

# Recruitment of Ex-offenders Policy

<b>Purpose</b>	To ensure the safe recruitment of staff into roles within Together for Short Lives
<b>Scope</b>	All applicants for roles at Together for Short Lives
<b>Lead Responsibility</b>	Director of Finance and Resources
<b>Reporting Requirements</b>	By Exception
<b>Version</b>	1.0 – New Policy
<b>Date</b>	August 2025
<b>Date for Review</b>	July 2027 or earlier as required

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## Policy

Together for Short Lives is committed to the fair treatment of all staff, potential staff and volunteers, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, physical/ mental disability or offending background.

We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential, and welcomes applications from a wide range of candidates. We will select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 enables some criminal convictions to become 'spent', or ignored, after a 'rehabilitation period'.

A rehabilitation period is a set amount of time from the date of conviction. After this period, with certain exceptions, an ex-offender is not normally obliged to mention their conviction when applying for a job or volunteering role.

We do not automatically exclude anyone with a criminal record. Each case is considered individually, based on the role and the circumstances of any offences.

## DBS checks

We comply fully with the DBS Code of Practice and relevant legislation, including the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, and ensure that all recruitment decisions are made fairly and lawfully.

Due to the nature of our work with children and young people, all positions with Together for Short Lives qualify for DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks at a level which provides access to sensitive criminal information about individuals. We will only request information that we are legally entitled to access, based on the level of check appropriate for the role. As an organization using the DBS service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, Together for Short Lives must comply fully with the relevant legislation and DBS Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. We will not discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar an individual from working with Together for Short Lives. This will depend on the nature of the role and the circumstances and background of the offences. The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 was introduced to ensure that ex-offenders who had not re-offended for a period of time since their last conviction are not discriminated against when applying for jobs. Unless a post is exempted from the Act, we are not allowed to discriminate on the grounds of spent convictions.

All staff, potential staff or volunteers who will be working directly with children and young people will be required to undertake an Enhanced DBS check with additional checks against the barred lists. All other staff, potential staff and office-based volunteers who will not be working directly with children and young people will be required to undertake a Basic DBS check which will only disclose 'unspent' convictions.

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All recruitment and job adverts will contain a statement that a DBS check will be undertaken in the event of the individual being offered a role.

### Vetting process

Together for Short Lives is committed to safeguarding and protecting the children and young people we work with. All posts that require work with children and vulnerable adults are subject to safer recruitment processes including self-disclosure, the disclosure of criminal records and vetting checks. The level of check will vary dependent upon the role and the access to children or vulnerable adults.

For roles that do not involve direct contact with children or vulnerable adults, applicants are not required to disclose spent convictions, in line with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

In order to protect vulnerable groups such as children and young people, when staff or volunteers are recruited into positions involving regular work with these groups, they are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, and therefore Together for Short Lives is entitled to ask the individual to disclose both spent and unspent convictions.

### Procedure

All applicants will be encouraged to provide details of any criminal record at an early stage in the recruitment process. Every short-listed candidate for roles that involve working directly with children and vulnerable adults will be required to complete a self-declaration form at the point of being invited to interview. Self-disclosure forms will only be used and read if the candidate is shortlisted and called for interview. Short-listed candidates that do not provide a completed self-disclosure form will automatically be withdrawn from the recruitment process.

The relevance of any convictions will be judged against the following:

- The seriousness of the offence and its relevance to other employees, service users and volunteers.
- The length of time since the offence occurred.
- Whether the offence was a one-off or part of a history of offending.
- Circumstances which lead to the committing of the offence.
- Whether the applicant's personal circumstances have since changed.
- The country in which the offence occurred.
- Decriminalisation and remorse.

Any offences revealed on the self-declaration form that might be relevant to the post, must be discussed at interview, or in a separate discussion, in an open and fair manner. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to the withdrawal of an offer of employment or volunteering.

If any relevant offences are disclosed, we will carry out a fair and proportionate risk assessment, considering the nature of the offence and its relevance to the role. This will include a discussion with the applicant. Only convictions which are relevant to the role which

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an individual applies for must be taken into consideration. Past convictions which were spent a long period of time ago and which would not impact on an individual's ability to perform a role competently and safely, will not bar an individual from taking up a post within the organisation.

We are committed to supporting applicants with criminal records and encourage open and honest disclosure. If an applicant is unsure about how their background may affect an application, please direct them to the TfSL HR team for a confidential discussion.

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