

## Recruitment of volunteers with a criminal record Policy



### Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to set out our approach to recruitment and selection of volunteers who may have a criminal record.

(To be read in conjunction to the recruitment and selection policy)

### Aims of Policy

**The aim of the policy is to: -**

- Select the right person for the Volunteer role
- Safeguard the vulnerable adults, Carers, staff, volunteers', members of the public and young carers that the volunteer may come into contact with.

### Selection

#### **How to make a recruitment decision**

The following needs to be considered when deciding whether to recruit someone with a criminal record:

- The potential volunteer's suitability for the role
- The relevance of the offence
- The level of risk they pose, to the organisation and those that come into contact with it
- The setting in which the volunteering activity will take place

#### **Suitability for the volunteering role**

It is important to establish at first the volunteer's suitability for the role they are applying for in the following ways:

- Can the person undertake the task that is required of them?
- Do they have the essential skills or experience needed for the role?
- If not, do they have the ability to develop them?
- If the answer is yes, only then should criminal convictions be taken into account when weighing up someone's suitability for the volunteering role.

## Recruitment of volunteers with a criminal record Policy



### The relevance of the offence

In some cases, it may be necessary to hold a second meeting with the potential volunteer to find out more about the circumstances in which the offence occurred.

Factors to consider when making a recruitment decision will include:

- Whether or not the conviction is relevant to the volunteering opportunity
- The nature and seriousness of the offence
- The circumstances surrounding the offence and the explanation offered by the applicant
- How old the applicant was when the offence was committed
- The length of time since the offence occurred
- Whether the behaviour that constituted the offence is still a cause for concern
- Whether the context behind that behaviour is still a cause for concern
- Whether the applicant has a pattern of offending behaviour
- Whether the applicant's circumstances have changed
- The applicant's attitude to the offence. Is it one of remorse? Does the applicant take responsibility for it and recognise the harm they caused?
- Whether the offence has since been decriminalised
- If the answers to most of these questions are reassuring, then the presumption may be that the potential volunteer does not pose a risk.
- References can be then taken and referees can be questioned where necessary to aid in the decision-making process.

### Managing risk

We will manage risks by:

- Requiring an offender or ex-offender to be 'clean' of offending for a period of at least 5 years before they are able to volunteer, dependent on severity of offence.
- Adapting the volunteering role to reduce levels of risk

## Recruitment of volunteers with a criminal record Policy



- Providing additional levels of supervision for the volunteer
- Identifying if staff or other volunteers need to be aware of any health and safety or personal security issues when working alongside a particular volunteer or a particular type of offender
- Adapting existing risk management policies and procedures to accommodate ex-offender volunteers.

### The volunteering setting

Where the volunteering actually takes place may be another factor in deciding whether or not to recruit an offender or ex-offender as a volunteer for a specific role.

### Discrepancies

There may be occasions when there is a serious discrepancy between what the applicant states and the disclosure certificate shows. If this happens then a decision should be delayed on recruitment until the situation is clarified by the Disclosure and barring service. A new disclosure certificate should be issued.

### Automatic barring

Any applicant who has committed serious crimes against a child or adult, including murder, rape, GBH and sexual offences shall be prohibited from volunteering with any vulnerable adult or child.

### Complaints

Any candidate who considers that they have been unfairly treated or discriminated against should contact the chairperson of the committee. Complaints received will be taken seriously and investigated promptly and sensitively, and we will advise of the outcome.

### Confidentiality

Only the Director of Charity will have access to DBS records and will discuss with volunteers their offences.

All notes DBS's and files on applicants/volunteers will be kept confidential.

(See data protection policy and confidentiality policy)

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<b>Reviewed</b>						
<b>Signature</b>						