

Main/Registered Office: Signposts, 58 Regent Road, Morecambe, LA3 1TE

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**“Working to Empower the Community”
in Lancashire and Cumbria**

Pamela Beswick - Chief Executive Officer

Community
Legal Service



Help Point

CRB Umbrella Body Policy

Policy Statement on the Secure Storage, handling, use, retention and disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure information

Background

All individuals or organisations using the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure service to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust and who are recipients of Disclosure information must comply fully with the CRB Code of Practice. Amongst other things this obliges them to have a written policy on the correct handling and safe keeping of Disclosure information. It also obliges them to ensure that a body or individual, on whose behalf they are countersigning Disclosure applications, has such a written policy and, if necessary, to provide a model for that body or individual to use or adapt for this purpose.

General Principles

As an organisation using the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure service to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, Signposts complies fully with the CRB Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage retention and disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure information. It also complies fully with its obligations under the Data Protection Act and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe, handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosure information and has a written policy on these matters, which is available to those who wish to see it on request.

Storage And Access

Disclosure information is never kept on an applicant's personnel file and is always kept separately and securely, in lockable, non-portable, storage containers with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their 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 has been revealed and

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we recognise that it is a **criminal offence** to pass this information on to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

Usage

Disclosure Information is only used for the specific purpose 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, we do not keep Disclosure information for any longer than is absolutely necessary. This is generally for a period of up to six months, to allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints. If, in very exceptional circumstances, it is considered to keep Disclosure information for longer than six months, we will consult the CRB about this and will give full consideration to the Data Protection and Human Rights individual subject before doing so. Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding safe storage and strictly controlled access will prevail.

Disposal

Once the retention period has elapsed, we will ensure that any Disclosure information is immediately suitably destroyed by secure means, i.e. by shredding, pulping or burning. While awaiting destruction, Disclosure information will not be kept in any insecure receptacle (e.g. waste bin or confidential waste sack). We 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, we may keep a record of the date of issue of a Disclosure, the name of the subject, the type of Disclosure requested, the position for which the Disclosure was requested, the unique reference number of the Disclosure and the details of the recruitment decision taken.

Acting as an Umbrella Body

Before acting as an Umbrella Body (one which countersigns applications and receives Disclosure information on behalf of other employers or recruiting organisations), we will take all reasonable steps to ensure that they can comply fully with the CRB Code of Practice. We will also take all reasonable steps to satisfy ourselves that they will handle, use, store, retain and dispose of Disclosure information in full compliance with the CRB Code and in full accordance with this policy. We will also ensure that any body or individual, at whose request applications for Disclosure are countersigned, has such a written policy and, if necessary, will provide a model policy for that body or individual to use or adapt for this purpose.

Chief Executive
December 2009

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Policy Statement on the recruitment of ex-offenders

Background

All individuals or organisations using the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure service to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust and who are recipients of Disclosure information must comply fully with the CRB Code of Practice. Amongst other things, this requires them to treat all applicants for positions who have a criminal record fairly and not to discriminate unfairly against the subject of Disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed. It also obliges them to have a written policy on the recruitment of such individuals, which can be given to all applicants for positions where a Disclosure is requested and to ensure that a body or individual at whose request applications are countersigned has such a written policy. Also, if necessary, to provide a model for that body or individual to use or adapt for this purpose.

General Principles

As an organisation using the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, Signposts complies fully with the CRB Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject for Disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.

Signposts is committed to the fair treatment of its staff or potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, and responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.

We have a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders, which is made available to all Disclosure applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.

We actively promote the equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills, and potential and welcome applicants from a wide range of candidate, including those with criminal records. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.

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A Disclosure 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 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 the position.

Where a Disclosure is to form part of the recruitment process, we encourage all applicants for interview to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process. We request this information is sent under separate, confidential cover, to a designated person within Signposts and we guarantee that this information is only to be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.

Unless the nature of the position allows Signposts to ask questions about your entire criminal record we only ask about (unspent) convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

We ensure that all those in Signposts who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences. We 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.

At interview, 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 sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.

We make every subject of a CRB Disclosure aware of the existence of the CRB Code of Practice and make a copy available on request.

We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a Disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

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

Chief Executive
August 2009

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Policy Statement on the Communication of Information Received from the CRB

Background

All individuals or organisations using the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure service to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust and who are recipients of Disclosure information must comply fully with the CRB Code of Practice. Information received from the CRB in processing a disclosure will only be used in the following ways:

Registered Bodies acting on their own behalf

A member, officer or employee of a Registered Body may only pass on Disclosure information

- in the course of his/her duties; and only
- to another member, officer or employee of that Body.

Umbrella Bodies (Registered Bodies acting on behalf of others)

A member, officer or employee of an Umbrella Body (acting at the request of another organisation, body or individual) may only pass on Disclosure information

- in the course of his/her duties; and only
- to another member, officer or employee within the Umbrella Body; or
- to a member, officer or employee of that body at whose request the Umbrella Body countersigned the application; or
- to the individual at whose request the Umbrella Body countersigned the application.

Organisations using an Umbrella Body and receiving Disclosure information

A member, officer or employee of an organisation using an Umbrella Body may only pass on Disclosure information

- in the course of his/her duties; and only

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- to another member, officer or employee of the unregistered body involved in the recruitment process.

Passing on Disclosure information in any other circumstances than these may be a criminal offence.

Chief Executive, December 2009