

DBS Policy (Including Safe Handling)



Purpose and Scope

As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, Maldon & District Community Volunteer Service (HCMS) complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Certificate information. It also complies fully with its obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998 and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Certificate information full details of which can be found, upon request, in the HCMS's Data Protection Policy.

Application

If, after a thorough risk assessment, it is proportionate and relevant to seek a DBS certificate for any employment or voluntary position, HCMS will make sure all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a DBS check will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position. Documentation will also state the level of disclosure required i.e standard or enhanced.

DBS checks will only be sought for those positions exempted under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974), and /or which are covered by the Police Act 1997 – Part V, and/or fall within the definition of Regulated Activity (Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and Protection of Freedoms Act 2012), and only after evidence of the individual's identity, including their name, date of birth, and current address has been submitted and verified.

In the event that a volunteer is a child, and/or it has been identified that children will frequently be clients, an enhanced DBS certificate **MUST** be held by the supervising employee/volunteer, who must be in attendance at all times, in pursuit of section 2(1) of Part 1 of Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

Further details of recruitment including recruitment of ex-offenders can be found, upon request, in the HCMS's Recruitment Policy.

If employment commences before a DBS certificate has been checked, this will be on a supervised basis only. For those positions requiring a DBS certificate, a new check must be undertaken every three years or the certificate's status checked via the DBS Update Service.

Safe Handling of Certificate Information

Storage & Access

Certificate information is never kept in personnel files and is always kept separately and securely, in lockable, non-portable, storage containers with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

Handling

No photocopies or scanned images of Certificate information will be made, however, in accordance with Section 124 of the Police Act 1997, Certificate information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. HCMS will maintain a record of all those to whom Certificates or Certificate information has been revealed and it recognises that it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to received it.



Usage

Certificate information is only used for the specific purpose of which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

Retention

Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been made, HCMS do not keep Certificate information for any longer than is absolutely necessary. This is generally for a period not exceeding six months, to allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints. If, in very exceptional circumstances, it is considered necessary to keep Certificate information for longer than six-months, HCMS will consult the DBS about this and will give full consideration to data protection and to the Human Rights of the individual subject before doing so. Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding safe storage and strictly controlled access will prevail.

Disposal

Once the retention period has elapsed, HCMS will ensure that any Certificate information is immediately destroyed by secure means, i.e. by shredding, pulping or burning. While awaiting destruction, Certificate information will not be kept in any insecure receptacle (e.g. waste bin or waste sack). HCMS will not keep any photocopy or other image of the Certificate or any copy or representation of the contents of a Certificate.

However, notwithstanding the above, HCMS may keep a record of the date of issue of a Certificate, the name of the subject, the type of Certificate requested, the position for which the Certificate was requested, the unique reference number of the Certificate and the details of the recruitment decision taken.

This policy must be made available, upon request.
