

Recruitment of ex-offenders

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 Sapphire Independent Housing is an organisation assessing applicants' suitability for positions which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order using criminal record checks processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). The organisation complies fully with the Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. The organisation undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.
- 1.2 The organisation can only ask an individual to provide details of convictions and cautions that ICH are legally entitled to know about. Where a DBS certificate at either standard or enhanced level can legally be requested (where the position is one that is included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended) and where appropriate Police Act Regulations (as amended), ICH can only ask an individual about convictions and cautions that are not protected.
- 1.3 The organisation is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.
- 1.4 This written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders is made available to all DBS applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.
- 1.5 The organisation actively promotes equality and diversity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcomes applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. The organisation selects all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.
- 1.6 An application for a criminal record check is only submitted to DBS after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a criminal record check is identified as necessary, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that an application for a DBS certificate will be submitted in the event of the individual being offered the position.

- 1.7 The organisation ensures that all those in Sapphire Independent Housing who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences. The organisation also ensures 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.
- 1.8 At interview, or in a separate discussion, the organisation ensures that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.
- 1.9 The organisation makes every subject of a criminal record check submitted to DBS aware of the existence of the Code of Practice and makes a copy available on request.
- 1.10 The organisation undertakes to discuss any matter revealed on a DBS certificate with the individual seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.
- 1.11 On the 29 May 2013, legislation came into force that allows certain old and minor cautions and convictions to no longer be subject to disclosure. Employers will no longer be able to take an individual's old and minor cautions and convictions into account when making decisions. All cautions and convictions for specified serious violent and sexual offences, and other specified offences of relevance for posts concerned with safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, will remain subject to disclosure. In addition, all convictions resulting in a custodial sentence, whether or not suspended, will remain subject to disclosure, as will all convictions where an individual has more than one conviction recorded.
- 1.12 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.
- 1.13 The final decision will be made by a senior manager or by collective agreement of the EMT.