



Policy & Approach to DBS Checking

Introduction

The Disclosure & Barring Service (formerly the Criminal Records Bureau, CRB, and the Independent Safeguarding Authority, ISA) aims to help employers make safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups.

We need to have a clear and consistent DBS Policy to:

1. ensure the safety of vulnerable adults accessing the Night Shelter and Drop-In;
2. ensure the safety of other volunteers and the security of the Church building and contents;
3. comply with our contractual agreements.

Approach/Guiding Principles

- A. DBS Checks are designed to ensure that **we have full and accurate information to assess** the safety and suitability of people who wish to volunteer at the Night Shelter or Drop-In.
- B. Our primary method of assessing candidates' suitability for volunteering remains a combination of:
 - i. our own character assessment based on interviews and observations;
 - ii. references;
 - iii. the candidates' declarations of any criminal convictions on their Volunteer Application Form.
- C. There are some types of offences that will automatically bar a potential volunteer, particularly those where vulnerable people have been targeted and abused.
- D. Most offences will not necessarily prevent an applicant from volunteering with us, particularly if they have been candidly declared, and the applicant can talk about how they have moved on from that offence.
- E. We recognise that most of the people who attend the Night Shelter and the Drop-In either have criminal records or are engaged in illegal activities, and as a result we feel it is beneficial to our service for some of our volunteers to have practical personal experience not only of homelessness but also of going through the criminal justice system.



Policy

1. We will seek to obtain DBS (or CRB) Checks for all our volunteers and staff.
2. We will ensure that at least one person has a DBS Check on each shift.
3. If we are waiting for DBS Checks but all our other checks have been ok and a volunteer has made a disclosure, we will allow that person to volunteer in a supervised role.
4. We don't provide services that require one-to-one working with people and we will try to avoid working in this way.
5. We won't allow people without a DBS Check to work unsupervised, and particularly not one-to-one with people using our services.
6. If someone makes a disclosure about their criminal record and we find additional undisclosed convictions on receipt of their DBS Check, that person will be immediately suspended from their volunteering role until further checks and assessments have been made.
7. We will comply with relevant guidance from the Churches Agency for Safeguarding who carry out our checks for us, from The Baptist Union of Great Britain, and from the Home Office Disclosure and Barring Service.
8. We will ensure that we only use DBS checks for the purpose for which they are intended, that we will keep all information confidential, that we will keep all DBS information in a safe and secure place, and that we will dispose of it appropriately.