

Lower Earley *Family Contact Centre*

Recruitment and DBS Policy

Scope

This policy covers DBS Disclosure Information for Volunteers, the recruitment of ex-offenders and the storage, correct handling, use, retention and disposal of Disclosure information.

General Principles

As part of the National Standards of the National Association of Child Contact Centres (NACCC) of which Lower Earley Family Contact Centre is a member, it is required that all new volunteers will have an enhanced criminal records disclosure through the DBS to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust.

This must be undertaken for all volunteers prior to their commencement of service, regardless of disclosures currently held, and repeated every 3 years.

All DBS-Registered Bodies and organisations using their service must treat Disclosure applicants who have a criminal record fairly and not discriminate because of a conviction or other information revealed. It also obliges organisations to have a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders, a copy of which can be given to applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.

NACCC is a registered umbrella body processing DBS disclosures for its member centres.

Our Centre complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice and the Data Protection Act 1998 regarding the safe and correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure information.

Recruitment

All advertisements for positions within this Centre will contain the statement, 'A Disclosure and Barring Service disclosure will be requested in the event of a successful application'.

In accordance with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 all application forms will contain the statement that, 'a criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to obtaining a position'.

All application forms will contain a section requiring the signature of the applicant stating they are willing for a DBS disclosure to be undertaken.

We make every subject of a DBS Disclosure aware of this policy and the existence of the DBS Code of Practice.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/474742/Code_of_Practice_for_Disclosure_and_Barring_Service_Nov_15.pdf

The Centre is committed to the fair treatment of its volunteers and users of its services. 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. We select all candidates for interview based on their interest.

Volunteers

This Centre recognises that an offence listed in a disclosure is not necessarily a bar to volunteering. We encourage all applicants called for interview to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process. We request that this information is sent under separate, confidential cover, to a designated person within the Centre and we guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.

This Centre will review any information listed in a disclosure and in accordance with the DBS Code of Practice will consider the following when reviewing an applicant's suitability:

- a. Whether the conviction or other matter revealed is relevant to the position in question,
- b. The seriousness of any offence or other matter revealed,
- c. The length of time since the offence or other matter occurred,
- d. Whether the applicant has a pattern of offending behaviour or other relevant matters, and

- e. The circumstances surrounding the offence and the explanation(s) offered by the convicted person.

The Management Committee or person with legal responsibility will have the final decision as to the suitability of an appointment of a person. This decision will be taken in accordance with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and will be after discussion with the individual applicant.

Payment for DBS Checks

Currently the DBS do not charge for checks on volunteers and whilst this continues the NACCC will continue to process volunteer applications without charge.

Security & Retention of Disclosure Information

This Centre takes confidentiality seriously and ensures that all information relating to disclosures is kept securely. Only the Centre Coordinator will have access to this.

DBS sends out two copies of each disclosure per application. One copy is sent to the applicant, who presents it to the co-ordinator / team leader, who reads it and notes the number. The second copy is sent to a named member of staff at the NACCC Registered Office.

Storage and access

Disclosure information should be kept securely, in lockable, non-portable, storage containers with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

Handling

In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, Disclosure information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. We maintain a record of all those to whom Disclosures or Disclosure information has been revealed and it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

Usage

Disclosure information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

Retention

Once a recruitment decision has been made, we do not keep Disclosure information for any longer than is necessary. This is generally for a period of up to six months, to allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints. If, in very exceptional circumstances, it is considered necessary to keep Disclosure information for longer than six months, we will consult the DBS about this and will give full consideration to the data protection and human rights of the individual before doing so. Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding the safe storage and strictly controlled access will prevail.

Disposal

Once the retention period has elapsed, we will ensure that any Disclosure information is immediately destroyed by secure means, i.e. by shredding, pulping or burning. While awaiting destruction, Disclosure information will not be kept in any insecure receptacle (e.g. waste bin or confidential waste sack). We will not keep any photocopy or other image of the Disclosure or any copy or representation of the contents of a Disclosure. However, notwithstanding the above, we may keep a record of the date of issue of a Disclosure, the reference number, the name of the subject and the details of the recruitment decision taken.