

POLICY ON THE RECRUITMENT OF EX-OFFENDERS

INTRODUCTION

Wellspring is committed to equality of opportunity and undertakes to treat all applicants for paid or voluntary positions within the organisation fairly and not to discriminate unfairly on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.

The nature of Wellspring's work means that some staff and volunteers will have regular and ongoing contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults. For this reason it will be necessary to carry out criminal record checks (Disclosures) as part of the recruitment process for some positions within the organisation. Wellspring complies fully with the Code of Practice, issued by Scottish Ministers, in connection with the use of information provided to registered persons and other recipients of information by Disclosure Scotland under Part V of the Police Act 1997 for the purposes of assessing applicants' suitability for positions of trust.

The aim of this Policy is to ensure that having a criminal record will not necessarily debar any individual from working with Wellspring, and that due consideration is given to the nature of the position together with the circumstances and background of any offences. This document is part of a policy framework designed to ensure safe and fair recruitment and selection procedures throughout the organisation, which includes Wellspring's:

- *Recruitment, Selection, Training & Support Policy and Procedures*
- *Equal Opportunities Policy & Practice*
- *Policy & Guidelines for Protecting Vulnerable People*
- *Child Protection Policy & Procedures*

- *Policy on the Secure Handling, Use, Storage and Retention of Disclosure Information*

POLICY

1. We are committed to equality of opportunity and our policy is to take every reasonable step to ensure that no-one connected to Wellspring receives less favourable treatment than others on the grounds of ethnicity, religious or political beliefs, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, ability, employment status or unrelated criminal record (see *Equal Opportunities Policy*).
2. Wellspring promotes equality of opportunity for and welcomes applications from a wide range of candidates, which may include those with criminal records. The selection of candidates for interview will be based on skills, qualifications and experience.
3. We will request a Standard or Enhanced Disclosure only where this is considered proportionate and relevant to the particular position. This will be based on a risk assessment of that position. Where a Disclosure is deemed necessary we will make clear in all job advertisements, application forms and any other information provided about the position that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of an individual's being offered the position.
4. The relevant Disclosure form will be sent to the applicant to complete and returned with a form of identity to the Wellspring nominated Disclosure Signatory. That person confirms the identity document matches the applicant, passes the form to the Administrator who sends it off to Disclosure Scotland together with the payment.

Within 7 - 10 days, Disclosure Scotland send one copy of their document to Wellspring, another to the applicant. The Signatory opens the Wellspring copy. If there are no convictions, the Signatory gives the number of the document to the Administrator for office records and the document is then destroyed.

5. If a conviction is shown, the Signatory will pass the document to the chair of the recruitment panel. Consideration will be given to:

- * whether the conviction is relevant to the position being offered
- the seriousness of the offence revealed
- the length of time since the offence took place
- whether the applicant has a pattern of offending behaviour

- whether the applicant's circumstances have changed since offending took place
6. We will undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a Disclosure with the subject of that Disclosure before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.
 7. Wellspring will ensure that all staff and volunteers involved in recruitment processes are aware of this Policy and have received relevant training and support on recruitment of ex-offenders. We will also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to employment of ex-offenders (eg Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974).
 8. We undertake to make a copy of this policy available to any applicant for a position with Wellspring.

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