

## Fact-Sheet: Understanding CRB & disclosure

The CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) started the disclosure service in 2002 out of huge public concern over paedophilia, support for the child protection agenda, and a need for a more stringent approach to recruitment.

With disclosure, the CRB aims to increase information to help provide protection for children and the vulnerable against those who might wish to hurt them, and to allow more informed recruitment decisions to protect your clients, staff, volunteers and organisation. Disclosure is a “one stop shop”, which consolidates information held on the Police National Computer, by the Department of Health and Department for Education and Skills and local police forces.

### Who is affected by disclosure?

Organisations are entitled to ask for a disclosure during the recruitment process if the profession is listed in the Exceptions Order to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 – this includes **those working with children and vulnerable adults**, Medical practitioners, dentists, taxi drivers and social workers and others in positions of trust.

### Levels of disclosure

There are two levels of disclosure available (although the government intend to introduce a third, lower, level- basic disclosure, at some point in the future – this will be slightly different, and the process is not included in this guide)

- **Enhanced disclosure**

For those regularly caring for, supervising, training or being in sole charge of children or vulnerable adults

The disclosure contains spent and unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings held on the Police National Computer, and for posts involving working with children, relevant information contained on the Department of Health and Department for Education and Skills lists. It may also contain relevant non-conviction information held by local police forces.

- **Standard disclosure**

Is for those working with children or having regular contact with vulnerable adults. It will contain the same information as above, with the exception that it won't have the local police force information.

### Which should we be using?

The advice from CRB is that enhanced disclosure should be used for those who have regular, one to one, contact with children or vulnerable adults, with standard disclosure in other cases.

### How does the process work?

Organisations wishing (and entitled to) benefit from standard & enhanced disclosure for a number of staff or volunteers should consider registering with the CRB as a Registered

body. This costs £300, and registered bodies are obliged to comply with the Code of Practice. However, many smaller organisations may wish to access disclosure through an umbrella organisation: a registered body that provides the service to other groups. Once an organisation has been registered, or an umbrella body selected and confirmed, the process to apply for an individual is quite straightforward.

### **Applying for disclosure**

There are two ways of doing this:

- The applicant can either phone the Disclosure application line directly, and will be asked a range of personal information to confirm their identity. Once identity has been provisionally established, the information provided will be sent to the applicant for their signature, to confirm the details recorded and indicating their consent to the check. They should then pass this form to the person who asked them to apply (or the umbrella body). These are called the counter signatories, who will check the identity details against original documentation (such as the applicant's driving licence or passport). The counter signatory will then sign the application form and send it to the CRB for processing.
- Alternatively, most umbrella bodies now have a supply of application forms. The counter signatory will assist the applicant in completing the form, and check the identity details against documentation, as above, before signing it and sending it to the CRB for processing. Applying in this way is the most common, with 80% of applications being done like this, as it means that the applicant does not need to talk directly to the CRB.

On receipt of the application, the CRB will access the relevant databases to produce the disclosure document. A copy of the disclosure will be sent to both the applicant and the counter signatory within the registered body or umbrella organisation.

### **Standards of fairness and impartiality**

The CRB provides a code of practice to ensure the information released in a disclosure is used fairly and to reassure those applying for disclosures that sensitive information about them will be treated appropriately. In particular, organisations entitled to use disclosure shall:

- Have a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders
- Ensure that application forms for positions where disclosures will be requested contain a statement outlining that fact
- Encourage those seeking positions to declare any convictions, or other matters that might be relevant, at an early stage of the recruitment process
- Discuss any matters revealed by Disclosure with the person seeking the position before making a recruitment decision

For example, a disclosure may reveal that someone has a spent conviction for a motoring offence or even assault – an organisation should assess how relevant that information is to the post applied for, and discuss the findings of the disclosure with the applicant.

Remember disclosures are just a snapshot in time – they were correct at the time of issue, and only contain information if someone has been “caught”.

They should therefore be used as part of a range of good recruitment practices, including taking up of references, interviews etc, rather than relied on as a statement of someone's good character.

### **How much does it cost?**

Enhanced disclosure fee: £29 for paid workers, free for volunteers

Standard disclosure £24 for paid workers, free for volunteers

In addition, you will either need to become a registered body (fee £300) or use an umbrella organisation to access the disclosure process. Umbrella bodies are entitled to charge a reasonable administration fee for their work, which is typically £5-£12 per applicant.

If you are preparing a funding bid, the cost for disclosure is a legitimate cost that can be included in your application

### **How long does it take?**

The CRB are currently processing 90% of standard disclosures in two weeks, and 90% of enhanced disclosures in four weeks.

### **How do I find an umbrella body?**

If you are affiliated to a regional or national organisation, check whether they are a registered umbrella body. This may be suitable for sports or church affiliated groups.

There is a list of umbrella bodies on the disclosure website [www.disclosure.gov.uk](http://www.disclosure.gov.uk)

Please ask DDCVS for an information sheet on where to get a CRB check in Derbyshire. Tel 01629 812154. Email [enquiries@ddcvs.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ddcvs.org.uk)

### **Useful contact addresses**

CRB Information line 0870 90 90 811 minicom 0870 90 90 344

[www.crb.gov.uk](http://www.crb.gov.uk)

[www.disclosure.gov.uk](http://www.disclosure.gov.uk)

### **Useful publications**

Employing people with conviction: good practice guide on the employment of people with criminal records. Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, 2001. [www.cipd.co.uk](http://www.cipd.co.uk)

Recruiting safely: Guidance for employers and other bodies in the health and social care field on recruiting and retaining staff and volunteers with criminal records. NACRO, 2001. [www.nacro.org.uk](http://www.nacro.org.uk)

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