



The Parish of Horndon, Orsett and Bulphan

Policy Statement for the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

The Church of England¹ requires that all parishes have a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders so that applicants for paid and volunteer positions are clear about how they will be treated if they are ex-offenders.

1. As an organisation assessing applicants' suitability for positions which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974² (Exceptions) Order using criminal record checks processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), we comply fully with the code of practice³ and undertake to treat all applicants for positions fairly.
2. We undertake not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.
3. We can only ask an individual to provide details of convictions and cautions that we are legally entitled to know about. Where a DBS certificate at either standard or enhanced level can legally be requested, we can only ask an individual about convictions and cautions that are not protected.
4. We are committed to the fair treatment of staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion⁴, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.
5. We have a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders, which is made available to all DBS applicants at the start of the recruitment process.
6. 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.
7. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.
8. An application for a criminal record check is only submitted to DBS after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a criminal record check is identified as necessary, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that an application for a DBS certificate will be submitted in the event of the individual being offered the position.
9. We ensure that all those who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offence. (see below regarding Responding to DBS Disclosures & Information)
10. We also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
11. At interview, or in a separate discussion, we 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. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment
12. We make every subject of a criminal record check submitted to DBS aware of the existence of the code of practice⁵ and make a copy available on request
13. We undertake to discuss any matter revealed on a DBS certificate with the individual seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

The Church of England's practice guidance on Safer Recruitment⁸ states clearly that the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (in the Diocese of Chelmsford this means that contact must be made with the Safeguarding Team) must be informed when there are disclosures of cautions, convictions, reprimands or police intelligence in order to ensure that the relevance of the offences and associated risk are assessed.

This policy was reviewed and agreed at a PCC meeting on 3rd March 2023

This policy will be reviewed every five years or earlier if any of the guidance is changed.

Next review date is January 2028

¹ Church of England Safer Recruitment Practice Guidance: www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-11/safeguarding%20safer_recruitment_practice_guidance_2016.pdf (Section 2.3, July 2016)

² Full text available here: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1974/53

³ DBS Code of Practice: www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-code-of-practice

⁴ See Appendix 1 for information about Genuine Occupational Requirements (GOR).

⁵ DBS Code of Practice: www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-code-of-practice