



Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership Policy on the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

Scope

This policy sets out the Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership's (SEP) approach to recruitment of people with criminal records to staff and volunteer roles within the Partnership.

The SEP currently uses the Church of England's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures for all safeguarding matters. This policy applies to all roles where the Church of England's Safer Recruitment and People Management Policy indicates that an enhanced or enhanced plus DBS check is required.

Who it applies to

The policy applies to anyone considered for a **staff or volunteer** role in the Partnership and must be applied by any person the accountable for recruitment, selection and appointment to such roles.

Date of approval: 10 September 2026

Review date: September 2029

Policy

Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership (SEP) is for everyone, and it is a priority for us to reflect the diversity of the community we serve. We welcome all applications and expressions of interest in staff and volunteer roles from interested and suitably qualified people, including those with criminal records.

We select all candidates for interview and appointment based on their skills, qualifications and experience.

As an organisation using the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS), including the DBS Update Service, to assess applicants' suitability for eligible posts, the Partnership undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly and not to discriminate on the basis of conviction or other information revealed. This is a requirement of the DBS Code of Practice published under section 122 of the Police Act 1997

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-code-of-practice> and of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

We follow:

- the requirements of the Church of England's Safer Recruitment and People Management Guidance and, through that, the legislation outlined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- the DBS Code of Practice when handling disclosure information, including that obtained from the DBS Update Service (all registered bodies are also required to comply with this).

Process

The SEP can only ask an individual to provide details of convictions and cautions that the SEP is legally entitled to know about. Where a Basic or Enhanced DBS check can legally be requested, we can only ask an individual about convictions and cautions that are not protected i.e. should be disclosed to employers. A disclosure is only requested where DBS eligibility criteria are met (available at

<https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-e-manual/safer-recruitment-and-people-management-guidance/section-9-disclosure-and-barring-service-dbs> (correct link at August 2026) or from the SEP Safeguarding Officer).

For those positions where a disclosure/criminal record check is identified as necessary, all job adverts and role descriptions will contain a statement that an application for a DBS certificate will be submitted in the event of the individual being offered the position. Job and voluntary role offers are conditional based on satisfactory completion of the check.

Where a DBS check forms part of the recruitment process, a Church of England Confidential Declaration form (CDF) must be completed, and this should be referenced in all recruitment documentation from the outset.

CDFs will only be viewed by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment and selection process, including the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers who will assess any information disclosed.

Unless the nature of the position allows for questions about an entire criminal record to be asked, we will only ask about “unspent” convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

With input from the Diocesan team, we will 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.

Implications of Failure to Reveal Information

Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant could lead to withdrawal of the offer of a position. In the case that disclosure information is received, the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers will be informed so information contained can be assessed, although this is not necessarily a barrier to the person undertaking the post applied for.

With input from the Diocesan team, we undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of work (paid or voluntary).

Training

All involved in recruitment are sign-posted to suitable training, including the Church of England Safer Recruitment module and DBS-specific training for those requiring it, including guidance in the relevant legislation, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

Related information

Copies of documents referred to in this policy are available on request from the Partnership Safeguarding Officer, and this policy sits alongside other Church of England policies and practice guidance relating to safeguarding and recruitment and other SEP policies available on stantonbury.net.