

RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS WITH CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS TOOLKIT

Helping organisations recruit volunteers with criminal convictions. Produced by Voluntary Action Leeds' Giving Time project in collaboration with third sector partners.



WHO IS THIS TOOLKIT FOR?

This toolkit is designed as a first step, to help organisations recruit volunteers by ensuring their volunteering programme is accessible to prisoners and people with criminal convictions.

The aim is to equip organisations with the skills and confidence to safely and carefully recruit people to their volunteering programmes.

The toolkit provides guidelines about what organisations should consider when assessing potential volunteers with criminal convictions, so that their recruitment and support processes are inclusive and safe for staff, volunteers and service users.

"Volunteering has given me a different outlook on life, more possibilities. It has helped me meet new people that I wouldn't have met before and has broadened my horizons."

- Giving Time volunteer



INTRODUCTION

Our experience of working with people with a wide range of criminal convictions has taught us that the fear of judgement or rejection often prevents people from applying to volunteer. We also understand that the value of a person with lived experience, particularly experience which is related to the volunteering role, is invaluable.

The introduction of the Disclosure and Barring Service (previously Criminal Record Bureau - CRB) has meant that we can access all previous convictions and safely recruit volunteers. The challenge arises when we use this information to exclude people whose offences are old or not relevant to the volunteering role. With this in mind we advise that applications from people with criminal convictions are dealt with on a one-to-one basis and are assessed based on individual needs and added values.

WHAT IS VOLUNTEERING?

NCVO defines volunteering as:

'Any activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or someone (individuals or groups) other than, or in addition to, close relatives. Central to this definition is the fact that volunteering must be a choice freely made by each individual. This can include formal activity undertaken through public, private and voluntary organisations as well as informal community participation and social action. Everyone has the right to volunteer and volunteering can have significant benefits for individuals.'



CONTENTS

- P4 **BENEFITS OF RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS WITH CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS**
Benefits to the organisation and the volunteer
- P8 **GOOD PRACTICE IN VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT, MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT**
Recruitment, induction, ongoing support, inclusive recruitment
- P12 **ORGANISATIONAL POLICY, PROCEDURE AND GOOD PRACTICE**
Application, interview, disclosure and references
- P15 **RISK ASSESSMENT AND POSITIVELY MANAGING RISK**
- P16 **THE REHABILITATION OF OFFENDERS ACT 1974 (ROA)**
Spent Convictions
- P18 **DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE**
Disclosure Levels, Automatic Barring and License Conditions
- P22 **GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION (GDPR)**
- P24 **VOLUNTEERING WITHIN THE PRISON ENVIRONMENT**
- P25 **VOLUNTEERS WITH SEX OFFENCES**
Reasons to Recruit, professional approaches, mitigations of Risk and factors that reduce the risk of reoffending
- P29 **YOUNG VOLUNTEERS WHO HAVE CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS**
Supporting Young People to become 'volunteer ready'
Approach to Engaging Young People
- P31 **USEFUL CONTACTS**
- P34 **APPENDIX**
Risk Assessment
Disclosure templates



BENEFITS OF RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS WITH CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS

Recruiting prisoners and people with criminal convictions as volunteers can bring many benefits, including:

BENEFITS TO THE ORGANISATION

- A significant proportion of people of working age have a criminal record; excluding them is not only discriminatory but also means you're excluding a significant number of potential volunteers.
- By including this group in your recruitment campaign you are demonstrating a commitment to equality and diversity and will increase the diversity of your volunteer base. This also runs in line with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Offering a range of roles opens up opportunities for people to develop their skills, experience and social connections. In turn this can increase confidence and self esteem, enhance employability, reduce isolation and social exclusion and increase wellbeing. This is an effective foundation to offer people the chance to choose a life away from crime, and reduce the number of victims of crime.
- By providing routes into employment, volunteering greatly contributes to the reduction of re-offending rates, creating safer communities.
- Volunteering helps the ongoing monitoring of people with criminal convictions.



- People with criminal convictions can bring a wealth of lived experience and knowledge to your organisation. Volunteers can draw on this when supporting service users or to shape the development of a project or service.
- Many people utilise their time in prison to gain qualifications, learn new skills and volunteer in a diverse range of roles. Many of these skills are transferrable to community-based organisations.
- A diverse volunteer base increases your ability to deliver a better service and to meet the needs of your service users. Volunteers with lived experience of the Criminal Justice System are best placed to support others who are at risk of, or already involved, with prison or probation services.
- By offering the most marginalised people the opportunity to volunteer has, in many cases, increased the level of commitment and investment from the volunteer.



BENEFITS TO THE VOLUNTEER

Volunteering can be an effective means of reducing reoffending and supporting people's rehabilitation, including:

- Preventing alienation and supporting reintegration.
- Keeping people occupied, giving structure and focus.
- Introducing volunteers to positive influences and positive role models.
- Giving people hope and presenting new opportunities.
- Helping people to create new friendships and networks away from crime.
- Assisting people to develop new skills that are transferable to paid employment opportunities.
- Increasing confidence and self-esteem.
- Providing people with a "second chance".
- Providing the opportunity to "break the cycle" and step away from criminality.
- Reducing isolation and social exclusion.
- Giving a sense of purpose.
- Providing an opportunity to "give back".

"If I hadn't gone to the Volunteer Centre when I did, I really don't know where I would have ended up. I would have come out of rehab and been really depressed with nothing to keep me going. My life now would be totally different if I hadn't got involved with Giving Time."

- Giving Time volunteer



BENEFITS TO YOUR SERVICE USER

Support organisations widely recognise the value of lived experience within their staff and volunteer base.

- Connecting with people who speak from experience enables the development of trusting relationships.
- Being inspired by people who have overcome challenges instills a sense of hope.
- People who have used services will have a strong insight into the needs of other service users.
- Volunteers with experience, can represent or facilitate the voice of your service users.
- Enable the motivation for change.
- Volunteers can communicate in a way that is accessible and has a shared meaning.
- Reduces the stigma associated with that particular area of lived experience.
- Promotes power sharing and co-production.
- Encourages service users engagement in wider services.



GOOD PRACTICE IN VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT, MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

Developing and managing a volunteering programme can be complex and will require a wide range of systems, procedures and policies to ensure its effectiveness. Outlined here is a short summary of the key points for consideration. These form the basis for programme delivery and need to be in place before developing volunteering opportunities that are accessible for people with criminal convictions.

RECRUITMENT

- Inclusive of all – consider how and where you advertise vacancies to ensure you reach a range of people from different backgrounds.
- Have up to date and comprehensive volunteering role descriptions that are widely understood by other staff.
- If the volunteering role requires a DBS check then be clear about this in your application pack.
- Don't request information about criminal convictions on your application form. You can include a statement such as:

We need to ask you about any unspent convictions as part of our duty of care. A criminal conviction will not necessarily prevent you from becoming a volunteer; the decision will depend on the type of offence and its relevance to the volunteering role. Some roles will also require a criminal record check. If you do have any unspent convictions please include details in a sealed envelope. If you would like to discuss any convictions you may have, please contact the person named in the covering letter. All information will be dealt with according to our Confidentiality Policy.



INDUCTION

- Provide all volunteers with a comprehensive induction.
- Design your induction and any potential training in the most interactive and engaging way possible. You can provide variety by, for instance, having different members of the team involved in the process or a mix of written, role play/simulation of the service tasks.
- Ensure you provide space for reflecting, thinking and asking questions. Having engaged volunteers from the start will increase your retention rate.
- Consider having a probationary period and a two-way review.
- Provide regular supervisions. The frequency of the supervision should be proportionate to the type of volunteering. During supervision you can check progress on the voluntary work itself and/or any other change in the volunteer's life; including any change in their life circumstances, any sentence or court order stipulation, or any additional support needs.

ONGOING SUPPORT

Once you have recruited volunteers, you need to ensure there are appropriate support structures, specific to their needs. People with convictions are a diverse group and should be treated as individuals, on a case-by-case basis.

Reimburse volunteers' expenses for bus fare or lunch. You are under no legal obligation to pay any expenses to volunteers. However, we would strongly encourage that you reimburse, where you are able, reasonable expenses for costs incurred. This will encourage a more diverse range of people to volunteer (not just people who can afford it).



- Showcasing volunteers' experiences and achievements is a great way of making people feel a valued part of the organisation.
- Encourage volunteers to attend meetings, lead on small projects and work with staff and volunteers - get to know them as a person and see their strengths and talents.
- Provide regular supervision and support. This will provide an opportunity to give positive feedback and address any challenges.
- Agree a trial/probationary period and set a review date for both parties to assess the suitability of the volunteering role.

For further information about approaches to the recruitment, management and support of volunteers please refer to the range of toolkits offered by Voluntary Action Leeds.

INCLUSIVE RECRUITMENT

- Advertise your commitment to working with people with convictions to show equality and diversity. Use statements such as 'we are a fair chance employer'.
- Consider how inclusive your volunteering roles are. Are they accessible to a range of different people?
- Include staff in the review of policy or procedure and consider providing training to challenge any potential prejudice.
- Demonstrate flexibility around volunteers attending probation appointments. These may occur on a fortnightly or monthly basis.
- Develop skills and confidence in completing and reviewing risk assessments.
- Complete risk assessments with the potential volunteer to maintain transparency and openness about the potential risk, mitigations and the expectations of the volunteer.
- Adopt a positive approach to risk. For example, consider what risk can be safely managed and supported within the organisation's capacity.



- Gain an understanding of the restrictions that feature in a person's probation order and adapt the role accordingly. For example, a volunteer may be restricted around the areas that they can enter. The volunteering role should accommodate this to prevent the breach of an order.
- Provide training and information to staff and volunteers to prevent or challenge prejudice.
- Consider who in the organisation needs information about a volunteers criminal convictions. Keep the number of people with this information to a minimum

"Volunteering has given me independence and the chance to help. It's given me purpose."

- Giving Time volunteer



ORGANISATIONAL POLICY, PROCEDURE AND GOOD PRACTICE

Ensure that policies, procedures and risk assessments reflect the needs of prisoners and people with criminal convictions. Utilise networks to share example policies that can be adapted for your organisation. There are a range of examples of good practice that can be found online, please see the links at the back of this document.

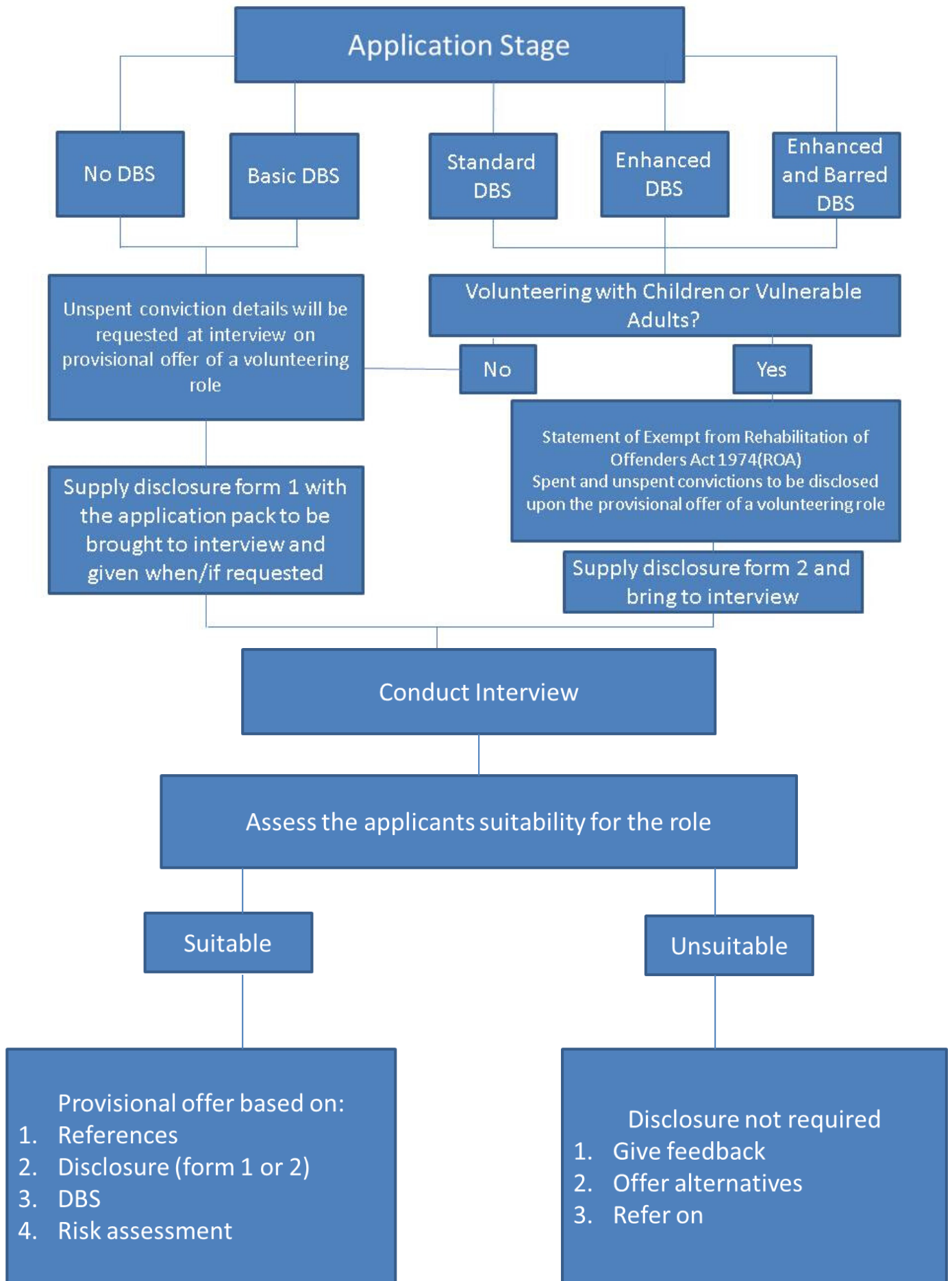
The following policies and procedures are required for inclusive volunteering:

- Recruitment of people with criminal convictions policy.
- Health and safety policy.
- Volunteer Policy.
- Safeguarding policy.
- Named volunteer manager/supervisor at your organisation.
- Volunteer role description.
- Volunteer induction.
- Risk assessment for volunteer roles.
- Risk assessments for individual volunteers (where required).

APPLICATION

The Ban the Box campaign discourages organisations from requesting criminal conviction details at application stage. Alternatively, it is recommended that application packs advise the level of DBS required for the role and the level of disclosure that is required. Sample disclosure forms are provided in the appendix. These can be included in the application pack and brought to the interview in a sealed envelope.





INTERVIEW

First arrange an initial, confidential interview with the potential volunteer.

The purpose of the interview is to identify if they have the essential skills, experience and attitude required to fulfil the volunteering role. This is also the opportunity to make an assessment of the nature of the criminal offence and how this relates to the volunteering role they are applying for.



Within the interview the usual questions should be included;

- Why have you chosen to volunteer with our organisation?
- What is it about this role that interests you?
- Have you volunteered before or done a role similar to this?
- What satisfaction would you get from volunteering in this role?
- Do you have any experience (in life or work) that you could bring to this role?
- What is important to you in a volunteering role?

Finding out about the person;

- What do you do with your spare time?
- What motivates you?
- What have you done in life that you are most proud of?

"I want to volunteer when I get out, I want to prove that I'm not the person I used to be - not a criminal anymore. I want to move forward with my life."

- Volunteer in HMP Leeds



DISCLOSURE

Asking about criminal convictions at interview:

- What criminal convictions are unspent?
- How serious was the offence?
- Was it a one-off or one of several offences?
- Was it in the last three years or 10 or more?
- How old were you when the offence was committed?
- Are you still on license?
- What else was going on at the time of the offence?

Use this opportunity to understand factors that might have led to the crime, things such as family problems, debt, mental health conditions or homelessness:

- How do you feel/think about the offence now?
- What support do you have now?

Refer to disclosure pro-forma Appendix p45:

It's important to take into account the precise nature of the offence, the situation surrounding it and the applicant's attitude. If required, a detailed risk assessment will give the opportunity to ask more detailed questions.

When discussing a person's attitude towards their offence you may want to consider:

- Do they take responsibility for their own actions?
- Are they remorseful for the offence?
- Do they recognise the impact on their victim?
- Have they moved away from criminality?
- How are they demonstrating the shift from criminality?

REFERENCES

Providing references can be challenging for people with criminal convictions, however references are crucial to the safeguarding process. If required, explore options such as references by probation officers or support workers, so the barrier is removed.



RISK ASSESSMENT AND POSITIVELY MANAGING RISK

When you recruit a volunteer with criminal convictions it is recommended that you perform a risk assessment. Having a risk assessment allows your organisation to have an open conversation with the potential volunteer in a transparent and supportive manner.

The risk assessment will highlight any potential risks or situations that could trigger risk, establish potential mitigations and lead to fair decision making about the suitability of the applicant. The aim is to create a safe environment for service users, staff and other volunteers.

The Giving Time Network has collaboratively designed a risk assessment that can be adapted to your own organisation, this is available in the appendix section.

For prisoners on Release on Temporary Licence from prison (ROTL) and those on licence, Probation Services and the appropriate prison will already have extensive risk assessments that might be useful to acquire and discuss with an Offender Manager.

REFUSING A VOLUNTEER

- Try to give honest and sensitive feedback.
- Offer alternatives or refer to an organisation that may help.



THE REHABILITATION OF OFFENDERS ACT 1974 (ROA)

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act is a law that allows people with past minor offences to leave them behind and gives them the right not to disclose them when applying for jobs.

When recruiting volunteers with criminal convictions this act must be considered. It impacts on the applicants' right to disclose their offence or not. It also impacts on the information that is disclosed on a basic criminal record check.

SPENT CONVICTIONS

Each criminal conviction is allocated a rehabilitation period. Following this period of time, the conviction is considered to be 'spent' and the offence can be forgotten. For those given prison sentences of over four years a criminal conviction is never considered 'spent' and disclosure will always be required. For people who have several criminal convictions it can be difficult to identify if they have been spent or not. It is advised that the applicant contacts organisations such as Unlock or Nacro who will assist them in calculating which, if any, convictions should be disclosed.

While people whose criminal convictions have been spent should be treated as if they have never committed an offence, some jobs or volunteering roles are exempt from this act. For example, roles including the personal care of vulnerable people.

Note: it is unlawful to refuse to recruit a volunteer because of a criminal conviction that has been spent.



"The Giving Time team helped us create a robust process for interviewing and inducting volunteers, including completing a volunteer agreement, personal risk assessment and management plan (with input in from relevant agencies - social worker/probation). We have also attended training through Giving Time up-skilling our staff so we feel confident to manage volunteers out on site and deal with any issues which arise."
- Volunteer Manager

DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE



The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) is part of the Home Office and enables organisations to make safer recruitment decisions, by identifying candidates who may be unsuitable for certain voluntary or paid roles. In particular roles that involve children or vulnerable adults. The DBS provides wider access to criminal record information, through its disclosure service for England and Wales.

The government defines a child as a person who is under the age of 18. The government defines a vulnerable adult as a person aged 18 or over, who is receiving support related to one or more of the following services:

- Health care.
- Relevant personal care.
- Social care.
- Assistance with household tasks, personal affairs (legal and financial) and transport. Such individuals may require this help due to age, illness or disability.

DISCLOSURE LEVELS

When recruiting for a volunteer, it is advised to consider each role description individually and make an assessment of the correct DBS certificate (if any) that will be required for safe recruitment. It is not advised to complete a blanket assessment at enhanced level. Organisations such as Nacro can offer tailored advice to avoid discrimination, while protecting the safety of vulnerable groups.



The different disclosure levels include:

Basic Disclosure

This gives details of any recent and/or serious unspent criminal convictions. This check can be used for any position or purpose.

Standard Disclosure

Gives details of spent and unspent convictions, as well as any cautions. This covers positions involving regular contact with children and vulnerable adults.

Enhanced Disclosure

Gives details of spent and unspent convictions, as well as any cautions and also includes options for police to share any information they hold and deem relevant. This covers positions including regularly caring for or being solely in charge of children and providing health and social care services for adults.

Enhanced and Barred List Check

Details spent and unspent convictions, as well as any cautions. It includes options for police to share any information they hold and deem relevant and checks the applicant against the barred lists. This is only available to a small number of positions, such as adoptive parents.

Volunteers' applications can qualify for a free criminal record check at standard or enhanced level. Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, it is only acceptable to ask someone to declare spent convictions if they will be volunteering with children or vulnerable adults.

If a DBS is returned and identifies a criminal conviction that is either spent and or unspent, this can form part of the risk assessment and doesn't automatically exclude the applicant from the role. The severity of the crime and how recently it occurred must be taken into account.



AUTOMATIC BARRING

Automatic barring occurs when the offence that has been committed automatically prevents a person from working or volunteering with children or vulnerable adults. If a person who has been included in the barred list seeks to work in regulated activity with a group of people that they are barred from working with, then they are breaking the law. It is also an offence to knowingly employ (paid or unpaid) a person to a role with people they are barred from working with. In this instance, the results of a disclosure automatically determine that a potential volunteer is unsuitable.

LICENSE CONDITIONS

Some people who serve prison sentences longer than 12 months are released early on licence. This means that they are completing their prison sentence in the community and are expected to follow 'licence conditions'. The licence conditions are set to manage risk and will be relevant and proportionate to the type of criminal conviction.

When recruiting a volunteer who is on license you will need to take into account their licence conditions. The applicant will be aware of their license conditions and understand the restrictions.

Below are some examples of license conditions that may impact on a persons' volunteering:

- Attending appointments with a Supervising Officer/Probation Officer.
- Only undertaking voluntary work that has been approved by the Supervising Officer.



- Restrictions relating to making contact with certain people, usually the victim of the crime or known associates.
- A requirement to comply with a curfew.
- Exclusion Zones - a restriction on geographical areas a person can enter.
- Not to volunteer or undertake an organised activity with a person under the age of...
- Not to use/own a computer, internet, mobile phone or camera.
- Not to have unsupervised contact with children under the age of...
- Not to associate with known sex offenders – this is a consideration if several volunteers have sex offences.

Be sure to check your individual volunteering roles against the current DBS legislation. Unlock and Nacro are able to offer advice on appropriate DBS levels.



GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION (GDPR)

Due to the sensitive nature of the information detailing a person's criminal conviction and the issues surrounding the offence, it will be necessary to consider your Data Protection Policy and updates on GDPR.

Consider the key principles of GDPR in relation to your organisations volunteer recruitment. Below are the principles of GDPR and some points for consideration:

Lawfulness, fairness and transparency

Be clear about the information you are collecting, the purpose and allow free access to this information.

Purpose limitation

Only collect data that has a specific purpose and only hold that information for the length of time it takes to complete that purpose.

Data minimisation

Only hold data that is required for the purpose of the volunteering placement and risk management.

Accuracy

Be sure that the information held is accurate.

Storage limitation

Delete all information when it is no longer required, for example when the volunteering placement has ended.



Integrity and confidentiality (security)

Handle all data securely. Follow organisational policy relating to where information is stored and how it is shared in a way that prevents accidental loss.

Accountability

Ensure that your approach to GDPR is reflected in organisational policies and procedures and that these are regularly reviewed.

This is a short summary on GDPR and for more detailed information please refer the Information Commissioners Office website, which can be found in the back of this handbook.

"I personally have gained so much support and guidance from the team, and the project has made me see that I am capable of so much more than I originally thought. I have positive role models in my life and am always introduced to other members of the project and organisations as an equal. The experience has boosted my confidence and given me new skills."

- Volunteer



VOLUNTEERING WITHIN THE PRISON ENVIRONMENT

Volunteering is a powerful way to prevent reoffending because it provides a sense of value and purpose. It enhances skills and employability and gives people with criminal convictions the chance to meet new people and make new positive relationships, whilst providing a structure, routine and something to focus on.

Some prisons offer the opportunity for prisoners to be Released on Temporary Licence (ROTL), this is the chance to leave prison each day and experience a working day. Prisoners who are deemed safe, and have used their time in prison to the fullest, taking on responsibility and supporting others, can go through a detailed process to be awarded ROTL.

Evidence suggests that the engagement in volunteering and 'community work' prior to release can be a highly effective way of reintegrating a prisoner back into society and reduces reoffending. Many organisations offer ROTL placements and have found them to be successful.

To develop a volunteering opportunity that can be offered as a ROTL, please contact the Reducing Reoffending Deputy Governor in your local prison, who will explain the process.



VOLUNTEERS WITH SEX OFFENCES

The aim of this section is to; provide an insight into the value of offering volunteering opportunities to people with sex offences, and to enable organisations to assess the suitability of incorporating people with sex-related offences in their volunteer base.

REASONS TO RECRUIT

Often there is a reluctance to offer volunteering opportunities to people with sex offences. The risks posed by people with these offences can seem too high and unmanageable. There is also confusion about the type of volunteering that would be suitable. As with all criminal convictions, it is useful to make an assessment of each offence individually. All criminal convictions can range in severity and risk - sex offences can vary from pornography and indecent exposure, to the most serious offences such as rape and sexual assault.

The experience of Giving Time and the network of specialist organisations working with people with sex offences, has identified that volunteering can be an effective means of rehabilitation. The increase in social isolation escalates the likelihood of criminal behaviours and volunteering is a proven method of reducing social exclusion. Volunteering helps to prevent alienation and supports reintegration and can give people structure and focus, helping them to increase their confidence and self esteem. Through the interaction with staff and volunteers, acting as positive role models, the person can break negative cycles and develop new skills and knowledge. This can be used to rethink their lives and provide hope for a better future.



PROFESSIONAL APPROACHES

The nature of sex offences can provoke a strong emotional response on a personal level and within society as a whole. It is important to acknowledge these emotional responses and allow time to consider and reflect on the meaning behind them. This will enable you to develop approaches to managing your wellbeing and find methods of preventing these responses being conveyed to the potential volunteer.

The following approaches can be useful in maintaining a professional and objective approach when recruiting and managing a person with sex-related convictions.

BEING NON-JUDGEMENTAL

Make assessment about the risks associated with their recruitment and potential to re-offend within the volunteering environment. These conclusions must be separated from personal bias and emotional responses to the offence.

PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES

Professional boundaries will enable you to maintain objectivity, by providing a barrier between yourself and the volunteer. Your professionalism can be relied upon to remind you of the core values that you work by. Clear boundaries will also enable you to feel safe when interviewing and will help to prevent conditioning and manipulation. Boundaries can be maintained by:

- Keeping to the purpose of the meeting - setting an agenda.
- Focussing on the sole purpose of the interview or task at hand.
- Being time-bound and avoiding personal disclosures.



UNCONDITIONAL POSITIVE REGARD

Carl Rogers developed the theory of Unconditional Positive Regard as part of his approach to Client-Centred Therapy. This approach is based on acceptance, disregarding your own personal beliefs and opinions about a person's behaviour. Unconditional positive regard is underpinned by a sense of hope, optimism and a belief in a person's ability to change their behaviour. This can be a useful approach when engaging volunteers who have criminal convictions that evoke an emotional response.

STRENGTHS-BASED APPROACH

Utilising a strengths-based approach will enable you to focus on a person's skills, knowledge and value base. This is a useful alternative to focussing on the prospective volunteer's risks. When conducting an interview, it is useful to identify the applicant's qualities, skills, talents and aspirations. This approach is recognised as an effective way to reduce reoffending and continue a person's desistance from crime.

"These opportunities have the power to turn lives around, reduce isolation, improve mental health and in some cases these opportunities mean fewer victims of violent/sexual crimes."

- Volunteer Manager



MITIGATIONS OF RISK

When completing a risk assessment consider the following points as a means of moderating risk:

- Identify suitable roles and create a role that doesn't conflict with a person's license conditions.
- Careful recruitment – application, disclosure, interview, reference, DBS, trial period.
- Assessing other volunteers that the potential volunteer would work with – do they have similar convictions?
- Confidentiality – who knows what about the offence, who can/can't the service user disclose to?
- Detailed induction regarding policies.
- Communication with Public Protection Unit (PPU).
- Volunteer agreement – particularly in relation to behaviour, boundaries and limits.
- Regular supervision.
- Regularly reviewing the risk assessment over an agreed duration, for example every two months over a two-year period.
- Training.
- Supervision by other members of staff, no lone working.
- Gaining additional authorisation.

REDUCING THE RISK OF REOFFENDING

- The length of time since the offence.
- Age at the time of the offence.
- Physical and emotional health - abstaining from drugs/alcohol.
- Positive, stable and supportive relationships.
- A responsible and remorseful attitude.
- Action taken to move away from offending behaviour.
- Engaged in purposeful activities.
- Is in employment or volunteering.



YOUNG VOLUNTEERS WHO HAVE CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS

For young people with a criminal record, both their age and offence can hold them back, and volunteering can be the turning point they need to steer them away from crime.



SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE TO BECOME VOLUNTEER READY

Young people may require more support to engage in volunteering and it is essential to maintain good practice in relation to your volunteer recruitment and management. Below is a list of approaches that can support a young person to engage:

- Create a volunteering opportunity that is accessible for a child/young person.
- Write a clear and simple role description that's realistic and accurate, so that young people can see exactly what they are expected to do.
- Make it more accessible by using colour and images.
- Screening and assessment are crucial. Not all young people are ready to volunteer - make an assessment of their skills, attitude, support needs, offence and potential to develop.
- Create a fun induction, for example use an orienteering activity or a quiz to help the young person to find their way around the organisation or understand safety procedures. Induction and training is very important but it also needs to be comprehensive, engaging and preferably highly interactive.

- Give the opportunity for young people to volunteer in pairs or small groups. Have a volunteer buddy system. Each young volunteer should have a designated, named supervisor in the staff team.
- Provide an opportunity for taster sessions or trial periods. Micro volunteering can be an excellent way to introduce a young person to volunteering and enables them to decide if volunteering is right for them.
- Give clear boundaries and expectations and ensure that the young person understands these. Identify the young person's reason for volunteering and explore ways to meet them.

APPROACH TO ENGAGING YOUNG PEOPLE

1. Be respectful
2. Involve them in decision making
3. Communicate without judgement
4. Give positive role models
5. Be honest
6. Have clear boundaries
7. Show trust
8. Use humour
9. Help them to access training opportunities
10. Understand they may have other meetings to attend
11. Give support for them to become high achievers
12. Help to build their confidence
13. Be welcoming
14. Be friendly
15. Be understanding
16. Expect us to achieve



USEFUL CONTACTS

Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS)

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service/about

Nacro

A crime reduction charity which supports ex-offenders and their families.

www.nacro.org.uk

Unlock

www.unlock.org.uk/

Ban the Box

www.bit.ly/34Q77kK

NCVO Volunteering

www.ncvo.org.uk/ncvo-volunteering

Doing Good Leeds

For advice, support and training visit:

www.doinggoodleeds.org.uk

Volunteer Centre Leeds

Phone 0113 378 8987

Email volunteering@val.org.uk



GIVING TIME SOCIAL FRANCHISING

Many people with criminal convictions experience extreme social exclusion upon their release. Volunteering provides the opportunity for people to build confidence and self-esteem. Our Giving Time programme delivers accessible volunteering services with prison establishments and their wider communities.

Voluntary Action Leeds can support the delivery of the Giving Time model in your area through our comprehensive Delivery Guide. Our Delivery Guide has been compiled through the experience of the team and the learnings and successes of the project. It includes all forms, templates and checklists that are needed to adopt the franchise in your area.

The team can also offer bespoke packages which, in addition to the Delivery Guide and Giving Time resources, can include fully inclusive training and on hand support to ensure the successful delivery of the model in your area.

Please call Voluntary Action Leeds on 0113 297 7920 to discuss further and find a package which is most suited to your needs.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank all of our third sector partners who have worked in collaboration with Giving Time to develop this toolkit.

All of the contents have been designed and trialled with volunteer managers and criminal justice experts across the city and the information is correct at the time of print.

APPENDIX





Part 1 – Individual Details.

Surname		Project	
Forename		Line Manager	
Risk Assessment Date			
Volunteering Role Applied for			
Level of Disclosure Required for the Role			
Enhanced and Barred: <input type="checkbox"/>	Enhanced: <input type="checkbox"/>	Standard: <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A: <input type="checkbox"/>

Part 2 – Offending Background.

Nature of conviction(s)						
Offence	Date of Conviction	Sentence Received	Age at Time of Offence	Length of Time Since Conviction	Is the Offence Relevant to the Position?	



What efforts have been made to avoid reoffending?

(Consider programmes of support / accountability that have been completed and changes in social/emotional situation).

Part 3 – Health and Wellbeing.

Does the individual have any physical, emotional or wellbeing issues which may affect their ability to volunteer?



Questions to consider having gathered information for Parts 1, 2 and 3.	Potential Responses (Please Tick).	Comments: (please complete as fully as possible to inform the Risk Assessment).
Have the individual's circumstances changed since the offence(s)? If so, how?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Does the nature of the role present any opportunities for re-offending?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Does the post involve regular unsupervised contact with vulnerable people?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Does the post involve direct contact with the public?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Does the post involve direct responsibility for finance or items of value?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Does the post involve a significant level of trust i.e. nursing or caring for people?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the individual barred from working in regulated activity?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
What level of supervision does the post-holder receive?		
Are you satisfied with the individual's explanation of the circumstances of the offence(s)?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure <input type="checkbox"/>	



RISK ASSESSMENT - GIVING TIME

Questions to consider having gathered information for Parts 1, 2 and 3.	Potential Responses (Please Tick).	Comments: (please complete as fully as possible to inform the Risk Assessment).
How serious do you consider the offence(s) to be?	<input type="checkbox"/> Major <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate <input type="checkbox"/> Minor	
Did the offence(s) occur recently? Within last:	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Year <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Years <input type="checkbox"/> 10 Years+	
At what age were the offence(s) committed?	Please state age when offence(s) were committed: Age: _____	
Does the disclosure show a pattern of behaviour, or was the offence a one-off?	<input type="checkbox"/> One-off <input type="checkbox"/> Repeat - frequent: <input type="checkbox"/> Repeat - infrequent:	
Have the circumstances that contributed to the applicant committing the offence(s) or behaviour in such a manner changed for the better?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Maybe	
Did the individual disclose any convictions, cautions, reprimands, as part of the application process or during the interview process?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No: no valid reason <input type="checkbox"/> No: with valid reason	
Are there any concerns in regard to the individual's motivations for working with vulnerable people?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	



Questions to consider having gathered information for Parts 1, 2 and 3.	Potential Responses (Please Tick).	Comments: (please complete as fully as possible to inform the Risk Assessment).
Is there any evidence in regard to any inability to manage conflict or cope with challenging behaviour?	Yes No	
Were both references satisfactory and at least one reference verified by telephone?	Yes No Reference Risk Assessment	
What level of supervision will the role receive?	High Moderate Low	

Part 5 – Mitigations of Risk and Safeguards.

Possible Risk/Offences.	Risks to individual, role, other staff, public or service users.	Control Measures/ Management of Risk.	Risk Rating.			Review Date (see table below).
			Low	Medium	High	
			Green	Amber	Red	



RISK ASSESSMENT - GIVING TIME

Possible Risk/Offences.	Risks to individual, role, other staff, public or service users.	Control Measures/ Management of Risk.	Risk Rating			Review Date (see table below).
			Low Green	Medium Amber	High Red	

Please detail any precautionary measures/safeguards identified and recommended for the individual in light of the above questions to ensure that the risk of any reoccurrence of any potential criminal activity or associated behaviour is avoided.

Please consider the specific triggers that the individual has identified during the meeting or from other sources.

Trigger.	Precautionary Measures
1.	
2.	
3.	



RISK ASSESSMENT - GIVING TIME

Trigger.	Precautionary Measures
4.	
5.	
6.	
What further action is required?	
Who is responsible for taking this action and by when?	



Part 6 – Outcome. (to be completed by Line Manager or Authoriser).

Date of First Review :

We ARE satisfied that it is safe to allow the individual to commence/continue with the organisation.

We ARE NOT satisfied that it is safe to allow the individual to commence/continue with the organisation.

In addition we wish to confirm if the individual is able to work in projects involving the following.

Young People or Children: Yes No

Vulnerable Adults: Yes No

Detail reason for your decision:

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**Criminal Record Declaration
Form 1**

This volunteering role does not require a criminal record check (also known as a DBS check) and is not exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act so we only require you to **disclose criminal convictions that are not spent**.

We recognise the contribution that people with criminal convictions can make as volunteers within our organisation. All applications will be considered on an individual basis and an assessment will be made based on:

- How serious the offence was
- How recent the offence was
- Age at the time of the offence
- The number and frequency of the offences
- The circumstances surrounding the offence
- The relevance of the offence to the volunteering role

Guidelines:

- Volunteer roles that require a DBS check are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (ROA). This means that you are required by law to provide details of any spent or unspent convictions.
- If you are unsure of your criminal convictions, you can get information and advice from nationally recognised organisations such as NACRO and Unlock. You can also request a lost of your convictions from a police station.
- Failure to disclose all unspent convictions may lead to dismissal from a volunteering role.
- Applying for a role with children, young people and vulnerable adults when you are barred is a breach of licence which may result in reconviction.
- Please submit this form following a conditional offer of a volunteering role.

Full name:

Disclosure:

Do you have any unspent convictions, cautions?

- Yes
 No

If yes, please list the criminal convictions with dates of the offence (if possible) below

Declaration

I declare that the information provided on this form is correct. I understand that the declaration of a criminal record will not necessarily prevent me from being offered this role at Voluntary Action Leeds

Signature:

Date:

Office use only:

- Is a risk assessment required? (if so please complete and attach)
- Does the criminal conviction pose risks within the volunteer role?
- Have references been received?
- Does the DBS certificate match the disclosure?
- Are there any license conditions that need to be taken into consideration for the role

Notes:

Completed by:

Signature:

Date:

**Criminal Record Declaration
Form 2**

This volunteering role requires a criminal record check (also known as a DBS check) and is therefore exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act. This means we require you to **disclose all convictions, cautions, reprimands or final warnings.**

We recognise the contribution that people with criminal convictions can make as volunteers within our organisation. All applications will be considered on an individual basis and an assessment will be made based on:

- How serious the offence was
- How recent the offence was
- Age at the time of the offence
- The number and frequency of the offences
- The circumstances surrounding the offence
- The relevance of the offence to the volunteering role

Guidelines:

- Volunteer roles that require a DBS check are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (ROA). This means that you are required by law to provide details of any spent or unspent convictions.
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- Failure to disclose all unspent convictions may lead to dismissal from a volunteering role.
- Applying for a role with children, young people and vulnerable adults when you are barred is a breach of licence which may result in reconviction.
- Please submit this form following a conditional offer of a volunteering role.

Full name:

Disclosure:

Do you have any convictions, cautions, reprimands or final warnings which are not protected as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (as amended in 2013)?

- Yes
 No

If yes, please list the criminal convictions with dates of the offence (if possible) below

Declaration

I declare that the information provided on this form is correct. I understand that the declaration of a criminal record will not necessarily prevent me from being offered this role at Voluntary Action Leeds

Signature:

Date:

Office use only:

- Is a risk assessment required? (if so please complete and attach)
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Notes:

Completed by:

Signature:

Date: