

DATA BARRING SERVICES (DBS) POLICY Previously Known As CRB Criminal Records Service

1. Introduction

1.1 This policy has been introduced to ensure fair and responsible recruitment and selection practices for the recruitment and employment.

1.2 The policy also outlines Age Concern Petersfield and District's approach to the employment of ex-offenders and the declaration of past criminal convictions in relation to the Employment of Ex-Offenders and the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Subject to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) order 1975).

1.3 It further outlines our policy for undertaking criminal history (DBS) checks.

1.4 Age Concern Petersfield and District 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.

1.5 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. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.

1.6 Nothing in this policy will contravene the effective implementation of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy of Age Concern Petersfield & District. The organisation will seek to implement all relevant legislation and develop best practice in equality and diversity and other organisation policies will support this objective.

1.7 All applicants will be made aware of the contents of this policy as part of the application process.

2. Definitions

2.1 The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 enables some criminal convictions to become 'spent' or ignored after a rehabilitation period. The period of time which must lapse before a conviction becomes 'spent' is determined by the length and severity of the conviction. Rehabilitation periods therefore vary in length. After this period with certain exceptions an ex offender is not normally obliged to mention their conviction when applying for jobs or obtaining insurance or when involved in criminal or civil proceedings. Some convictions however, are never considered to be 'spent.'

2.2 This act aims to rehabilitate offenders by not making their past mistakes affect the rest of

their lives if they have been on the right side of the law for some time.

2.3 However, to allow employers to protect certain vulnerable groups within society there are specific posts and professions that are exempted from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (ROA). Organisations are therefore legally entitled to ask applicants applying for posts which fall into certain categories for details of all convictions irrespective of whether they are 'spent' or 'unspent' under the ROA. These posts involve access to children, young people, vulnerable adults, specific health service appointments and jobs involving the administration of justice, banking or other financial services and national security all of which are exempted from this Act. A full list of all job categories exempt under the ROA is available from the www.dbs.gov.uk website.

3. Policy

3.1 Age Concern Petersfield and District recognises that it has a duty to its clients and the wider community to take account of offences that may have a direct bearing on a candidate's suitability for a particular post.

3.2. It is Age Concern Petersfield and District's policy to require applicants to disclose any 'unspent' criminal convictions as part of their application. Additionally, in the case of applications for posts that involve access to children or with vulnerable adults or where staff would be in positions of trust, all convictions must be declared.

3.3 Appointment to posts involving regular contact with children and vulnerable adults are subject to a satisfactory DBS check from the Disclosure and Barring Service at the organisation's cost.

3.4 Age Concern Petersfield and District will not discriminate unfairly against applicants with a criminal record. Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar an applicant from working for Age Concern Petersfield and District, the nature of a disclosed conviction and its relevance to the post in question, will be considered.

3.5 All information supplied by staff and volunteers will be treated in strict confidence. Where someone has a conviction that falls within one of the above categories we reserve the right to make further enquiries before reaching a decision on her/his suitability as a volunteer or employee.

3.6 Age Concern Petersfield and District reserves the right to conduct checks on staff, trustees and volunteers through the Disclosure and Barring Service every three years, or at any time if any information comes to the Trustees attention that a further DBS is required. Any additional checks made during the course of the person's employment MUST be made known to the employee for transparency.

3.7 All staff, volunteers and trustees have the responsibility of informing the Chair of Trustees immediately in the event their DBS record has changed. Any changes at any time must be recorded on the DBS Chart and the members of the Board of Trustees informed.

3.8 All applicants, staff and volunteers will be entitled to expect confidentiality for information supplied at the time of application about past convictions and any unauthorised disclosure of this information or related discrimination or harassment will be treated as a disciplinary

matter.

4. Disclosure and Barring Checks

4.1 As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, Age Concern Petersfield and District complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.

POLICY STATEMENT

All Policies and Procedures held by Age Concern Petersfield & District are regularly reviewed and may be amended from time to time to reflect any changes in Legislation, regulatory guidance or internal policy decisions, as well as for any other reasons determined by the Board of Trustees. The latest versions will always be reflected on our website.