

**Disclosure and
Vetting and Barring Service
England and Wales**

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CHURCHES'

Child Protection

ADVISORY SERVICE

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Introduction

Criminal records checks are available to help organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors by identifying candidates who may be unsuitable to work with children or other vulnerable members of society. Checks are available to anyone involved in working with children or vulnerable adults in certain situations.

In April 2002 the government introduced new procedures to enable organisations, including churches, to check the criminal record and background of any prospective employee, volunteer or trustee involved in the care, training or supervision of children and vulnerable adults.

The government agency set up to administer these new procedures is the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). Applications for criminal record checks and other information, known as a *Disclosure*, have to be made through a *Registered Body*. Most churches and organisations do not qualify to apply to become a *Registered Body* but checks are possible through another agency (such as CCPAS) known as an *umbrella organisation* appointed by the CRB. CCPAS is one such organisation that can also help users reach appropriate decisions where offences or concerns are revealed by a disclosure check.

Independent Safeguarding Authority / Vetting and Barring Scheme

Following the tragic murders in Soham the Bichard Inquiry questioned the way employers recruit people to work with vulnerable groups, and particularly the way background checks are carried out.

Recommendation 19 of the Inquiry Report highlighted the need for a single agency to vet all individuals who want to work or volunteer with children or vulnerable adults and to bar unsuitable people from doing so. The report led to the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (SVG Act) 2006.

The Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) was set up to fulfil this role across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Scotland is setting up a similar authority linked to the ISA.

In summary, the SVG Act says:

- The ISA will make all decisions about who should be barred from working with children and vulnerable adults
- The activities include both paid and unpaid (voluntary) work
- There will be two separate but aligned ISA Barred Lists (one for those barred from working with children and one for those barred from working with vulnerable adults). Barred individuals can be placed on one or both of these lists
- Some offences will automatically result in the individual being barred, without leave to appeal or to make mitigating representations
- Relevant information about an individual should be referred to the ISA from interested parties such as employers, regulatory bodies or even concerned members of the public (through a recognised authority such as social services)
- Individuals listed on one of the ISA Barred Lists may have the right to appeal to the Care Standards Tribunal on a point of fact or law but not on the ISA's decision
- A series of new criminal offences will be created to enforce the new scheme. These will relate to both employers and employees.

The ISA Vetting and Barring Scheme (VBS) started its initial phase in October 2009 with the creating of the two new barred lists; a legal duty to refer information and the widening of the categories of people who can be checked (particularly for vulnerable adults' workers). From July 2010 those being newly appointed to work with children and / or vulnerable adults can apply to register with the VBS. From November 2010 all new workers in this sector will have to apply. This will be done via a CRB application form and will be

phased in for all others currently working with children and / or vulnerable adults over a five year period to avoid over 11 million eligible people applying at once!

In most cases organisations will still need to carry out a criminal records check in addition to checking a person's status on the scheme. This is because some offences may not cause an individual to be barred from working with children or vulnerable adults but may be relevant for the position the person has applied for eg serious driving offences for someone applying as a youth worker where the duties include driving the youth mini bus.

For full details please follow the link to our website <http://www.ccpas.co.uk/ISA.htm>

What is a 'Disclosure'?

A *Disclosure* is a document containing information held by the police and government departments that provides details of a person's criminal record, including convictions, reprimands and warnings held on the Police National Computer (PNC). It can also contain details from lists and other information held by the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) as well as information held by local police forces.

A *Disclosure*, therefore, enables organisations to check the background of a job applicant (paid or voluntary) to ensure they do not have a history that makes them unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults. A *Disclosure* is an essential element of the appointment process within any church or organisation, forming part of a structured recruitment policy that should include staff supervision, training and support.

The person(s) within the church/organisation handling *Disclosures* is called the *Recruiter*. For CCPAS purposes there is always a *Lead Recruiter* and the CCPAS Disclosure Unit will usually correspond with this person, though there should be at least one other *Recruiter* within the church/organisation who can handle *Disclosure* applications.

Further information, including details about additional *Recruiters*, is contained in the *CCPAS Recruiters Guide*, which will be sent to the *Lead Recruiter* once they have been registered.

There are two types of *Disclosure* applications available, *Enhanced* and *Standard*.

Enhanced Disclosure

An *Enhanced Disclosure* should be applied for where the appointment involves a substantial degree of contact with children or vulnerable adults including regularly caring for, supervising, training or being in sole charge of such people. This applies to most people working with or responsible for children in a church situation. All the information sources listed above will be checked as well as local police records. In a very small number of cases, and usually to protect a current police investigation, additional information is sent separately to the *Counter-Signatory*, who is the person at the *Registered Body* responsible for handling the disclosure application. This information would not be revealed to the applicant but with police agreement be made available to those within the church or organisation involved in the recruitment decision.

Standard Disclosure

A *Standard Disclosure* is no longer available for those applying to work with children or vulnerable adults.

Paid Worker or Volunteer?

The CRB charges a statutory fee in relation to paid workers. There is no statutory fee in regard to 'volunteer' applications, though CCPAS make a charge to cover our expenses after the first year's 20 free checks. However, the CRB definition of a 'volunteer' is restricted and in some circumstances the statutory fee is required, eg where an organisation provides some benefits in kind, such as subsistence, accommodation and training.

Regulation 2 of the Police Act 1997 (Criminal Records) Regulations 2002 defines a 'volunteer' as:

'A person engaged in an activity which involves spending time, unpaid (except for travel and other approved out-of-pocket expenses) doing something that aims to benefit some third party other than in addition to a close relative.'

For the purposes of the above definition, applicants claiming 'volunteer' status must be 'unpaid'. The CRB advise that the applicant must not be in receipt of any form of payment, be it remuneration, an allowance, benefit, payment in kind, or other means of support in relation to the activity (except where they are considered by the CRB to constitute 'travel and other agreed out-of-pocket expenses'). Students on placement or individuals working towards ordination or accreditation (for example in counselling) are not regarded as volunteers as they will personally benefit from the work they are doing by means of accreditation or a qualification.

If you have any doubts about a particular situation in terms of whether a check can be legally carried out or whether an individual qualifies as a 'volunteer', then it would be wise to contact CCPAS further – preferably by emailing disclosure@ccpas.co.uk. CCPAS will seek clarification from the CRB where necessary.

Checks for Clergy and Leaders with Overall Charge

Most checks carried out by CCPAS are for church workers who are appointed locally. However, most Clergy, for example, hold their appointment by virtue of a Bishop's License. For other leaders it may be a different external accreditation process. Because this type of appointment and therefore any disciplinary matters are handled outside the local church, CCPAS would regard the appropriate person at the denominational headquarters as being directly involved in the recruitment process and therefore reserves the right to discuss a *Disclosure* with this person. The use of the CCPAS Disclosure Service by a local church or branch of an organisation is conditional on this.

How the Appointment Process Should Work

The appointment process should not operate in isolation from a working child protection policy prepared in accordance with the principles contained in the official government guidelines *Safe from Harm (Home Office 1993) (England)* and *Safe from Harm: Safeguarding Children in Voluntary and Community Organisations in Wales (Welsg Assembly Government, 2008) (Wales)* and *Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfES 2006)* – see CCPAS publication 'Safe and Secure' manual.

It is important to stress to applicants that having a criminal record should not necessarily bar the person from being appointed unless children or vulnerable adults would be put at risk. The scope of a criminal records check must be explained to the applicant, including the fact that strict confidentiality is observed. Information relating to the Rehabilitation of Offenders and Safe Storage policies should be made available for applicants to see. Importantly, individuals should also be asked to complete a job application form and self-declaration form before a check is applied for. This gives a person the opportunity to discuss any past issues which could emerge in a check. In such circumstances advice can be given on whether or not information would prevent someone working with children or vulnerable adults. Also, later on where there is a 'blemished' disclosure, the information given by the applicant in a self-declaration can in some cases help in determining the outcome (for example, in assessing their honesty). We advise that the self-declaration form should, when completed, be returned separately in a sealed envelope to the *Recruiter*. See our 'Safe and Secure' manual available to all members in their area of our website.

If, following an interview and taking up references, the church/organisation is satisfied the applicant is suitable for the position, they will be given a *CRB Disclosure Application Form* to fill in. Once this has been done, the form must be passed to the *Recruiter* who will check evidence of identity from original documentation, complete the *Recruiter's* section on the form and send it to the *Registered Body* (e.g. CCPAS). Detailed advice on this is contained in the *CCPAS Recruiter's Guide*.

The *Counter-Signatory* at CCPAS checks and signs the *Disclosure* application and then forwards it to the CRB. Once processed, a certificate will be issued by the CRB to the job applicant and another to the *Registered Body* (CCPAS). CCPAS then sends the certificate with a covering letter to the *Recruiter* (unless the applicant is applying for the role of Recruiter when the certificate is retained and destroyed by CCPAS).

If a past conviction is revealed on the certificate, the *Recruiter* will be informed that they can consult a named individual at CCPAS to help them reach an appropriate employment decision.

Criminal Records Bureau Code of Practice

Introduction

Churches and organisations wanting to use the Disclosure Service are required to comply fully with the *CRB Code of Practice* (APPENDIX B). Individuals or organisations that do not comply risk failing in their obligations, or even committing an offence, under the Human Rights Act and Data Protection Acts. The *CRB Code of Practice* requires:

Fair Treatment

All applicants for positions must be treated impartially (including those who have a criminal record), and not discriminated against unfairly. User organisations must have a written policy, though this does not mean an informed decision cannot be made where information revealed about an individual raises concerns in relation to the safety of children and vulnerable adults. Appendix C is a model policy statement that churches and organisations can use or adapt for this purpose.

Handling and Safekeeping of Information

Churches/ organisations must have a written policy on the correct handling, storing and retention of Disclosure information. Appendix D is a model policy that can be used for this purpose.

It has already been stated that occasionally, additional information may be released as the result of an *Enhanced Disclosure* application. The same procedures outlined in Appendix D apply, but in addition, its existence and/or contents must not be revealed to the applicant or any person not involved in the recruitment decision. To disclose this information without the written permission of the police is a criminal offence. CCPAS is available to give advice in such circumstances, particularly if as a result of the information received, the church or organisation decide they do not wish to appoint the person.

Good Practice by the Registered Body/Umbrella Organisation

As a *Registered Body*, CCPAS is required to take reasonable steps to ensure those using the service are observing the *CRB Code of Practice* and complying with CRB requirements. For this reason CCPAS has to insist it is the only *Registered Body* being used by the church/ organisation, unless it is being required by another statutory body, such as OFSTED, to use their services for a particular activity. From time to time checks may need to be carried out and written notice must be given in advance if its services are to be terminated.

The CRB operates a strict code of practice for its own handling and keeping of personal information and data. They also have a system for monitoring *Registered Bodies* that includes a formal complaints procedure. This can be accessed where there are concerns the *Registered Body* is not working to CRB policies and procedures.

Registering with the CCPAS Disclosure Service

Carrying out criminal records checks is just one part of a safe recruitment policy. For this reason, it is necessary to become a member of CCPAS to access the CCPAS Disclosure Service. If you are not an existing member then you can join by completing the *CCPAS Disclosure Unit Registration Form*. Membership includes 20 free checks for volunteers during the first year. **This assumes a minimum membership period of two years. If you leave before the minimum time, the free checks will need to be paid for.** Members also receive monthly email updates on changes in legislation, government guidelines and CCPAS recommended working practice. Members will also have access to our comprehensive safeguarding manual (Safe and Secure) in the members' area of our website. The recommended donation for this service is £80.00 per annum but if you are a larger church/group/organisation could you consider donating more? If your church or group already offer financial support to CCPAS, please indicate if you wish to become a member without further donation.

Additional Volunteer checks will cost £12.00 including VAT and this charge will be levied for *all* volunteer checks after the first year. Each check for a paid worker is £48.00 (incl VAT). This covers the £36.00 fee levied by the CRB plus the same administrative charge for volunteer checks.

Returned Forms

Forms returned to the sender because they have been incorrectly completed will incur a charge of £4.50 including VAT per form. Incorrect forms cause a significant increase in workload and this charge contributes to covering administrative costs.

Payment

Both the initial donation for membership and subsequent payments should be made by Direct Debit. Specific charges for disclosures are collected on a monthly basis using this means. You will receive a direct debit notification by email giving 15 days notice before any monies are taken. Payment cannot be made using any other method.

NB. CCPAS seeks only to cover the costs of running its Disclosure Service and makes no additional charge for providing consultation on good working practice or individual appointments. Research suggests CCPAS charges are significantly lower than most other *Registered Bodies* and none of these provide the additional support CCPAS offers.

Training

CCPAS training and support to the Recruiters and the wider church/organisation is second to none. We provide two types of training. We have over many years run basic child protection awareness programmes, 'Facing the Unthinkable', which are held in various parts of the country. A distance learning course of the same name is based on DVDs. We are also running training sessions for Recruiters covering current issues – for further information see the CCPAS website.

How to Register

To register and become a member as described above, the church or organisation will need to do the following:

1. Agree to formally adopt a policy on the fair treatment of all applicants and the handling and safe keeping of information (Appendices B, C and D) and agree to work within the *CRB Code of Practice*. These documents should be kept securely. We accept that an organisation may still be working on these documents at the point application is made to join the CCPAS service. However, these documents must have been formally adopted and available to applicants before the Recruiter begins to process checks for workers.

2. Complete and return the *CCPAS Disclosure Registration Form* (found at the back of this document) including the Direct Debit section. (If you already have a Direct Debit arrangement for CCPAS membership you need only complete the form, not the Direct Debit mandate.)
3. Upon receipt of your application, new members will receive from CCPAS a membership pack containing, amongst other things, a Recruiter's CRB application form and booklet.
4. The proposed *Lead Recruiter* should then complete a *CRB Disclosure Application Form* for an *Enhanced Disclosure*. Alternatively, we will accept an *Enhanced Disclosure* less than a year old. The original certificate should be sent to CCPAS at the time of sending the registration.
5. Send the completed *CRB Disclosure Application form* and *Lead Recruiter's* personal identification (see notes below) via Royal Mail Special Delivery to:

CCPAS Disclosure Unit, PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent BR8 7UQ.

Please enclose a self-addressed Special Delivery pre paid envelope for the return of your ID. This can be obtained from the Post Office. Please note that we cannot be held responsible for any ID that goes astray in the post and this is our only recommended method of posting.

6. Upon receipt of clearance from the CRB, CCPAS will confirm registration via email enclosing the *CCPAS Recruiters' Guide* and *Recruiters Validation Form*. From then on the church/organisation can use the CCPAS Disclosure Service to carry out criminal records checks on additional *Recruiters* and *Workers*. Completed applications can be sent to CCPAS for processing without having to send in personal ID as these will have been inspected by an approved *Recruiter*.

Notes:

As already mentioned, the *CRB Disclosure Application Form* is sent as part of the membership pack when people join. However, if you are already a member and you have not received this form, please send an envelope marked 'Request for Recruiter's Form' to the CCPAS Disclosure Unit at the above address, enclosing a stamped self-addressed envelope (A5). The form and accompanying CRB booklet will be sent by return of post. Your completed *CCPAS Disclosure Registration Form* can be submitted in the meantime.

When completing the *CRB Disclosure Application Form* take care to follow all the instructions contained in the booklet which accompanies it. If mistakes are found by CCPAS, please bear in mind the form will be returned for correction and a charge will be made for this. The most common mistakes relate to previous addresses and identity documents. Previous addresses must be continuous over a five year period. For example, if the end of residency at an address is July, the next residency address must start in July, otherwise it will be rejected by the CRB.

Listed below are the main means of identification accepted by the CRB to be enclosed with the *Disclosure Application*. They *must* be the *original* documents (not photocopies) and in the current name (as in section A of the form).

(i) One of the following:

- valid passport (any nationality)
- full UK driving licence (showing date of birth) either old style paper form or photo-card accompanied with the paper counterpart.
- original UK Birth Certificate

(ii) Proof of change of name (e.g. marriage certificate) – we must see this for the Recruiter.

(iii) Two of the following that confirms the applicant's current address and has been issued within the preceding three months:

- Utility Bill
- Credit Card Statement
- Bank Statement
- Store Card Statement
- P45/P60

Once a *Lead Recruiter* has been accepted, any additional *Recruiters* do not have to submit their identification to CCPAS but it must be seen and checked by the *Lead Recruiter*. This process is explained in the *CCPAS Recruiters Guide*.

CCPAS aims to complete registration and the *Disclosure Application* within 28 days but this is obviously dependent upon the CRB responding within their timescales.

Contacting the CCPAS Disclosure Service

The Disclosure Service is open every weekday but times may vary. If the office is closed, opening times will be available on the Disclosure Service answerphone.

The dedicated telephone line is: 0845 120 45 49

Email: disclosure@ccpas.co.uk

Website: www.ccpas.co.uk

Do you have any further questions? The chances are someone has asked the same thing before! Before phoning CCPAS you may find the answer in 'Frequently Asked Questions' on the home page of our website – www.ccpas.co.uk. You will also find it in your membership pack.

APPENDIX A: Glossary of Terms

Child Protection or Safeguarding Policy	All organisations working with children and / or vulnerable adults should formally adopt a Safeguarding Policy. Such policies are recommended in government guidance such as "Safe from Harm" and "Working Together to Safeguard Children". The Charity Commission requires organisations (including churches) to have a child protection policy in place before granting charitable status. Policies are also an expectation of many insurance companies. For churches or organisations without such a policy, CCPAS has a model policy available and can give further advice.
Code of Practice	This Code sets out the Criminal Records Bureau requirements that employers and other bodies must comply with in order to access Standard and Enhanced Disclosures.
Criminal Conviction	A criminal conviction is a finding of guilt by a criminal court. Criminal convictions form part of a criminal record.
Criminal Record	A criminal record relates to a person's convictions, whether spent or unspent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974; cautions; reprimands; final warnings and other non-conviction information such as acquittals.
Criminal Records Bureau	The CRB is an executive agency of the Home Office, set up under the Police Act 1997 for facilitating safer recruitment procedures to protect children and vulnerable adults.
Counter-signatory	An individual within a registered body or umbrella organisation authorised to support applications for a criminal records disclosure.
Disclosures	A Disclosure is a criminal records certificate. There are two types of disclosure: enhanced and standard.
Employment	Employment in CRB terms is interpreted widely and covers volunteer and paid work.
Lead Signatory	The person in the registered body (or umbrella organisation) heading up the service and authorised to support applications for criminal record checks.
Police National Computer	This is the police national database against which all checks are made. This is the only source of information that will be used for Standard Disclosures. For Enhanced Disclosures, checks against local police records will also be made as well as lists held by the Department of Health and Department for Education and Skills.
Recruiter	The description given to the individual within the church or organisation responsible for recruitment of workers. The Recruiter is required to see and check evidence of identity of each applicant and will be the person in direct contact with CCPAS in the checking process. The CCPAS Disclosure Unit will only be able to deal with a named Recruiter in any matters concerning an individual application. Recruiters are required to handle all disclosure information in a sensitive and confidential manner.
Registered Body	The Registered Body is an employer or other agency registered with the Criminal Records Bureau to administer Enhanced and Standard Disclosures.
Safe from Harm	Issued by the Home Office in 1993, "Safe from Harm" contains various recommendations to be adopted by voluntary organisations working with children. The recommendations can be found in CCPAS Safe and Secure Manual.
Umbrella Organisation	Umbrella Organisations are Registered Bodies (see above) who can access CRB information on behalf of organisations not registered in their own right.
Working Together to Safeguard Children	The current edition of Working Together to Safeguard Children was issued in 2006 by the government. It is addressed to statutory and voluntary agencies providing services to children and contains details on how agencies should work together to protect children. The guidance can be viewed at www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/workingtogether/

APPENDIX B: Criminal Records Bureau Code of Practice

This Code of Practice is published under section 122 of the Police Act 1997 ('the Act') in connection with the use of information provided to registered persons ('Disclosure information') under Part V of that Act.

Disclosure information is information:

- contained in criminal record certificates under section 113 of the Act (which are referred to in this Code as 'Standard Disclosures')
- contained in enhanced criminal record certificates under section 115 of the Act (referred to in this Code as 'Enhanced Disclosures')
- provided by the police under section 115(8) of the Act.

Except where indicated otherwise, the Code of Practice applies to all recipients of Disclosure information - that is to say

- registered persons
- those countersigning Disclosure applications on behalf of registered persons
- others receiving such information.

Where reference is made to 'employers', this should be read as including any person at whose request a registered person has countersigned an application, including

- voluntary organisations and others engaging, or using the services of, volunteers
- regulatory and licensing bodies

Further information in relation to the Code, and other matters relating to registered persons and others having an involvement with Disclosure information, is contained in an Explanatory Guide. (See the CRB web site at www.disclosure.gov.uk)

Purpose of the Code

The Code of Practice is intended to ensure, and provide assurance to those applying for Standard and Enhanced Disclosures, that the information released will be used fairly. The Code also seeks to ensure that sensitive personal information is handled and stored appropriately and is kept only for as long as is necessary.

Obligations of the Code

The obligations under the Code are as follows:

1. Fair use of Disclosure information

Recipients of Disclosure information shall:

- observe guidance issued or supported by the Criminal Records Bureau ('the Bureau') on the use of Disclosure information and, in particular, recipients of Disclosure information shall not unfairly

discriminate against the subject of Disclosure information on the basis of conviction or other details revealed.

In the interest of the proper use of Disclosure information and for the reassurance of persons who are the subject of Disclosure information, registered persons shall:

- have a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders, so that a copy can be given to all applicants for positions where a Disclosure will be requested.
- ensure that a body or individual at whose request applications for Disclosures are countersigned has such a written policy and, if necessary, provide a model for that body or individual to use.

In order that persons who are, or who may be, the subject of Disclosure information are made aware of the use of such information, and be reassured, employers shall

- ensure that application forms for positions where Disclosures will be requested contain a statement that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of a successful application, so that applicants are aware of the situation;
- include in application forms or accompanying material a statement to the effect that a criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to obtaining a position, in order to reassure applicants that Disclosure information will not be used unfairly;
- discuss any matters revealed in Disclosure information with the person seeking the position before withdrawing an offer of employment.
- make every subject of a Disclosure aware of the existence of this Code of Practice, and make a copy available on request
- in order to assist staff to make appropriate use of Disclosure information in reaching decisions, make available guidance in relation to the employment and fair treatment of ex-offenders and to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

2. Handling of Disclosure information

Recipients of Disclosure information

- must ensure that Disclosure information is not passed to persons not authorised to receive it under section 124 of the Act. Under section 124, unauthorised Disclosure is an offence
- must ensure that Disclosures and the information they contain are available only to those who need to have access in the course of their duties
- must securely store Disclosures and the information that they contain
- should retain neither Disclosures nor a record of Disclosure information contained within them for longer than is required for the particular purpose. In general, this should be no later than six months after the date on which recruitment or other relevant decisions have been taken, or after the date on which any dispute about the accuracy of the Disclosure information has been resolved. This period should be exceeded only in very exceptional circumstances which justify retention for a longer period.

Registered persons shall

- have a written security policy covering the correct handling and safe-keeping of Disclosure information
- ensure that a body or individual at whose request applications for Disclosures are countersigned has such a written policy, and, if necessary, provide a model for that body or individual to adopt.

3. Assurance

Registered persons shall

- cooperate with requests from the Bureau to undertake assurance checks as to the proper use and safekeeping of Disclosure information.
- report to the Bureau any suspected malpractice in relation to this Code of Practice or any suspected offences in relation to the misuse of Disclosures.

4. Umbrella Bodies

An Umbrella Body

- is one which has registered with the Bureau on the basis that it will countersign applications on behalf of others who are not registered.
- must satisfy themselves that those on whose behalf they intend to countersign applications are likely to ask exempted questions under the Exceptions Order to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Umbrella Bodies must take reasonable steps to ensure that those to whom they pass Disclosure information observe the Code of Practice.

5. Failure to comply with the Code of Practice

The Bureau is empowered to refuse to issue a Disclosure if it believes that

- a registered person, or
- someone on whose behalf a registered person has acted
- has failed to comply with the Code of Practice.

APPENDIX C: CCPAS Model Equal Opportunities Statement

NB. This policy has been drafted for a Christian care organisation and would need to be adapted to suit the needs of others eg a church or non-faith group.

- 1 *(Insert name of organisation)* is a Christian organisation committed to social justice and resolutely opposed to discrimination in society. We are committed to providing services on a fair and equitable basis, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, life-style, sex, sexuality, physical/mental disability, offending background or any other factor. No person requiring services from *(name of organisation)* will be treated less favourably than any other person on any grounds.
- 2 In employment we actively seek to recruit with the right mix of talent, skills and potential, promoting equality for all, and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications, experience and commitment to the values and purposes of the organisation.
- 3 As an organisation seeking to deliver services within a Christian context, some posts can only be filled by Christians. These posts are specified in the *(state where)* and kept under regular review. The nature of these posts or the context in which they are carried out, and their link to the ethos of the organisation, give rise to a genuine occupational requirement (GOR) for the post-holders to be Christians. All staff in these posts are required to demonstrate a clear personal commitment to the Christian faith. This policy is implemented in accordance with Employment and Race Directives issued by the government and ACAS guidance.
- 4 As an organisation using the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure Service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, the church/organisation undertakes to comply fully with the CRB Code of Practice and to treat all applicants for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any person on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.
- 5 A Disclosure is only requested if relevant for the position concerned. For those positions where a Disclosure is required, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered a position.
- 6 Where a Disclosure is to form part of a recruitment process, we encourage all applicants called for interview to provide details of any criminal record at an early stage in the application process. We request that this information is sent separately and in confidence to the Recruiter within the organisation and we guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to, as part of the recruitment process.
- 7 Unless the nature of the position allows questioning about your entire criminal record, we only ask about "unspent" convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- 8 We ensure that all those in the organisation who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance of offences. We will also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- 9 At interview, or in 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 sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment or voluntary work.
- 10 Every person under-going a CRB check will be made aware of the CRB Code of Practice and a copy will be available on request.
- 11 We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a disclosure with the person seeking a position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working with us. This will depend upon the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of your offences.

APPENDIX D: Handling, Use, Secure Storage, Retention & Disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure Information

In consideration of our use of the Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure Service, to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, we agree to comply with the CRB Code of Practice, Data Protection Act and other legislation in regard to the correct handling, use, storage, retention, and disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure information.

Storage and access.

Disclosure information is never kept on an applicant's personal file but stored separately and securely, in a lockable, non-portable, storage container (e.g. filing cabinet), with access strictly limited to those who are entitled as part of their official duties.

Handling.

In accordance with Section 124 of the Police Act 1997, Disclosure information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. We maintain a record of all those to whom Disclosures or Disclosure information have been revealed and we recognise that it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

Usage.

Disclosure information is only used for the specific purpose for 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, Disclosure information may be kept for up to six months for the resolution of disputes or complaints, unless there are exceptional circumstances. If this happens it will be done in consultation with the CCPAS Disclosure Unit who will seek advice from the CRB giving full consideration to the Data Protection and Human Rights legislation. The conditions regarding safe handling and storage will continue to apply.

Disposal.

Once the retention period has lapsed, we will ensure that any Disclosure information is immediately and appropriately destroyed (e.g. by shredding, pulping or burning). While awaiting destruction, Disclosure information will continue to be kept securely. We will not keep any original documents or copies relating to the disclosure certificate. However, we may keep a record of it, i.e. the name, date, and type of disclosure, the position for which it was requested, the unique reference number and the details of the recruitment decision taken.

Our relationship with CCPAS as an Umbrella Organisation.

We accept that the CCPAS Disclosure Unit, as our umbrella organisation, has a responsibility to ensure, as far as possible, that we comply with all the requirements in the CRB Code of Practice, this and other policy statements, and in other CRB procedures and processes. We undertake to keep CCPAS informed of any changes in our organisation, personnel or practices which could materially affect our ability to work within these expectations.

CCPAS - who are we?

The Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service is an independent professional agency offering advice, training and support to churches and organisations across the UK in all areas of child protection and safe working practice. Those registering with its Disclosure Service have access to a wide range of support services including a lo-cost helpline (0845 120 45 50). The helpline is staffed by qualified and experienced social workers and counsellors and includes an 'out of office hours' service for emergencies.

For further information contact us on:

Tel: 0845 120 45 50 (General Enquiries)
0845 120 45 49 (Disclosure Service)

E-mail: info@ccpas.co.uk

Web: www.ccpas.co.uk

CHURCHES'

Child Protection

ADVISORY SERVICE

CCPAS DISCLOSURE UNIT REGISTRATION FORM

Please complete in **BLOCK CAPITALS & BLACK INK** and return in an envelope marked **Confidential** to
Disclosure Service, CCPAS, PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent BR8 7UQ

1. Church/Organisation details

Name: _____

Organisation Type (e.g. church, registered charity): _____

Denomination/Organisation: _____

Statutory Details (company / charity numbers): _____

Established Since: _____ Previous Names: _____

Registered Address: _____

_____ Post code: _____

Tel no: _____ Email: _____

(An email address is essential)

Contact Address: (if different from above. This must be the address of the church or organisation where contact can be made with the *Recruiter* and where copies of disclosures can be securely received):

_____ Post code: _____

Tel no: _____ Email: _____

(An email address is essential)

Name & Telephone Number of Senior Leader in Church/Organisation (other than the *Recruiter* or a relative of the *Recruiter*)

Name: _____ Tel no: _____

2. Are you a CCPAS Member (Updating) already? YES/NO Membership no: _____

