



Wandsworth Voluntary Sector Development Agency

enabling voluntary action

Carrying out CRB checks what your organisation needs to know

Organisations that wish to carry out Criminal Records disclosures (CRB checks) must comply with the Criminal Record Bureau's Code of Practice, to ensure that:

- the information disclosed in the CRB check will be used fairly, and that
- sensitive personal information is handled and stored appropriately and is kept for only as long as necessary.

Therefore, if your organisation is carrying out CRB checks on volunteers or paid staff you should have a policy stating:

1. who is responsible for undertaking the CRB checking of staff and/or volunteers in your organisation,
2. how this information is stored, how long the information is kept and who is entitled to look at this information,
3. who will make the decision to employ or not employ someone should a CRB check reveal a criminal conviction,
4. your policy regarding the recruitment of ex-offenders.

You should also have in place the following procedures covering recruitment for posts requiring CRB checks, processing handling and storage of CRB checks.

Recruitment:

- You must ensure that your organisation states in any advertisement if the post will require a CRB check.
- You should still undertake work references to check the person's suitability, skills and character for the work.
- You can make an offer of employment subject to satisfactory references and CRB.
- You must undertake a CRB check on staff or volunteers BEFORE they are allowed access to your vulnerable clients. This should be confirmed in your policy.



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- You can accept a previous CRB if your own policy allows it and as long as your organisation follows certain procedures and accepts responsibility for possible risks – this is called portability.

CRB checks:

- You will need to have named person(s) who will deal with the CRB checking process. Only these named persons in your organisation should be able to see or deal with confidential information.
- You will need to train your staff to understand the CRB process and be able to make recruitment decisions based on the information received.
- You will need to ensure there is a procedure for assessing potential causes for concern and associated risks and making decisions regarding employing or not employing someone should a CRB check reveal a criminal conviction (e.g. having in place a CRB sub committee or panel).
- There should also be an appeals process should a prospective applicant wish to appeal against a decision made by your organisation.

Storage and handling:

- Information received needs to be treated as confidential and have restricted access in terms of personnel (those listed on your policy) and storage (locked cabinet).
- You should only hold the information for 6 months, so you need to ensure that information is destroyed safely i.e. shredded.

If you would like further information or advice on any of the issues in this document, please contact Wandsworth Voluntary Sector Development Agency (WVSDA) on 020 8875 2844/6 or Email: smallgroups@wvsda.org.uk or info@wvsda.org.uk.

More Guidance Notes can be found on the downloads page of our website: www.wvsda.org.uk.

The Wandsworth Voluntary Sector Development Agency (WVSDA) provides information, advice and training to assist voluntary and community groups with issues relating to setting up and managing effective organisations. Whilst every effort is taken to ensure the information, advice and support we offer is current, relevant and accurate, it does not constitute legal advice.