

# Wales Council for Voluntary Action

Supporting charities, volunteers and communities

## 4. Volunteers

### 4.10 Criminal records checks



The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) is a government agency and provides a one-stop shop for those seeking access to criminal record checks.

A Disclosure (CRB check) is a process of gathering information about an applicant's possible criminal activity. This includes spent and unspent convictions, cautions and warnings given by the Police. A Disclosure is the certificate containing this information.

The CRB Disclosure service can be accessed by becoming a Registered Body or through the services of an Umbrella Registered Body which acts on behalf of other organisations.

A CRB Disclosure can only be requested where it is best practice and/or meets the mandatory requirements with regards to eligibility.

There are two levels of Disclosure available:-

**Standard** – this is no longer available for posts that involve working with children or regular contact with vulnerable adults. It will be available for certain security and gaming posts.

**Enhanced** – for posts that involve regularly caring for, supervising, training or being in sole charge of children or vulnerable adults. The scope of the Enhanced Disclosure was broadened to take regulated activity into account from October 2009. This will provide details of spent and unspent convictions, cautions and warnings. In addition, it may contain information from local police forces which may be relevant to the position.

The ISA registration stage of the Vetting and Barring Scheme has been halted to allow the Government to conduct a remodelling of the scheme back to 'proportionate, common sense levels'. As a result the ISA registration phase of the scheme has been stopped and was not launched on 26 July 2010.

Whilst final requirements on individuals to register with the scheme will depend on the outcome of the review, it is important to note that the requirements introduced by the first phase of the Vetting and Barring Scheme in October will remain in place.

These include:

- since January 2009, ISA have been making independent barring decisions. It will continue to maintain two constantly updated lists, one for those barred from working with children, the other for those barred from working with vulnerable adults

- existing requirements concerning CRB checks will remain in place, and those entitled to such checks can continue to apply for them; and
- employers are still legally obliged to refer information to the ISA if they have moved or removed an individual because they have harmed or there is a risk of harm to a member of a vulnerable group.

## **Cost of Criminal Record Checks**

The CRB levies a charge for paid employees of

- Standard Disclosure £26
- Enhanced Disclosure £36

**Volunteers are free of charge.**

## **How to obtain a Criminal Record Check**

There are two ways for organisations to apply for checks. An organisation can apply to the CRB to become a Registered Body or it can apply through an Umbrella Registered Body.

Many organisations however, may consider becoming a Registered Body to be inappropriate for them or indeed may not be eligible.

## **WCVA Criminal Records Unit**

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WCVA Criminal Records Unit (CRU) is a CRB Umbrella Registered body providing FREE access to the CRB Disclosure service and ISA Vetting and Barring Scheme for the Voluntary Sector within Wales.

The Unit has been set up to help with the safer recruitment of paid staff and volunteers who are recruited into positions working with children and vulnerable adults. CRU is able to take requests and countersign Disclosure applications on behalf of any voluntary organisation recruiting for positions based in Wales. It also gives advice and guidance on the necessary procedures that need to be in place to ensure that organisations using criminal records checks are compliant with CRB Code of Practice.

The fully bilingual service is FREE of administrative charge to voluntary organisations. The only charges are those levied by the CRB in relation to Disclosure checks for paid employees; volunteer checks are free of CRB charges.

WCVA CRU welcomes enquiries from organisations that would like to know more about criminal records checks or wishing to use the CRU service.

## Further information

WCVA CRU

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### Disclaimer

The information provided in this sheet is intended for guidance only. It is not a substitute for professional advice and we cannot accept any responsibility for loss occasioned as a result of any person acting or refraining from acting upon it.

### For further information contact

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Produced by WCVA, County Voluntary Councils and Volunteer Centres.

**Last Updated:**04/08/2011