



West Sussex Policy on the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

Approved by: HR Officer

Date: September 2025

Last reviewed on: September 2025

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General Statement

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar ex-offenders from working with us. This will depend on the offence and the relevance of the offence in relation to the position applied for. The factors taken into account will include the responsibilities of the position, the vulnerability of the client group, the nature of the offence(s), the number and pattern of the offences (if there is more than one), how long ago the offence(s) occurred and the age of the offender when the offence(s) occurred.

Introduction

WSCC uses the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checking service to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust. As a registered body of the DBS, the County Council must comply fully with the DBS Code of Practice. Amongst other things, this requires the County Council to treat fairly all job applicants who have a criminal record and not to discriminate unfairly against anyone who is the subject of a DBS check on the basis of conviction or other information revealed. It also obliges the County Council to have a written policy on the recruitment of such individuals, which can be given to all applicants for positions where a DBS check is requested. Adherence to this policy will ensure compliance with the DBS Code of Practice in this respect.

Policy

As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checking service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, we aim to comply fully with the DBS Code of Practice and undertake to treat all applicants for positions fairly. We undertake not to discriminate unfairly against anyone who is the subject of a DBS check on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.

- We are committed to the fair treatment of our staff, potential staff or users of our services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependents, age, physical/mental disability, or offending background.
- This policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders is made available to all DBS applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.
- We actively promote equality of opportunity for all to achieve 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 on the basis of their aptitude, skills, qualifications and experience in relation to the requirements of the post.
- A DBS is only requested after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a DBS check is required, the recruitment information will contain a statement that a DBS check will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position.
- Certain old and minor cautions and convictions will no longer be subject to disclosure under the Exceptions Order 1975 (2013). However, for posts concerned with safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, WSCC is allowed to ask about any convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings, which would not be removed as part of the police filtering process. Please refer to the information provided by the DBS on filtering.
- Where a DBS check is to form part of the recruitment process, we encourage all applicants called for interview to provide details of any convictions, cautions, reprimands or warnings which would not be removed as part of the police filtering process at an early stage in the application process. We guarantee that this information

is only seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process. suitable guidance to enable them to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of the offence in relation to the position applied for. We also ensure that they have access to appropriate guidance on the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

- At interview/assessment, or in a separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position applied for could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.
- We make every subject of a DBS check aware of the existence of the DBS Code of Practice and make a copy available on request.
- We undertake to discuss any positive disclosures in a meeting with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment. As DBS certificates are provided to the applicant only, it will be necessary for the applicant to produce their original DBS certificate at this meeting.

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