

Recruitment Processes

Disclosure & Barring Service – What to Expect



All organisations are entitled to ask applicants to disclose details of any convictions which are not yet spent under the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act. Depending on the role they can request details of any spent cautions or convictions under an enhanced criminal record check.

An employer may request a DBS check as part of their recruitment process. These checks are processed by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 allows most convictions (and cautions) to be considered spent after a specified period of time. Once a caution or conviction is spent the Act treats the person as if they had never committed an offence. This means that jobseekers with criminal records have the right to legally withhold such information from a prospective employer when applying for most jobs. The specified period of time is determined by the sentence or disposal that was received in respect of a particular offence.

NACRO have developed a good guide to support individuals understand what needs to be disclosed, guidance on spent and unspent convictions and what to expect under the Rehabilitation of Offender Act 1974 for further advice we highly recommend you visit [Criminal record checks and disclosure | Nacro](#) for specialist support and advice.

Employers can check your criminal record no matter what role you apply for. This is called a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

For certain roles organisation can request a more detailed DBS check, for example if you'll be working with children or in healthcare setting.

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The types of check are:

- **Basic checks, which shows unspent convictions and conditional cautions**
- **Standard check, which shows spent and unspent convictions and adult cautions, from the Police National Computer which have not been filtered in line with legislation**
- **Enhanced check, which shows the same as a standard check plus any information held by local police that's considered relevant to the role**
- **Enhanced checks with a check of the barred lists, which shows the same as an enhanced check plus whether the applicant is on the adults' barred list, children's barred list or both**

The type of DBS check required will depend on the nature of the role and the client group. The organisation in line with legislative requirements will be responsible for defining the level of check required for the role.

A DBS check has no official expiry date. Any information included will be accurate at the time the check was carried out. Most organisations will outline in their recruitment policy the frequency at which they will require DBS checks to be renewed.

The cost of processing checks is normally covered by the organisation as part of their safer recruitment practices but range from £18-38 currently.

Checks are free for volunteers. Once processed individuals can register for an update service for a small fee.

Depending on the type of check these usually take between 7-14 days to process once submitted but these can take longer especially if you have lived in areas that cross police force borders.

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Documents you will need for a criminal record check

Before a DBS check can be processed you will be asked to prove your identity. As part of this will need show the recruiter original copies of documents to verify your identity.

The documents you will need to provide will depend on the route the application takes.

There are 3 routes for processing identity checks, the first route is the most common and Route's 2 and 3 can only be followed if you cannot meet the requirements of Route 1.

Documents typically required include:

- Passport
- Driving licence
- Birth Certificate
- Marriage Certificate
- Plus items such as utility bills dated within the last 3 months.

For further information on these routes and the identity documents we recommend you visit:

[Check someone's criminal record as an employer: Checks you can make on someone's record - GOV.UK](#)

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Whilst the DBS process can be applied to check for convictions

depending on the role the organisation may ask you complete a criminal record disclosure form as part of the recruitment process.

It is typically best practice to disclose any information at the earliest opportunity, this is referred to as self-disclosure and will provide opportunity for you to provide context that vetting checks such as DBS will not cover.

Self-disclosure can be made on Conviction disclosure forms provided as part of the recruitment process or can be made directly by including a disclosure letter or statement in your CV or Covering Letter.

An example disclosure is available for you to download.

A useful guide with further practical advice can be found on www.nacro.org who have put together a bank of resources and handy guides for disclosing criminal convictions and also over a free and confidential service that can be accessed at Criminal Record Support Service for all criminal record related issues.