

Policy Statement on the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

This policy statement applies to all recruitment and selection processes where:

- The Manchester Diocesan Board of Finance is the employer and/or,
- Appointments are made which will require a licence from the Bishop.
- Volunteers

It will apply to any diocesan roles where the Church of England's Safer Recruitment Policy indicates that a DBS check is required.

It is highly recommended that all parishes implement the following policy statement when undertaking their own recruitment and selection processes.

Principles

The Code of Practice published under section 122 of the Police Act 1997 advises that it is a requirement that all registered bodies must treat DBS applicants who have a criminal record fairly and not discriminate automatically because of a conviction or other information revealed.

A copy of the Code of Practice can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-code-of-practice>

Particulars regarding conviction information

On the 29 May 2013, legislation came into force that allows certain old and minor cautions and convictions to no longer be subject to disclosure. In addition, employers are no longer be able to take an individual's old and minor cautions and convictions into account when making decisions. Further guidance is available from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) regarding the filtering of old and minor cautions and convictions which are now 'protected' and therefore not subject to disclosure to employers.

All cautions and convictions for specified serious violent and sexual offences, and other specified offences of relevance for posts concerned with safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, will remain subject to disclosure. In addition, all convictions resulting

in a custodial sentence, whether or not suspended, will remain subject to disclosure, as will all convictions where an individual has more than one conviction recorded.

Diocese of Manchester Policy Statement

- As an organisation assessing applicants' suitability for positions which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order using criminal record checks processed through the DBS, the Diocese of Manchester complies fully with the Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants fairly.
- The Diocese of Manchester undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.
- The Diocese of Manchester will 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 (where the position is one that is included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended, and where appropriate Police Act Regulations as amended), the Diocese of Manchester will only ask an individual about convictions and cautions that are not protected.
- The Diocese of Manchester 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.
- The Diocese of Manchester is committed to equality for all job applicants and aim to select people for employment or service based on their skills, abilities, experience, knowledge and, where needed, qualifications and training.
- An application for a criminal record check is only submitted to the DBS after a 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, the application pack will include a clear statement that an application for a DBS certificate will be submitted in the event of an individual being offered the position.

- For those positions where a criminal record check is identified as necessary, applicants who are provided with a conditional offer of employment will be required to complete a Confidential Declaration Form as part of their pre-employment checks. The Confidential Declaration Form, in broad summary, asks if there is any reason why they should not be working with children and adults experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect. Should a volunteer or applicant not wish to complete the Confidential Declaration, which is entirely their choice, the application will not proceed further and will be terminated.
- Having a criminal record may not necessarily be a bar to working with children or adults experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect. Any information provided on either a Confidential Declaration Form or a DBS certificate will be assessed by the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser to assess whether an appointment can be made.
- The Diocese of Manchester ensures that those involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences or are aware of whom to seek guidance from which will normally be the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser. The Diocese of Manchester also ensures 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.
- At interview, or in a separate discussion, the Diocese of Manchester ensures 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.
- The Diocese of Manchester undertakes to discuss any matter revealed on a DBS certificate with the applicant before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment. Where a DBS check reveals convictions that may be relevant, the Diocese reserves the right to employ an individual subject to a risk assessment and a risk management plan being put in place. Failure to accept the outcomes of the risk assessment or abide by the risk management plan could result in employment not being offered or the employment being terminated.

Data Protection

- The Diocese of Manchester processes information about individuals' criminal records in accordance with its data protection policy. We hold data collected

during recruitment securely. We will allow only authorised individuals to access or disclose personal data for the purposes of completing the recruitment process.

- We will destroy securely any information about criminal records gathered in the course of the recruitment process. No personal data related to criminal records will be transferred to an individual's employment file.
- Link for Unlock - team who provide support to ex-offenders [Unlock](#)