

Southampton Voluntary Services (SVS)

POLICY ON EMPLOYMENT OF EX OFFENDERS

As an organisation using the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure Service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, SVS complies fully with the CRB Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.

SVS is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, volunteers, potential staff and volunteers, and users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.

This SVS policy statement on the recruitment of ex-offenders is made available to all applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.

We actively promote equality of opportunity to ensure 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, qualifications and experience. We recognise that having a criminal record does not mean a lack of skills, qualifications and experience and we are aware that high quality training leading to qualifications is available in many prisons.

A Disclosure is only requested after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a Disclosure is required, all recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position.

We encourage all applicants called for interview to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process. We request that this information is brought under separate, confidential cover to a named employee, to the interview, and we guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.

Unless the nature of the position allows SVS to ask questions about your entire criminal record we only ask about "unspent" convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

We ensure that all those in SVS 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 and Exceptions and the Police Act 1977.

At interview, or in a separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place about offences or other matter that might be relevant to the

position. All information regarding offences is kept confidential in a secure lockable filing cabinet which is only accessed by personnel. The successful applicant can request to be informed who in the organisations knows of the conviction and reasons for that.

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

We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a Disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working with us.

This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of your offences. However, failure to reveal relevant information could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment, or dismissal if it comes to light following appointment. We have a duty to identify any risk to the organisation business, customers, clients, volunteers and employees.

Criminal Conviction Forms

Appendix A For positions that do not require a Disclosure

Appendix B For positions that require a Disclosure

APPENDIX A

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS DECLARATION

Please complete the following statement and bring it with you to the interview in a sealed envelope marked confidential.:

If you do have any unspent criminal convictions, then please give details below.

This information, along with the health form and references will be considered after a decision has been made on an applicants ability to do the job, but before an offer of appointment is made. If further details or information are required we may contact the applicant at that time.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working with us.

This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of your offences. However failure to declare unspent convictions may result in an offer being withdrawn or dismissal after an appointment has been made.

I do / do not have any criminal convictions (Please delete as appropriate)

<u>Date of conviction (s)</u>	<u>Offence</u>	<u>Any factors you consider relevant</u>
-------------------------------	----------------	--

Signed

Date

APPENDIX B

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS DECLARATION

**For positions Exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
because of access to children or vulnerable adults**

Please complete the following statement and bring it with you to the interview in a sealed envelope marked confidential.

If you have any convictions spent or unspent, then please give details below.

The terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 are set aside for the purposes of this position. Criminal convictions including spent convictions must be declared. The fact that convictions have been recorded against you will not necessarily debar you from consideration for this appointment. However failure to declare convictions may result in an offer being withdrawn or dismissal after an appointment has been made

This information, along with the health form and references will be considered after a decision has been made on an applicants ability to do the job, but before an offer of appointment is made. If further details or information are required we may contact the applicant at that time.

I do / do not have any criminal convictions (*Please delete as appropriate*)

<u>Date of conviction (s)</u>	<u>Offence</u>	<u>Any factors you consider relevant</u>
-------------------------------	----------------	--

Signed

Date

Please note that a CRB Disclosure will be required for all successful applicants.