

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Disclosure and Baring Service Policy

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| Cross Reference | Safer Recruitment and Recruitment of Ex-offenders, Complaints, Allegations of Abuse against Trustees, Staff and Volunteers |

Purpose of this document

All staff and volunteers who, through their contact with Aspired Futures (AF) have access to children/young people (CYP) must have appropriate Disclosure and Baring Service (DBS) check to an Enhanced level. Until suitability has been checked no unsupervised contact is permitted with any AF service users.

Details of Policy

The Trustees of AF are committed to promoting the welfare and safety of CYP and retain overall responsibility for the DBS process. The Trustees will comply with charity registration requirements for confirming the suitability of Trustees for a children's charity.

All staff DBS applications are completed by the SMR & HR Manager and all volunteer DBS applications are completed by the Service and Volunteer Manager (SV Manager), with support from the SMR & HR Manager if required.

Designated staff members responsible for the DBS process will ensure that all staff and volunteers;

- Are subject to an Enhanced Level DBS check before taking up their job role or voluntary activity.
- Are aware that if they present a CRB certificate dated after 17th June 2013 but have not previously signed up to the DBS Online Service will need to undergo a full DBS check again.
- Are informed that they must present their DBS certificate as soon as possible upon receipt to the SMR & HR Manager for details to be checked and information logged on the Index spreadsheet.
- Complete an updated check an Enhanced Level every three years. This will show any serious allegation about their conduct with CYP or vulnerable adults or if new information has been recorded. This must be dealt with as soon as the information comes to light to ensure the safety of the CYP.
- They MUST report any possible change to their DBS status to SMR &HR Manager or SV Manager immediately.
- Positions requiring an Enhanced DBS check are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act. This means that all unspent convictions, reprimands or warnings must be disclosed as soon as possible and they should be aware that none disclosure of unspent convictions could lead to ejection from AF.
- Any matter revealed in a disclosure will be discussed with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment or deciding that a prospective volunteer is not suitable for volunteering for AF.

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- Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar an applicant from working with AF. It will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances of the offences disclosed. (Please also refer to AF policy on the recruitment of ex offenders.)
- Every subject of a DBS check will be made aware of the existence of the relevant Code of Practice and a copy will be available on request.

Recruitment

DBS checks are undertaken alongside other recruitment checks which together help to safeguard the CYP. These include:

- Clear job descriptions and person specifications
- Completed letter of application for staff positions or registration form for voluntary positions.
- A written declaration by the candidate and the disclosure of any unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands or warnings, as well as any pending cases.
- Fair and robust selection process through the AF Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy
- At least two suitable written references obtained for staff positions
- Volunteers are asked to attend a number of supervised session visits as a visitor before applying to be a volunteer.
- Proof of identity including photographic identity document, and a birth or marriage certificate
- Validation of qualifications
- Investigation of gaps in employment
- Probationary period and full induction programme
- On-going training opportunities and the compulsory completion of a Level 1 Safeguarding Online programme as part of the induction.
- All staff are asked to sign a Code of Conduct and volunteers asked to sign a Volunteer Agreement as part of their induction
- All staff and volunteers are made aware of the AF Complaints and Allegations of Abuse against Trustees, Staff and Volunteers policies if they have concerns about anyone associated with AF.
- Regular formal/informal supervision and appraisal on a 3 monthly basis.

Storage and Access

- AF will ensure that disclosure information is never kept on an applicant's personnel file and is always kept separately and securely on a passworded spreadsheet on the main office computer only accessible by the relevant staff.

Handling and Usage

- Disclosure information will only be passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. AF recognises that it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.
- Disclosure information will only be used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

Retention

- AF will not keep disclosure information for any longer than is absolutely necessary once a decision has been made about the application. Normally this will be for up to a period of six months, to allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints.

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- If, in very exceptional circumstances, it is considered necessary to keep disclosure information for longer than six months, AF will consult the DBS about this and will give full consideration to the Data Protection Act.
- Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding safe storage and strictly controlled access will prevail.
- A record will be maintained of all those to whom disclosures or disclosure information has been revealed.
- Archived personal records are kept in a locked cupboard, in a locked office and are accessible to appropriate staff members only.

Disposal

- Once the retention period has elapsed, AF will ensure that any disclosure information is immediately destroyed by secure means.
- While awaiting destruction, disclosure information will not be kept in any insecure receptacle.
- AF will not keep any photocopy or other image of the disclosure or any copy or representation of the contents of a disclosure.
- However, notwithstanding the above, Aspired Futures may keep:
 - A record of the date of issue of a Disclosure
 - The name of a subject
 - The type of Disclosure requested
 - The position for which the Disclosure was requested
 - The unique reference number of the Disclosure
 - The details of the recruitment decision taken.
 - A copy of the signed permission form to apply for an update on DBS information.