Policy on the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

**Policy Brief and Purpose**

The Church of England is for everyone, and it is a priority for us to reflect the diversity of the  
community the Church serves across the whole diocese. We welcome all applications from  
interested and suitably qualified people, including those with criminal records. We select all  
candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.

As an organisation using the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS), including the DBS Update  
Service and associated registered bodies, to assess applicant’s suitability for eligible posts, the  
Diocese of Hereford undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly and not to  
discriminate on the basis of conviction or other information revealed. We follow:

* legislation outlined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
* the requirements of the Church of England’s Safer Recruitment and People

Management Guidance

* the DBS Code of Practice when handling disclosure information, including that obtained

from the DBS Update Service (all registered bodies are also required to comply with

this).

**Process**

A disclosure is only requested where DBS eligibility criteria is met.

For those positions where a disclosure is required, the level of check will be made explicit on  
the job advertisement.

Advertisements are required to state that a DBS check will be requested in the event of an  
individual being offered the position.

Job offers are conditional based on satisfactory completion of the check.

Where a DBS check forms part of the recruitment process, a Church of England Confidential  
Declaration form (CDF) must be completed, and this should be referenced in all recruitment  
documentation from the outset.

CDFs will only be viewed by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment and selection  
process, including the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers who will assess any information  
disclosed. A privacy notice specific to the Confidential Declaration form is available.

Unless the nature of the position allows for questions about an entire criminal record to be  
asked, we will only ask about “unspent” convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of  
Offenders Act 1974.

All involved in recruitment are sign-posted to suitable training, including the Church of England  
Safer Recruitment module and DBS-specific training for those requiring it, including guidance in  
the relevant legislation, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

We will 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.

**Implications of Failure to Reveal Information**

Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant could lead to withdrawal of the offer of a  
post. In the case that disclosure information is received, the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers  
will be informed so information contained can be assessed, although this is not necessarily a  
barrier to the person undertaking the post applied for.

We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a disclosure with the person seeking the  
position before withdrawing a conditional offer of work (paid or voluntary).

Copies of documents referred to in this policy are available on request, and this policy sits  
alongside other Church of England policies and practice guidance relating to recruitment processes and safeguarding.