

## CSAS Statement on the recruitment of ex-offenders

- 1 CSAS, in serving the Catholic community in England and Wales, and as an organisation using the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, will comply fully with the CRB Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants fairly. CSAS undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of conviction or any other information revealed.
- 2 **Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working within the Catholic community.** This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of your offence(s).
- 3 CSAS is committed to the fair treatment of their office holders, staff, potential staff and volunteers, to ensure a safe environment for everyone who engages in activities based within the Catholic community.
- 4 This written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders must be made available to all Disclosure applicants at the outset of the appointment process.
- 5 CSAS and the Catholic community in England & Wales actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of people, including those with criminal records. We select everyone for interview based on their skills, qualifications and relevant experience, according to current legislation.
- 6 A Disclosure is only requested after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the role concerned. For those roles where a Disclosure is required, all the documentation (such as 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 role, and will state the required level of Disclosure.
- 7 Where a Disclosure is to form part of the process of appointment, everyone called for interview is required to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process. This information should be sent under separate, confidential cover to a designated person, generally the person responsible for the appointment process, and this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process. The Safeguarding Co-ordinator will be consulted in cases of doubt.
- 8 Unless the nature of the role allows questions to be asked about your entire criminal record, only "unspent" convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 must be disclosed.
- 9 In order to protect certain vulnerable groups within society there are a large number of roles, posts and professions that are exempted from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. These include posts and volunteer roles involving access to children, young people, the elderly, people with disabilities, alcohol or drug misusers and the chronically sick. In such cases, organisations are legally entitled to ask applicants for details of all convictions, irrespective of whether they are 'spent' or 'unspent' under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act. A Standard Disclosure will be requested where a paid post or voluntary position involves regular contact with children and/or vulnerable adults. An Enhanced Disclosure will be sought for office holders, paid posts or voluntary positions involving greater contact with children or vulnerable adults, for example jobs involving the caring, supervising, training or being in sole charge of children and/or vulnerable adults. (See also **Section 1** of this Policy Document).
- 10 Suitable training to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences is provided for all those who are involved in the recruitment process. Appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the appointment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 is also provided.
- 11 At interview, or in a separate discussion, an open and measured discussion must take place on the subject of any offences or other matters that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to the withdrawal of an offer of appointment.
- 12 Every subject of a CRB Disclosure is made aware of the existence of the CRB Code of Practice and a copy is available on request.
- 13 Any matter revealed in a Disclosure will be discussed with the person seeking employment or volunteer role before withdrawing a conditional offer of appointment.