

C. SAFER RECRUITMENT

A safer recruitment process will be followed in all cases which involves a number of steps and measures including, but not solely reliant on, relevant vetting and barring checks. To minimise the risk of abuse to a child/young person the church should adopt a careful selection process otherwise known as a safer recruitment approach.

1. THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS (EMPLOYEES)

The leadership will ensure all workers will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safer recruitment. This includes ensuring that:

- There is a written job description and person specification for the post.
- Those applying for positions must complete an application form and a [self-declaration form](#). Self-declaration doesn't replace the need for a criminal record disclosure check for eligible roles but can provide additional information that a records check does not.
- Those shortlisted will be interviewed.
- Safeguarding will be discussed at interview.
- Written references will be obtained and followed up where appropriate.
- A relevant criminal record check will be completed where necessary (we will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information).
- Qualifications where relevant will be verified.
- A suitable training programme will be provided for the successful applicant including safeguarding training to be undertaken prior to the commencement of employment.
- The applicant must complete a probationary period.
- The applicant will be given a copy of the organisation's safeguarding policy and must know how to report concerns.

The screening procedure for employees/volunteers working with children/young people should include the following elements:

- (a) Employees for formal roles will follow recruitment processes. This involves face-to-face interviews, verbal and written reference checks, identity verification, induction and supervision. Safeguarding should be discussed at the interview and a suitable training programme provided for the successful applicant. The applicant should be given a copy of the organisation's safeguarding policy and understand how to report a concern. They shall be required to complete an information form (see [Appendix 5: Self-Declaration Form](#)) and provide references (see [Appendix 6: Request for Reference](#) and [Appendix 7: Reference Form](#)).
- (b) All new employees should be subject to a probationary period of six months. Job descriptions and outlines of work should be reviewed bi-annually or when the job changes significantly.
- (c) Those applying for roles that will bring them into contact with children and adults at risk will be required to apply for a Disclosure check (i.e. DBS/PVG/AccessNI/NVB) and complete a Self-Declaration Form prior to commencement of employment. Requests for references should include the job description with the reference request. (see [Appendix 4: Sample Role Description](#), [Appendix 6: Request for Reference](#), and [Appendix 7: Reference Form](#)).
- (d) Where the conference/mission runs specific courses for those working with children or adults at risk, course directors should verify that criminal records disclosure checks have been completed. Should any concerns arise regarding their suitability, these should be addressed with the individual and their line manager or local pastor as appropriate. If the criminal record disclosure check reveals information relevant to safeguarding, a risk assessment must be carried out and /or if there is a cause for concern the safeguarding procedures outlined in [Appendix 10: Responding to Concern](#) should be followed.
- (e) Where employees are subsequently found to have had a history of sexual offending and/or violence and have failed to disclose it, they shall be immediately suspended from their position until the employing organisation have reviewed and assessed suitability for continued employment.

2. THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS (VOLUNTEERS)

To minimise the risk of abuse to a child/young person the church should adopt a careful selection process otherwise known as a safer recruitment approach. The screening procedure for employees/volunteers working with children/young people should include the following elements:

- a) Local church officers must be appointed through the process outlined in the Church Manual. The process of church family voting on officers provides a protective and transparent process for securing the right people to work with our children and adults at risk. [See Church Manual](#)
- b) All volunteers who carry out responsibilities that bring them into contact with children or adults at risk are required to have a criminal record disclosure check in order to fulfil their role (i.e. DBS/PVG/AccessNI/NVB). It is the responsibility of the Disclosure Clerk to ensure that these checks are administered.
- c) Should any concerns arise regarding a volunteer's suitability to work with children or adults at risk, these should be addressed with the individual and their local pastor and designated safeguarding lead. If the criminal record disclosure check reveals information relevant to safeguarding, a risk assessment must be carried out and /or if there is a cause for concern the safeguarding procedures outlined in [Appendix 10: Responding to Concern](#) should be followed.
- d) Where volunteers are subsequently found to have had a history of sexual offending and/or violence and have failed to disclose it, they shall be immediately removed from their position.

3. WHO REQUIRES A CRIMINAL RECORDS DISCLOSURE CHECK?

Vetting and barring checks help churches make safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups, including children. These checks are processed by different agencies within the nations:

England & Wales - [The Disclosure and Barring Service \(DBS\)](#)

Scotland - [Protecting Vulnerable Groups \(PVG\)](#)

Northern Ireland - [AccessNI](#)

Republic of Ireland - [National Vetting Bureau \(NVB\)](#)

Any individual working or intending to work with children and/or adults at risk, must have a criminal record check. Staff and volunteers who wish to work with children or adults at risk of harm within the Seventh-day Adventist Church require an enhanced criminal record disclosure (in the nations where varying levels of vetting exist) which shows details of spent convictions, unspent convictions and cautions that have not been filtered. This includes a check of local police records.

In deciding who requires a vetting and barring check the following question should be considered:

Does the role mean that the relevant individual either supervised/unsupervised on a frequent/infrequent basis, teaches, trains, instructs, cares for or supervises children/adults at risk or provides advice/guidance on physical, emotional or educational well-being to children?

Regulated Activities with Children

In simple terms, regulated activity is work that a barred person must not do.

In England, Northern Ireland and Wales, regulated activity with children means carrying out any of the below activities frequently or with intensity (more than 3 days in a 30-day period or overnight).

Unsupervised activities: teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children; providing advice or guidance on wellbeing, or driving a vehicle only for children.

Working for a limited range of specified places with the opportunity for contact with children and young people, for example schools, children's homes, childcare premises (excluding work done by supervised volunteers).

Some activities are always regulated activities, regardless of how often they take place and whether or not they are supervised. These include:

- engaging in intimate or personal care of children.
- health care by, or under the supervision of, a registered health care professional.

In Scotland, regulated work with children can be paid or voluntary. It usually involves:

- working directly with children
- teaching or supervising children
- providing personal services to children
- caring responsibilities

The frequency and intensity requirement does not apply.

Regulated work can also apply to certain positions of trust within organisations, for example being a trustee of a children's charity.

For more information about the definitions of regulated activity and regulated work, please see Appendix 20: Legislation for the Protection of Children and Adults at Risk in your respective countries ([Appendix 20: England](#), [Appendix 20: Northern Ireland](#), [Appendix 20: Republic of Ireland](#), [Appendix 20: Scotland](#), [Appendix 20: Wales](#)).

Regulated Activity – Adults

The new legal definition of regulated activity for adults no longer uses the term 'vulnerable adults' and no longer requires the activity to meet a minimum frequency threshold. The definition now focuses on the nature of activities, which, if required by an adult, will define them to be vulnerable. The following activities fall under the category of regulated activity:

- Health care – any health care professional providing health care to an adult or anyone who provides health care to an adult under the supervision of a health care professional.
- Personal care – providing assistance, supervision, or advice in relation to activities including eating and washing.
- Social care
- Assistance with cash, bills, or shopping
- Assistance in the conduct of a person's own affairs
- Transporting an adult because of their age, disability, or illness to or from their home and a place where they will receive health care, personal care, or social care.

Any staff or volunteer who wish to engage in any of the above activities is required to have a DBS check.

The Validity of Vetting and barring Checks Across Organisations

NB - All staff or volunteers who have been DBS/PVG/AccessNI/NVB checked in their employment or other activities outside the remit of the Seventh-day Adventist Church are STILL required to obtain a separate certificate in relation to their church activities.

In England & Wales the UK Government provides the [DBS Update Service](#) which can limit the necessity of checks for more than one employment setting.

The Update Service is an online subscription service that lets staff/volunteers keep their enhanced DBS certificates up to date. It also allows employers to check a certificate online, with consent.

Those registered with the service are able to take their DBS certificate from one job to the next, unless:

- an employer asks them to get a new certificate
- they need a certificate for a different type of 'workforce' (for example, they have an 'adult workforce' certificate and need a 'child workforce' certificate)
- they need a different level certificate (for example, they have a standard DBS certificate and need an enhanced one)

The employer can notify what DBS certificate is required.

Registration lasts for one year. The service costs £13 per year and starts from the date the DBS certificate was issued. There is no charge for those using a volunteer application or certificate to join the Update Service.

Benefits of joining:

- saves time and money

- the DBS certificate can be used from role to role (if within the same workforce, where the same type and level of check is required)
- employers can carry out instant online status checks on DBS certificates that are linked to the subscription
- the service enhances safeguarding processes