

Recruitment of applicants with a criminal record

The Clock Tower Sanctuary (CTS) is committed to best practice when recruiting people and volunteers with a criminal record. It is essential that people do not face unfair discrimination in applying for any role within the charity, whether paid or voluntary. We have measures in place to consider the criminal record that applicants have, so that we can identify what, if any, concerns they raise. As a result, this policy explains how we use criminal records as part of our recruitment process.

A criminal record will not normally, in itself, prevent an applicant from being appointed to the post or volunteering role. Suitable applicants will not be refused posts because of offences that are not relevant to the role and which do not raise serious concerns in the role for which they are applying. We will judge each case on its merits and not discriminate unfairly against any applicant on the basis of a conviction or criminal record information disclosed to us.

What, when and how we ask about criminal records

We will make it clear in the role description and application process whether the position is covered by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (and so only requiring the disclosure of unspent offences) or whether it is exempt (and so requiring the disclosure of all convictions and cautions, even if they are spent, unless they are filtered). We use the Government checker to determine the level of check required <https://www.gov.uk/find-out-dbs-check>

It is CTS policy to require applicants to disclose any 'unspent' criminal convictions once a conditional offer is made, except in the agreed cases of applications for posts working with vulnerable adults or children where all convictions must be declared on application.

The recruitment process

We take a positive approach to applicants with past criminal records. We ensure that all those involved in the recruitment process have received appropriate guidance and training in the legislation and practice of recruiting people with criminal records. We ensure that all those who are involved in making suitability decisions based on an applicants' criminal record have been trained to do so.

CTS will ensure that this policy and information regarding the DBS process is made available to potential applicants and volunteers including the DBS [code of practice](#).

All recruitment documents will inform potential applicants that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual receiving a conditional offer of employment and explaining the process.

The application process

CTS will shortlist applicants based on merit and will not ask for criminal records at the application stage except when the role is identified as being exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. In this instance, a positive declaration will need to be made on the application in relation to a criminal record, to ensure suitability for the role.

Interview

Interviews will assess the suitability and skills of the individual for the role. Applicants will not be directly asked about their criminal record as part of the interview.

Conditional offer of volunteering or employment

Confidential disclosure - Following the interview process, CTS will decide who will receive a conditional offer of volunteering or employment. The successful candidate will be asked to provide criminal record details appropriate to the level of disclosure identified for the role. CTS will process the DBS check on line, through an umbrella organisation, Atlantic Data. Information provided during this process will be treated as confidential and be used for recruitment purposes only.

Consideration of disclosure

Any information disclosed will be considered by the CEO (if recruiting for CEO post, the recruitment panel for that post will consider the disclosure) taking into account details such as;

- Whether it's information we are legally allowed to consider
- Whether the offence is relevant to the position applied for
- The age at the time of the offence(s)
- The length of time since
- The circumstances surrounding the offence(s), and what has changed since

If felt necessary, a discussion with the candidate may be arranged, particularly where there are concerns. Any serious consideration of the information disclosed will result in a discussion being arranged with the candidate, preferably face-to-face. We refer to this as a 'disclosure discussion'

Appointment

Appointment will be subject to the relevant level of criminal record check being undertaken. CTS will cover this cost. Any discrepancies will initiate a review.

Post-appointment

Those appointed will have their self-disclosure form held on their personnel file or on the volunteer database, which has restricted access. They will be informed of who knows about their convictions within the organisation –this will only be shared internally on a 'need to know' basis. We expect individuals to notify us of any changes in relation to their criminal convictions. Any changes will initiate a review process.

All those appointed will be required to register with the DBS update service: a review of online disclosures will be undertaken if there is cause for concern or if CTS are informed of a change of disclosure information. CTS will pay the costs of the update service.

Further sources of information

Helpful guidance for applicants with a criminal record can be also be found on the following websites:

www.unlock.org.uk

www.nacro.org.uk

For general enquiries about this policy, please contact:

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