to statutory bodies or individuals and will seek your consent to do so. The DST will provide a written risk assessment to the recruiter which includes a recommendation of safe to proceed, proceed with amendments to role or not safe to proceed. You will be provided with a copy of that assessment.

The recruiter will then communicate to you a decision regarding whether they are able to continue with the appointment process.

Failure to reveal information that is relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment or voluntary work. Failure to consent to risk assessment will result in any offer of employment or voluntary work being withdrawn.

Quality Assurance and Appeals:

In order to ensure that this process is followed according to Church of England agreed policy and practice (see National Church of England 'Practice Guidance: Risk Assessment for individuals who may pose risk to children or adults' June 2015) the Diocesan Secretary as Safeguarding Lead within the Diocese will be made aware of all risk assessments conducted within this process.

Should the individual subject to this process feel that they have been treated unfairly or that the process is contradictory to Church of England practice guidance, they may appeal.

The individual subject to risk assessment states in writing that they wish to appeal. If the individual initially states verbally that they wish to appeal they may be assisted by any party in producing a letter stating their reason for appeal.

Independent Chair of Diocesan Safeguarding Steering Group (DSSG) notified of appeal. (Write to: Independent Chair, DSSG, Diocese of Bristol, Hillside House, 1500 Parkway North, Stoke Gifford, Bristol BS34 8YU)

Independent Chair identifies panel of three individuals taken from DSSG membership (not to include Diocesan Secretary).

Individual subject to assessment is invited to submit any documents or a statement to the Independent Chair that they wish to be considered by the panel.

DST provides Independent Chair with anonymised material (investigation report/ risk assessment/ agreement/ action plan dependent on case).

Independent Chair reviews and forwards anonymised material to the individuals on the panel. Chair will request any additional information required from individual subject to risk assessment or the DST or others.

Panel members individually review material.

Independent Chair convenes a panel meeting in person or by teleconference at which the appeal and information submitted are considered.

The panel will consider the information submitted alongside the guidance 'Practice Guidance: Risk Assessment for individuals who may pose risk to children or adults' June 2015 and any other relevant Church of England policy or guidance and any legislation relevant. The panel will then reach one of the following conclusions:

The meeting is adjourned, either whilst additional information is obtained or for consideration.

The appeal has no grounds and is therefore dismissed

The appeal has grounds and recommendations are made for amendments to the implementation of the risk management plan or agreement.

There has been a breach of relevant policy or poor professional practice in which case a recommendation may be made to the relevant line manager for appropriate procedures to be followed.

The individual subject to investigation, the DST and the commissioning body will be informed of the panel's decision in writing. The Commissioning body will then be responsible for considering, with support of the DST any panel recommendations.

Report made to Bishop and to next DSSG with case summary, panel recommendations and actions taken.

If you have any concerns or need to talk to any one please contact our Safeguarding Officer Brenda Young on 01793 339 742.