

Policy on Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) for Staff, Volunteers and Board of Directors

1. General Principles and Recruitment

Following National Standards, at FordHaven it is required that all newly appointed staff, volunteers and members of the management committee undergo a criminal records disclosure through the Disclosure and Barring Service ("DBS").

All advertisements for positions within FordHaven, whether for volunteers or paid staff will contain the statement, 'A DBS disclosure will be requested in the event of a successful application'.

In accordance with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (and its amendments 2020) all application forms will contain the statement that 'a criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to obtaining a position'.

All application forms will contain a section requiring the signature of the applicant stating they are willing for a DBS disclosure to be undertaken.

SPARK Somerset is a registered body processing DBS disclosures for its clients, which FordHaven is one of.

All existing staff/volunteers/management committee members will undergo a further DBS disclosure or online check every 3 years

2. Paid Staff/Volunteers

FordHaven recognises that an offence listed in a disclosure is not necessarily a bar to employment or volunteering.

FordHaven will review any information disclosed under the DBS procedure and in accordance with the DBS Code of Practice will consider the following when reviewing the suitability of that person's appointment with the Centre:

- a. Whether the conviction or other matter revealed is relevant to the position in question.
- b. The seriousness of any offence or other matter revealed.
- c. The length of time since the offence or other matter occurred.

d. Whether the person has a pattern of offending behaviour or other relevant matters.

e. The circumstances surrounding the offence and the explanation(s) offered by the person.

The Management Committee or person with legal responsibility will have the final decision as to the suitability of an appointment or continued employment of a person. This decision will be taken in accordance with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and will be after discussion with the person concerned.

- Each applicant, staff member, volunteer or management committee member will be made aware that upon request a copy of the DBS Code of Conduct and this policy can be provided. This statement will be included in the application form.

3. Security & Retention of Disclosure Information

FordHaven takes confidentiality seriously and ensures that all information relating to disclosures is kept in a secure place, under lock and key.

Only relevant employees who have been assigned responsibility for disclosure information have access to this.

DBS only send out the disclosure to the applicant. It is therefore important that you see the disclosure and make a note of the disclosure number and date for your records to enable three yearly DBS checks to be carried out.

4. Levels of Disclosure

FordHaven processes all disclosures at the level of 'enhanced' as defined by the DBS.

5. Payment of DBS Disclosures

- Currently the DBS do not charge for disclosures on volunteers and whilst this continues FordHaven will continue to process volunteer applications without charge. However, there is a processing fee per application of £26 due to the independent organisation. A voluntary contribution towards this is welcomed but not essential.
- There is a charge for paid staff and this cost is paid by FordHaven.

Approved by: Roxana Ford - Director
Last reviewed: March 2024
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