

THE FIRE FIGHTERS CHARITY**Human Resources****Topic: Recruitment and Employment of Ex-Offenders**

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RECRUITMENT AND EMPLOYMENT OF EX-OFFENDERS

Policy

The Fire Fighters Charity is committed to equality of opportunity and the fair treatment of its employees, potential employees, volunteers, potential volunteers or users of its services, regardless of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief, marital or civil partnership status, trade union membership, offending background or will be disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be justified.

As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checking service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, The Fire Fighters Charity complies fully with the Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. The Charity undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a disclosure on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.

The Charity actively promotes equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, 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, abilities, experience, knowledge and where appropriate qualifications. The Fire Fighters Charity will therefore consider ex-offenders for employment or a volunteering role on their individuals merits. The Charity's approach to employing or offer volunteering opportunities differs, depending on whether the role is or is not exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

The Charity has a written policy on the recruitment and employment of ex-offenders, which is made available to all applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.

A disclosure certificate is only requested if it is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a disclosure certificate is required, all application forms will contain a statement that a disclosure certificate will be requested in the event of an individual being offered the position.

Unless the nature of the position allows the Charity to ask questions about an applicant's entire criminal record, we only ask about 'unspent' convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

We ensure that all those in the Charity 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.

In a separate discussion, we ensure that an 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 or volunteering opportunity.

We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a disclosure certificate as per the Charity's Recruitment and Employment of Ex-offenders Procedure with the person seeking the position, before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment, terminating an existing contract of employment or withdrawing a volunteering opportunity.

We make every subject of a disclosure aware of the existence of the Code of Practice and make a copy available on request.

Data Protection

The Fire Fighters Charity processes information about an individual's criminal convictions in accordance with its Data Protection Policy. In particular, data collected during the recruitment process is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of completing the recruitment process. In appropriate access or disclosure of applicant data constitutes a data breach and should be reported in accordance with the Charity's Data Protection Policy and Data Breach Policy. It may also constitute a disciplinary offence, which will be dealt with under the Charity's disciplinary procedure.

Once an individual is recruited, criminal record information gathered in the course of the vetting process will not be transferred to personnel file.