

Recruitment of Applicants with a Criminal Record Policy

Cambridgeshire County Council values diversity and welcomes applications from a wide range of people. We select candidates for interview and employment based on how well their skills, qualifications and experience match the requirements of the role that we are recruiting to. We recognise the contribution that people with criminal records can make as employees and welcome applications from those with a criminal record. Suitable applicants will not be rejected because of offences that are not relevant to the role applied for. We also take our safeguarding responsibilities for the children and vulnerable adults seriously and will therefore consider conviction information that we are legally entitled to know and that is relevant to the role.

Shortlisting and interviewing

We shortlist for all our roles based on how well an applicant matches the requirements set out in the person specification. We do not ask any applicant to declare criminal record details on their application form or at interview. We only obtain information about criminal convictions that we are legally entitled to know about (via a declaration or DBS check) once we have selected a preferred candidate for a role.

Communicating the level of DBS check required

For positions where a DBS check is required the job advert will state the level of check that will be undertaken (i.e. basic, standard, enhanced or enhanced with barred list checks).

Where a role involves undertaking regulated activity with children and/or vulnerable adults we will undertake an enhanced DBS check with a barred list check, the job advert will specify which roles this applies to. It is a criminal offence for an individual to apply for a role undertaking regulated activity with children or vulnerable adults if they are barred from working with children or vulnerable adults. If we identify via a DBS check that an individual has applied for a role that they are legally barred from undertaking, we will contact the police about this.

When we obtain/consider conviction information

Following an interview and any selection tests the recruiting manager will select a preferred candidate for the role. We will then seek information about relevant criminal records for preferred candidates as part of the pre-employment checking process.

Role that do not require a DBS check

For roles covered by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (i.e. roles not requiring a DBS check) we will ask the preferred candidate to declare any unspent convictions or pending convictions on an additional details form.

If an applicant is not sure if a conviction is spent or unspent, we recommend they visit the NARCO website (a charitable organisation providing practical advice to people with criminal records). NARCO provide a [Criminal Record Support Service](#) and a helpline where people can ask questions that they have about disclosing criminal record information.

Roles that require a DBS check

For roles that are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, we will undertake a DBS check for the preferred candidate at the appropriate level and with the appropriate workforce. The additional detail form will also ask the preferred candidate to disclose if they have any pending convictions (as these may not be shown on their DBS check). The DBS check will only disclose information that we are legally entitled to consider (i.e. DBS will apply their filtering rules before disclosing information to us).

Considering conviction information

If the preferred candidate discloses a relevant criminal conviction or the DBS certificate shows that a person has a criminal conviction/contains any additional information, we will ensure follow that we have an open and fair discussion with them about this. This is to ensure that we take into consideration the circumstances of the conviction. We will consider:

- Whether we are legally allowed to consider the information disclosed.
- Whether the offence is relevant to the position that they have applied for.
- How old they were at the time of the offence(s).
- How long ago the offence occurred.
- The circumstances surrounding the offence(s).
- Any other relevant information.

If necessary, we may arrange a face-to-face discussion with the preferred candidate to obtain further details. We will treat any information disclosed in the strictest confidence. Once we have the full details, we will take a decision about whether the conditional offer of employment will or will not be withdrawn.

Failure to disclose/provide accurate information

We expect applicants to provide accurate information on a criminal record declaration where this is required. We also expect an applicant to provide accurate information about pending convictions and where we are following up on information contained on a DBS certificate. Failing to provide full and accurate information could lead to us withdrawing of an offer of employment or could lead to dismissal if the individual has commenced employment with us.