

## **APPLYING FOR A DISCLOSURE DOCUMENT AS PART OF ACCORD'S RECRUITMENT PROCESS**

The following guidance is adapted from the Criminal Records Bureau website. It is designed to help answer your questions about the service and will give you details of how to apply for a Disclosure.

### **What is a Disclosure?**

A Disclosure is a document containing information held by the police and government departments. It can be used by employers and voluntary organisations to make safer recruitment decisions. Disclosures are provided by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB), an executive agency of the Home Office.

The Disclosure service offers organisations a means to check the background of job applicants to ensure that they do not have a history that would make them unsuitable for posts they are trying to fill. Disclosures will provide details of a person's criminal record including convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings held on the Police National Computer (PNC).

If the position involves working with children, Disclosures will also contain details from lists held by the Department of Health (DH) and the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) of those considered unsuitable for this type of work. Depending upon the level of Disclosure, it might also contain information held by local police forces.

There are three levels of Disclosure:

- Enhanced
- Standard
- Basic

### **Why have I been asked to apply for a Disclosure?**

You may have been asked for a Standard or an Enhanced Disclosure because you will be working with children or vulnerable adults; or will be working in an establishment that is wholly or mainly for children; or will be working in healthcare. There are also a number of other specified positions and professions for which a Disclosure can be required.

### **Can I refuse to apply for a Disclosure?**

Yes. However, there are some posts for which a Disclosure is required by law. If you refuse to apply for a Disclosure in this instance, the recruiting organisation would be within their rights not to take your job application any further.

## **What if I already have a Disclosure?**

If you already have a Disclosure and would like to use it for a second position, you can ask if the second organisation is willing to accept it. When making this decision they will take into account the length of time that has elapsed since that Disclosure was issued; the level of Disclosure; the nature of the position for which the Disclosure was issued; and the nature of the position for which you are now applying. Please note however that Accord's policy is to obtain up-to-date Disclosures for all new employees.

## **What if I have lived overseas?**

If you have lived overseas for a substantial period of time, it may not be worth applying for a Disclosure, as the CRB does not generally have access to overseas criminal records. The CRB can, however, advise you on how to obtain equivalent information from the overseas authorities, where available. You may wish to discuss this with your prospective employer.

However, some organisations have a statutory duty to check a prospective employee against one or both of the lists held by the DH (those individuals considered unsuitable to work with children) and the DfES (those considered unsuitable to work in the teaching profession). Therefore, if you are a foreign national (with either a limited or no prior period of residence in the UK) and your prospective employer has a statutory duty to check the lists, you will be required to apply for either a Standard or Enhanced Disclosure. Applying for these higher-level Disclosures is the only way to check individuals against the lists held by the DH and DfES. If, as a foreign national, you have also lived in the UK for a substantial period of time, a Disclosure may be required, in addition to any overseas information your prospective employer deems necessary.

## **How much will a Disclosure cost?**

Each level of Disclosure will cost £12.00 per application.

Accord is arranging a direct invoicing facility with the CRB. However, if you prefer, payment for Disclosure can be made by credit/debit card, by personal cheque, or postal order. Accord will refund this amount to you (please provide a receipt or other proof of payment)

The CRB will issue Standard and Enhanced Disclosures free of charge for volunteers working in sensitive positions (including working with children and vulnerable adults).

## **How will I know which level of Disclosure is required?**

The organisation that has asked you to apply will decide the appropriate level of Disclosure for the position.

Accord will indicate this in your offer letter.

## **How do I apply for a Disclosure?**

- Please telephone the **Disclosure application line on 0870 90 90 844**. You will be asked to provide information that relates to you personally. This will help the CRB to confirm your identity.
- When all details have been provided to the Contact Centre, the part completed application form will be sent to you by post. When you receive the application form, please check that your personal details are correct and sign the declaration giving your consent to undergo a Disclosure check. It should then be sent to the person who asked you to obtain the Disclosure, together with any original identity documents that are requested.

## **What information do I need to give?**

You will be asked for your full name and any other name that you may have been known by; addresses where you have lived during the past five years; your date and place of birth; your national insurance number; and other information such as passport/driving licence details. This is not a complete list, as the questions asked will depend upon the answers you provide. The information requested is to ensure the applicant has given their true identity and current address.

The CRB is committed to compliance with the Data Protection Act. This means that any personal information that you submit to us will be protected. For full details, please telephone the CRB information line on 0870 90 90 811 and request a copy of the CRB data protection leaflet.

## **Who will receive my Disclosure?**

You will receive your Disclosure in the post. A copy of the Disclosure will also be sent to the person who countersigned the Disclosure application form. This person will have been registered with the CRB, and as such, has agreed to comply with the Code of Practice.

## **When will I receive my Disclosure?**

You should receive your Standard Disclosure within one week, or your Enhanced Disclosure within three weeks, of the completed application form being posted to the CRB. There will be a dedicated phone line for disputes.

## **How do I know that the information contained on my Disclosure will be kept confidential?**

Organisations using the Disclosure service must comply with the CRB Code of Practice, which is there to make sure the whole process works fairly.

Under the provisions of the Code, sensitive personal information must be handled and stored appropriately and must be kept for only as long as it is necessary. The Code of

Practice is published on the CRB website, or you can request a copy from the person who asked you to apply for the Disclosure.

### **What if I have a criminal record that may not be relevant to the position for which I am applying?**

Safeguards and guidelines have been introduced to ensure that conviction information is not misused and that ex-offenders are not treated unfairly. Ex-offenders will retain the protection afforded by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. The Code of Practice for Registered persons and other recipients of Disclosure information will govern Registered Bodies' conduct and prevent abuse of the system.

The CRB is working with a number of organisations, such as the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) and the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NACRO), who have produced guidance information for employers on this matter. Information can be obtained from the CRB website.

### **Can I challenge the information on my Disclosure if it is incorrect?**

If you think that any information contained on your Disclosure is incorrect, please contact the Disclosure dispute line on 0870 90 90 778 immediately and ask about the dispute procedures.

### **For how long will Disclosures be valid?**

Each Disclosure will show the date on which it was printed, therefore, the older the Disclosure the less reliable it is. However, there will be no expiry date.

### **Further Information**

If you would like more information about Disclosure or the CRB please contact:

Disclosure application line      0870 90 90 844

CRB information line              0870 90 90 811

CRB website                        [www.crb.gov.uk](http://www.crb.gov.uk)

(Telephone calls are charged at national rate. Calls will be recorded for security and may be monitored for training purposes)