

CSAS

Safeguarding Matters

Welcome to the 18th issue of Safeguarding Matters

This is the bi-monthly Newsletter that CSAS releases to all those within the Church with some responsibility for safeguarding vulnerable groups. Should you have any comments—please email Sally Robinson (sally.robinson@csas.uk.net)

ALL THINGS CRB

The Criminal Records Bureau launched in March 2002 and the Catholic Church introduced the use of CRB Disclosures as part of its Safer Recruitment practice later that same year. Since that time there has been much press coverage concerning Disclosures and the CRB. More recently the Government released the Terms of Reference for a review of CRBs and the outcomes of the review are expected early in the New Year.

Despite CRBs having been in use for 8 years, there are still some issues that continue to cause confusion and the recent introduction of a new CRB application form has presented new queries. This edition of Safeguarding Matters tries to address the most frequently asked questions and provide guidance in connection with the new style application form.

Why does my CRB Disclosure say that I've not been checked to work with vulnerable adults?

Until October last year there was a list of those barred from working with children (the POCA List—Protection of Children Act List) and a list of those barred from working with vulnerable adults (the POVA List—Protection of Vulnerable Adults List). The POVA List had been managed by the Department of Health (DoH) and they set restrictions concerning access to the barred list.

As a result of the DoH rules, only those in the Church who worked in regulated Care Homes were permitted to be checked against the POVA List.

However when the CRB application was submitted, the "position applied for" (for those working with vulnerable adults or those expected to work with children and vulnerable adults through their ministry) would have indicated that the role would be working with vulnerable adults.

As a result, the CRB would then check to see if there were any relevant offences in the applicant's criminal history that were relevant to working with this group.

With effect from October last year, the new Independent Safeguarding Authority became the agency responsible for managing the new barred lists which incorporated the previous POCA and POVA Lists. Consequently CRB applications submitted from October 2009 have been able to check against the new ISA Vulnerable Adults barred list.

If a person in the parish has been CRB checked for their SVP role, do they have to be CRB checked again for other roles working with vulnerable groups in the parish?

This is a very commonly asked question. The Catholic Church has always endorsed "internal portability". By this we mean that if a person has been CRB checked at an Enhanced level via CSAS (formerly COPCA) Registered Body for a role in the Church working with children and/or vulnerable adults and is not taking on a role of greater responsibility working with the same group for whom they have been checked, then a new CRB check is NOT necessary.

This means that if a person has been CRB checked as a member of SVP and then takes up a role as Childrens Liturgist for example, a new CRB check would not be required. Conversely if a person was CRB checked initially for their role with a parish visiting programme, they wouldn't need a new CRB check should they join SVP.

Additionally if a person continues the same role they previously performed but moved parish or Diocese a new CRB is not needed. Similarly if a member of a Religious Congregation has been CRB checked as a Religious Sister/ Brother via their Order, a new CRB check is NOT needed if they are working in a parish or Diocese. The only exception is if the member of Religious is working in particular contexts which dictate a specific CRB check to satisfy particular regulations i.e. working in a School, Prison or Hospital. In all of these cases, the Registered Body would be other than CSAS for example a Local Authority or the Prison Service.

CRB questions continued...

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What do we do with people coming into the UK from overseas? How do we CRB check them?

It is not possible to CRB check someone who isn't resident in the UK. Therefore if you have someone arriving in the UK for a very short term period in order to assist with a particular Church activity or event you must rely on the other aspects of Safer Recruitment, namely references. For members of Clergy or Religious, the Church expects Testimonials of Suitability to be obtained. If someone is going to be residing

in the UK, Church policy recommends that a CRB check is not sought until a person has resided in the UK for 12 months but this can be sought after 6 months. The exception to this is in respect of regulated Care Homes run by Religious, as the Care Quality Commission (CQC) require that a CRB check is obtained immediately. CQC requirements supersede the national policies of the Church in this respect.

The recently introduced CRB Application Form makes reference to a National Insurance Number; Driving Licence and Passport. Are these the only forms of ID documentation that are now accepted?

No. The new CRB application form seeks information about "unique" forms of ID that applicants may possess however many people do not have a driving licence and/or a passport.

The rules concerning 3 forms of ID if a Group 1 document is presented or 5 forms of Group 2 documentation still apply and this is made reference to (albeit vaguely) on the 1st page of Guidance Notes on the CRB application form. See the "Proving Your Identity" section and if you refer to the CRB website, you will see the long list of acceptable forms of ID. Therefore if you have an applicant that only has 1 or 2 documents from the National Insurance Number; Driving Licence or Passport listed on the Application Form, continue to obtain additional ID documentation to ensure you have seen adequate documentation. The ID Verification Form of the Catholic Church (dated Nov 2009) reiterates the need to have 3 documents including Group 1, or 5 forms of Group 2.

The new CRB Application Form makes reference to "working with children or vulnerable adults at the applicant's home address" at line X66—does this relate to Presbyteries and people running prayer groups in their home?

No. This question specifically relates to CRB applications in respect of prospective adoptive or foster parents and those intending to provide childcare services from their own home.

What role title should I put on the CRB Application Form when it comes to unpaid/voluntary posts in the Church?

You should use the generic term "Church Ministry" for unpaid posts. This should then be followed by "CHN" if the role is working with children; "VAd" if the role is working with vulnerable adults and "CHN/Vad" if the role is working with both groups. Do not use Church terms i.e. Childrens Liturgist; Eucharistic Minister; Parish Helper and DO NOT use the term "Volunteer". The unpaid nature of the role should be identified at line X68 on the CRB application form. Please also note that administrative/clerical roles are NOT eligible for a CRB check even if they handle or have access to sensitive information. Only those working in specific environments i.e. Social Services; Regulated Care Homes etc can CRB check administrative staff. Outside of those limited settings it is illegal to ask someone to undertake a CRB check without the role satisfying the CRB eligibility criteria.

If you have any queries relating to these points or any other CRB related questions, please refer to your Diocesan Safeguarding Office; CoR Counter-Signatories Office or CSAS for further assistance.



Please note that the CSAS office will be closed from 24th December to 3rd January inclusive.

CSAS would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year.