

## SECTION 3

# SAFER RECRUITMENT

- Introduction
- The Recruitment Process
  - 10 Step Procedure
- Activities making a person eligible for an enhanced criminal record check
- Portability of Disclosure and Barring (DBS) Checks

Church settings are safe environments for the great majority of children and adults at risk and, of course, the vast majority of people who work with them have their safety and welfare at heart. It is known, however, that some people seek access to children and adults at risk in order to abuse. In addition, some victims of abuse do not disclose the abuse at the time, so the perpetrator may remain active at the church.

This section covers the safe recruitment of all paid staff and volunteers working with children, young people and adults who may be at risk. Following these procedures is essential so that unsuitable people are not appointed to work with children and adults at risk and that those appointed have access to the guidance, training and support they need to operate safely and effectively. More comprehensive guidance is given in the full Church of England '**Revised Safer Recruitment Policy and Practice Guidance for the Church ( updated 2015)**

The Church of England is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults, care and nurture of children within our church communities. We will carefully select, train and support all those with any responsibility within the Church, in line with Safer Recruitment principles.

This means that we will

- Ensure that our recruitment and selection processes are inclusive, fair, consistent and transparent.
- Take all reasonable steps to prevent those who might harm children or adults who may be at risk from taking up, in our churches, positions of respect, responsibility or authority where they are trusted by others.
- Adhere to safer recruitment legislation, guidance and standards, responding positively to changing understandings of good safer recruitment practice.
- Produce and disseminate practice guidance on safer recruitment for both churches, ensuring that such practice guidance is compatible, and keep it updated.
- Always seek advice from human resources personnel to achieve best possible practice.
- Ensure training on safer recruitment practice guidance.
- Introduce systems for monitoring adherence to the churches' safer recruitment practice guidance and review them regularly.

It should not be forgotten that only a tiny percentage of adults who abuse get caught and still fewer are convicted, so organisations must never rely solely on a criminal record check. Criminal record checks, although crucial, remain only one element of safeguarding and the safer recruitment process:-

## THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

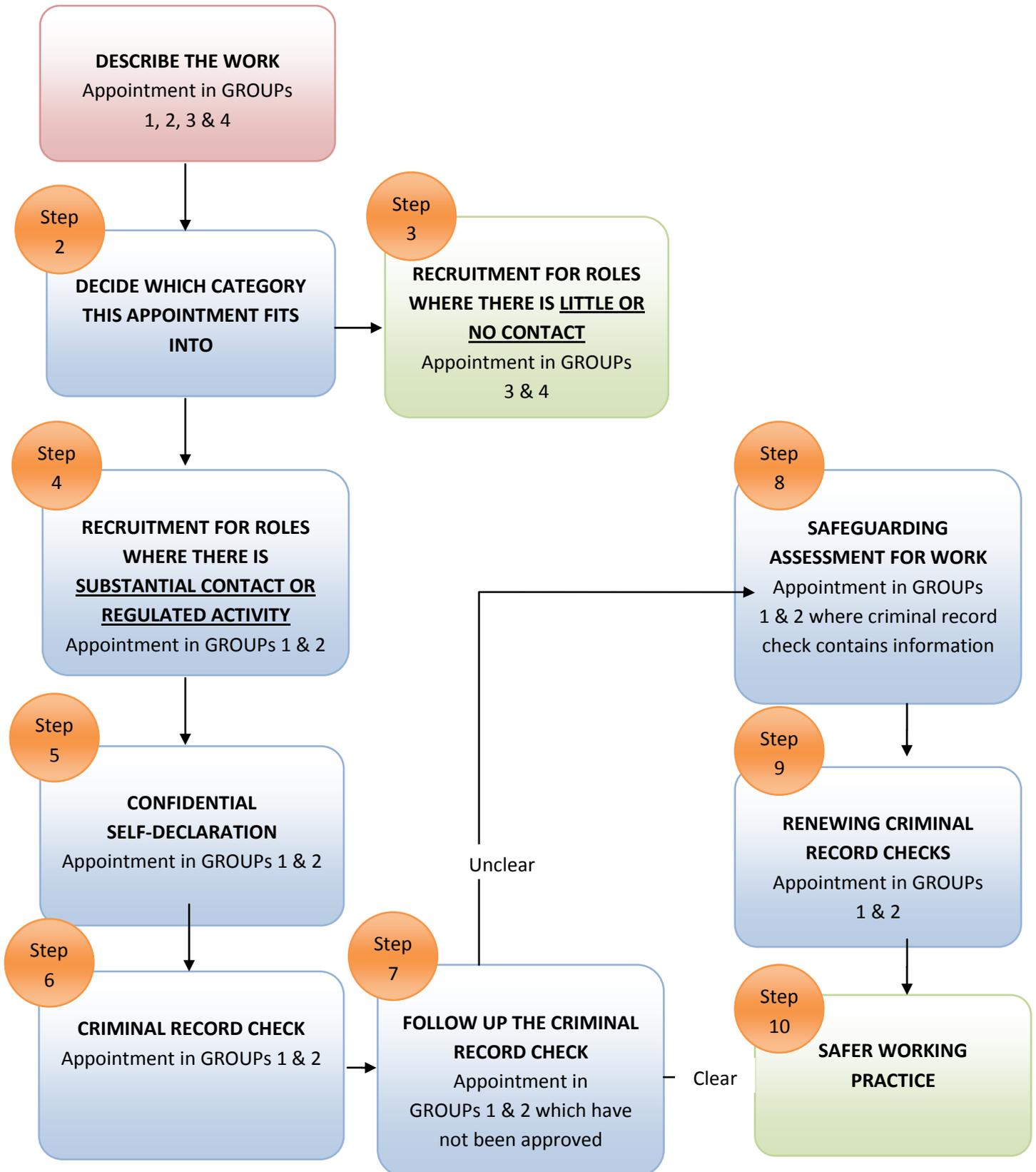
### The steps to safer recruiting:

**Be clear about who is responsible for appointments.** . In local churches this rests with the PCC. Responsibility can be delegated but the person must have been safely recruited him / herself, be capable and competent in recruitment and be able to keep personal matters confidential

**Have a policy statement on the recruitment of ex-offenders.** Applicants should be clear about how they will be treated if they are ex-offenders. The DBS has published a sample policy statement on the recruitment of ex-offenders

**Ensure that there are safeguarding policies in place.** The parish must have adopted the House of Bishops' safeguarding policies

## THE 10 STEP PROCEDURE FOR ALL RECRUITMENT FLOW CHART



## THE 10 STEP PROCEDURE FOR ALL RECRUITMENT

### STEP 1 DESCRIBE THE WORK

- Ensure you have a **written outline** of the role. For paid roles this should be a formal job description and person specification. For voluntary roles a role outline may be preferred. For all roles in GROUPs 1,2,3,4 a statement should be included explaining that the church is committed to safeguarding and that if anyone in this role sees or hears anything that might be a safeguarding risk they should report it immediately to their 'manager' or the safeguarding representative.

### STEP 2 DECIDE WHICH CATEGORY THIS APPOINTMENT FITS INTO

*If uncertain please discuss with someone else in your Safeguarding Team.*

- Decide which workforce this role relates to ( children and young people and / or adults who are or may be vulnerable) Include this in the role outline.

### STEP 3 RECRUITMENT FOR ROLES WHERE THERE IS LITTLE OR NO CONTACT

- Plan the recruitment using the principles and practice of safer recruitment :
  - application form
  - interview / discussion,
  - References
- The Confidential Self Declaration form can be used BUT for GROUPS 3 and 4 it can only ask about unspent and unfiltered convictions/ cautions.

### STEP 4 RECRUITMENT FOR ROLES WHERE THERE IS SUBSTANTIAL CONTACT OR REGULATED ACTIVITY

- Plan the recruitment using the principles and practice of safer recruitment,
  - **Application**
    - Ensure that you carefully examine application forms and references and make sure that the information that has been provided is consistent and the organisation has a satisfactory explanation from the applicant in

relation to any discrepancies and any gaps in the applicant's personal history and/or career.

- **Confidential self- declaration**
- **Interview/ discussion**
  - Have a face-to-face interview or discussion with pre-planned and clear questions to assess a person's suitability for a role.
- **References**
  - **Always** ask for and take up references. Ask referees specifically about an individual's suitability to work with at risk people
- **DBS check.**
  - The applicant should never start in the role until the criminal record check has been received and they have been approved for the work. This applies to both voluntary and paid roles.

## **STEP 5 CONFIDENTIAL SELF - DECLARATION**

- Once it has been decided to appoint to a role ( paid or voluntary) the applicant must always complete a Confidential Self-Declaration form.
- This process offers the person the opportunity to flag up information that may be disclosed through the DBS check
- This should be done with care as people can be deeply embarrassed about incidents from their past.
- The information and process are kept confidential and used for recruitment and safeguarding purposes only.
- Should the person wish to discuss the information the minister and Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser can be involved as appropriate.

## **STEP 6 APPLICATION FOR A DBS RECORD CHECK**

Note: No one can start in a role in Groups 1 and 2 before the criminal record check has been received and the applicant approved for work.

### **DBS Workforce Questions**

**Child Workforce:-** Use this for any position that involves working / volunteering with children

**Adult Workforce:-** Use this for any position that involves working / volunteering with adults.

Children and Adult Workforce:- Use this for any position that involves working / volunteering with both children and adults.

## **STEP 7 FOLLOW UP THE CRIMINAL RECORD CHECK**

Note: only the applicant now receives a copy of the criminal record

- Always ensure that the applicant ( either paid or volunteer) does not work until approved
- Once the applicant receives the criminal record check certificate, they should show it to their recruiter. It must be kept strictly confidential for recruitment and safeguarding purposes
- If the criminal record check certificate is clear ( ie no information on the form other than personal information, employment details and countersignatory details ) then the person can be approved for work.

## **STEP 8 SAFEGUARDING ASSESSMENT FOR WORK**

- When the criminal record check reveals any information at all, this must be assessed for possible risk. This is done through the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser
- The parish has an important role in supporting the applicant through this process

## **STEP 9 RENEWING DBS Checks**

- People working for the church ( either employed or in voluntary positions) carry individual responsibility for ensuring that their check is renewed within the five year period.
- Each parish should have a system in place so that renewals can be carried out within the 5 year time frame. It is important to keep our information up to date.

## **STEP 10 SAFER WORKING PRACTICE**

- Appointing someone safely is a crucial part of protecting children, young people and adults who are vulnerable. Once the applicant has been appointed then the church should provide.
  - Support
  - Induction
  - Training in the role and in safeguarding
  - Reviews
  - Boundaries
  - Information re accountability

**DISCLOSURE & BARRING SERVICE (DBS):** The public body created 1<sup>st</sup> December 2012, which combines the functions of the Criminal Records Bureau and the Independent Safeguarding Authority.

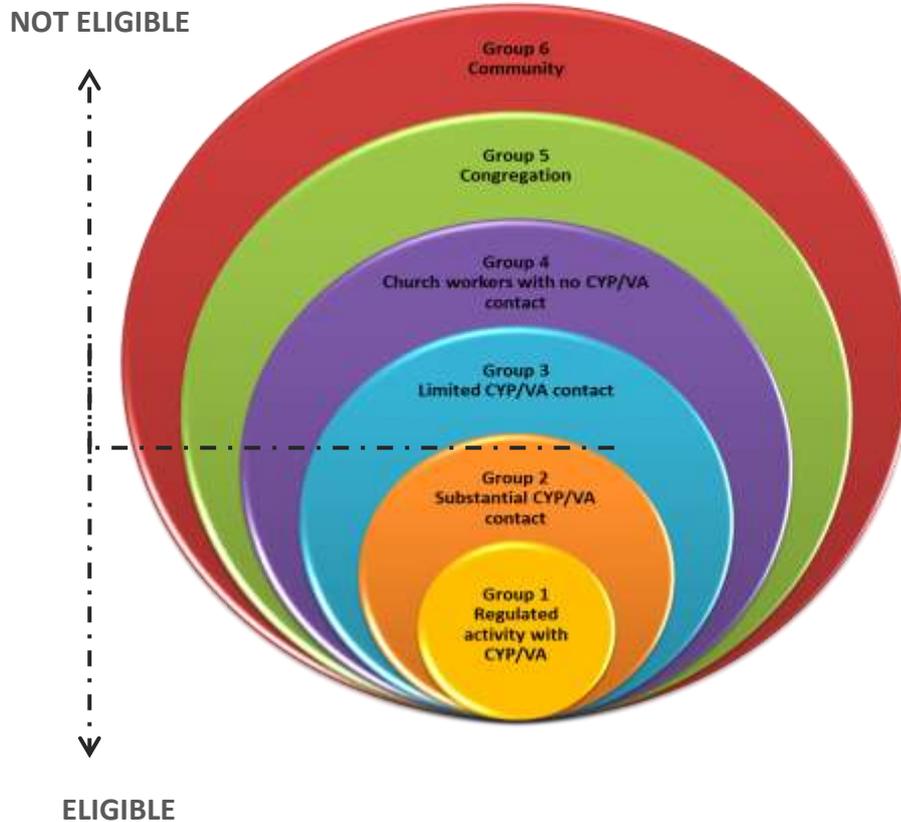
## **DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE CHECKS**

**Who is eligible?** Good safeguarding practice requires those who work closely with children and / or adults who may be at risk to have an enhanced DBS check. An enhanced DBS check reveals spent convictions / cautions etc., as well as those that are unspent and in addition includes any other information held by the local police which they deem may reasonably be relevant for the position applied.

Eligibility criteria for enhanced DBS checks:

- Is applicant over 16
- Does the role include activities that allow regular, close contact with children or adults who may be at risk?

### DBS Check Eligibility Circles in Relation to Children, Young People (CYP) and Adults at Risk



GROUP	Eligible for:
<b>1 (YELLOW) Those who undertake 'Regulated Activity' with children or adults who may be at risk</b> There is a legal requirement to check whether the individual is barred from 'Regulated Activity'.	<b>Enhanced Plus</b> <i>With barred list check</i>
<b>2 (ORANGE) Those who have substantial contact with children, young people or adults who may be at risk but not 'Regulated Activity'.</b>	<b>Enhanced</b> <i>Without barred list check</i>
<b>3 (BLUE) Those who have limited contact with people (including children and adults who may be at risk) through their role</b>	<b>Basic Check</b>
<b>4 (PURPLE) Those where it would be useful to know about any convictions but their work does not relate to children, young people or adults who may be at risk</b>	<b>Basic Check –</b>

## ELIGIBILITY GROUPS FOR SAFEGUARDING CHECKS

This document addresses how to recruit people in GROUPs 1, 2, 3 and 4.

GROUPs 5 and 6, where we do not do checks, are also important. They represent the largest group of people in church; and are where people who might pose a safeguarding risk to either children or adults are often located – for example prisoners who attend church on release. Enhanced DBS checks are not available for people in the community or congregations, but there should still be close working relationships between safeguarding officers in the church and the statutory services, for example the police and probation service.

The Church is in a unique position in that as part of its mission, it welcomes all people including those who, because of their past behaviour, are deemed to pose a risk to others within the church community but are seeking help and support in turning their life around. This risk-taking activity at the core of the Church's mission means that the Church needs to pay increased attention to safer recruitment, safe working practices, and general good practice in terms of safeguarding. This includes remaining vigilant in relation to people in GROUPs 5 and 6, particularly if they begin to take on roles from GROUPs 1 and 2 without a proper recruitment pro

### How long do criminal record checks last in the Church context?

Criminal record checks should be renewed every five years. (Should there ever be a delay in obtaining the criminal record check, the person is **not** approved by the Church to act and should stand down pending completion of the process). However, a new check will also be required where:-

- A person changes jobs or roles and moves from the local church where they were approved to work or volunteer to another church;
- A person moves from working with children (for which they were checked) to working with adults who may be at risk (for which they were not checked) – or vice versa

- The level of check required changes to a higher level (e.g. moving from a role outside regulated activity to a role where the individual will be engaging in regulated activity) a new check is needed.

A new check, however, will not be required if:-

- the person has subscribed to the DBS web based update service
- the outcome of update service has been seen
- the individual is continuing to work with the same workforce (children or adults who may be at risk) for which they were initially approved. The update service provides for continuing DBS registration,

## **PORTABILITY OF DBS CHECKS**

This is the term employed by the Government for using a DBS criminal record check obtained in one role, for a different role sometimes with a different employer or organisation.

There can be some portability of a criminal record check within the Church as follows:

- anyone applying for a further role within the same parish, church does not require a second criminal record check, if the work is with the same 'workforce' i.e. children or adults at risk
- where someone wishes to work/volunteer in a role with the different 'workforce' (for example, someone who has volunteered at a youth club now offering to work as a driver for a housebound adults scheme) then a new criminal record check is required.

To accept a pre-existing criminal record check from a body outside the Church, the following requirements must be met:

- A Confidential Declaration Form must be completed
- The original criminal record check must be shown to the organisation by the applicant;
- The individual in his / her new role must be eligible for the same level of criminal record check as he / she was in his / her previous role;
- The criminal record check must be completely clear (i.e. no record of cautions, convictions or additional information), be less than 2 years old, be for the same

“workforce” (for example, someone who has volunteered at a youth club (children) is now offering to work as a driver for adults who may be at risk in a PCC scheme would not be acceptable);

- The applicant’s identity should be verified; and
- The applicant’s current organisation should confirm that the applicant was appointed following receipt of all relevant checks, (e.g. confidential declaration and enhanced criminal record check etc.); is currently still in post; there are no disciplinary matters pending and they can recommend them to the new role