

## **Policy Statement on the Recruitment of Ex-offenders**

As an organisation using the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, CREST Waltham Forest 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 of a Disclosure on the basis of conviction or otherwise.

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

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

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 recruitment interviews will contain a statement that the 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 called for interview to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process. We request that this information is only seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.

Unless the nature of the position allows CREST Waltham Forest 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 within CREST Waltham Forest 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 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/volunteering.

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 or volunteering.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily prevent you working with us. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances/background of your offences.

## **Policy Statement on the Secure Storage, Handling, Use, Retention and Disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure information**

### **General Principles**

As an organisation using the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure service to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, CREST complies fully with the CRB code of practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage and disposal of Disclosures and disclosure information.

### **Storage and Access**

Disclosure information is never kept on an applicant's personal 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 we recognise that it is a **criminal offence** to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

### **Usage**

Disclosure information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has being 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 necessary 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 Act and human rights for the individual

subjects before doing so. Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding storage and strictly controlled access will prevail.

### **Disposal**

Once the retention period has elapsed, we will ensure that any Disclosure information is immediately destroyed by secure means, i.e. by shredding 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 the Disclosure. However, notwithstanding the above, we may keep a record of the date of the issue of the Disclosure requested, the position for which it was requested, the unique reference number of the Disclosure and the details of the recruitment decision taken.