

## Policy on the employment of ex-offenders

- As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, Dorset Council complies fully with the DBS code of practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.
- The council's aim is to promote diversity so that no employee, potential employee or user of its services, will be subject to unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of gender, age, marital status, colour, race, nationality or other ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, disability, sexuality, criminal background, membership or non-membership of a trade union or political beliefs.
- This written policy on the employment of ex-offenders will be made available to all Disclosure applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.
- We actively promote diversity and equality of opportunity for all with 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.
- 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 applicants will be informed that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position. A conviction will not necessarily bar an applicant from employment. This will depend on the nature of the position, the offences and the circumstances applying to the offences.
- Where a Disclosure is to form part of the recruitment process, 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 sent under separate, confidential cover, to a designated person within Dorset Council and we guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.
- The nature of some positions allows Dorset Council to ask questions about a person's entire criminal record, including "spent" and "unspent" convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- We ensure that all those in Dorset Council who are involved in the recruitment process are suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences. We also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- At interview, or in a separate discussion, we ensure 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 or termination of employment.
- We make every subject of a DBS Disclosure aware of the existence of the DBS 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 with the council.
- The council will specify all positions where a Disclosure is required, together with the level and type of Disclosure.
- Employees will be required, as part of their contract of employment, to declare any convictions, cautions or bind overs which occur during their employment with the council. Employees in appropriate posts will be subject to DBS checking on a three-yearly cycle.