

03. Recruitment

1. Purpose of Policy

- i. The aim of this policy is to select and appoint Staff with appropriate skills and experience through a methodical selection process, free from discriminatory bias and soundly based on the principle of equality of opportunity.
- ii. This policy outlines the processes used during recruitment of Staff and in particular, details the policy on recruitment of offenders and for those Staff that subsequently offend.
- iii. In addition, this document details separately the policy concerning the recruitment of Volunteers (pages 4-5).

2. Relevant Legislation & Glossary

- i. In line with the Police Act 1997 (Part V) and dependent on the nature of the position, Carers Link will ask successful applicants to become a member of the Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme (PVG Scheme) at the appropriate level with regards to working with adults or children/young people. Details of handling and storage of this information is available in our **Policy on Data Protection (Personal Data & Disclosure Information)**.
- ii. For positions not eligible for PVG Scheme membership, a Basic Disclosure shall be requested.
- iii. Membership of the PVG Scheme will contain details of all convictions on record, whether "spent" or "unspent" under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and details the type of regulated work in respect of which the individual is a PVG Scheme member, if the individual is under consideration for listing, convictions and cautions, if the individual is included on the sex offenders register, relevant non-conviction information and prescribed civil orders.
- iv. An inquiry to the PVG Scheme will also contain the above, but in addition will contain details of non-conviction information held locally by the Police, where this is considered relevant to the post.
- v. The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act was established to create equal access to employment for ex-offenders. Provided they have not been re-convicted for another offence, their conviction is said to become spent and to be treated as though it never existed. However, this only covers sentences up to 2½ years. Nevertheless, the Exceptions Order 1975 (updated to Exclusions and Exceptions Order 2003), allows Carers Link to be exempted from this Act, as we carry out work that brings the person into contact with vulnerable groups, namely children and young people, old and elderly people and people with a disability. This Exceptions Order thus overrules rights in relation to "spent convictions" and these must therefore be disclosed.

3. Equal Opportunities

- i. Carers Link actively promotes equality of opportunity for all with the right combination of talent, skills and potential, and welcomes applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. The selection of candidates for interview will be based on skills, qualifications and experience. Candidates will not be discriminated against based on their sex, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, age, disability or responsibility for dependants.
- ii. Equal Opportunities monitoring forms will be detached from Staff Applications and used only for the purposes of monitoring the effectiveness of our equal opportunities policies.
- iii. In accordance with our policies, attempts will be made to accommodate the particular needs of any person suffering from a disability within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010 at all stages of the recruitment process.
- iv. Carers Link is recognised by Job Centre Plus as being Positive About Disability, which guarantees an interview for any disabled person who meets the minimum criteria.
- v. Carers Link is also the first organisation in Scotland to have achieved Exemplary Status as a Carer positive Employer.
- vi. In addition, Carers Link complies fully with the Code of Practice, issued by Scottish Ministers, in connection with the use of information provided by Disclosure Scotland under Part V of the Police Act

1997, for the purposes of assessing applicants' suitability for positions of trust. We undertake to treat all applicants for positions fairly and not to discriminate unfairly against the subject of a Disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed. The specific process with regard to ex-offenders is contained within the relevant sections of this policy.

- vii. Having a criminal record will not necessarily stop ex-offenders from working with Carers Link. This will depend on the nature of the position, together with the circumstances and background of their offences.
- viii. This **Recruitment Policy** is made available at all times on our website.
- ix. All individuals who enquire about a vacancy will be offered a copy of the policy - in any suitable format - at the outset of the recruitment process.

4. Advertising

- i. The aim of any recruitment practice is to ensure no discrimination takes place in this first stage. The extent and method of advertising will be dependent on whether the post is temporary or permanent.
- ii. Posts expected to last no more than 6 months and with no possibility of renewal may be advertised internally only to staff, students, volunteers and previous job applicants (if appropriate).
- iii. Posts expected to last between 6 months and 1 year will be advertised internally. However they will also be made known to the wider public through our website and facebook pages and through voluntary sector networks such as EDVA or the Coalition of Carers. Advertising within the press or website (such as Goodmoves) will only occur if funding permits.
- iv. For points ii and iii above, please also refer also to the **Policy on Temporary Workers**.
- v. Permanent posts will be advertised as per iii above but will also be advertised through the press/website packages offered through Goodmoves. Other national and professional press or websites will only be utilised where funding permits or if appropriate.
- vi. All existing employees, students and volunteers who meet the minimum criteria for a post will be guaranteed an interview. Please refer also to the Policy on **TUPE**.
- vii. Where membership of PVG Scheme is deemed necessary for a post or position, all applications forms, job adverts, website, and any other appropriate literature will contain a statement that PVG Scheme membership will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position.
- viii. All printed advertising will contain 'Positive about Disabled People' symbol.

5. Staff Recruitment Process

- i. Prior to advertising a new post or filling an existing vacancy, a job description and person specification will be drawn up by the CEO or delegated manager/team lead and approved by the Board's Management Staffing Sub-Group.
- ii. Application packs (in the appropriate format) will be made available to all prospective candidates. The default position being through e-mail or website download. These packs will include job descriptions, person specification, equal opportunities monitoring form, criminal conviction declaration form, and background information on Carers Link and the relevant project. Where possible, applicants are asked to return the completed criminal declaration form sealed in an envelope.
- iii. The CEO and designated members of staff will shortlist from applications received using a scoring system against the Person Specification. Applications from people who do not meet the minimum criteria or who are not included in the shortlist will be responded to with a 'no thank you' letter or e-mail at the earliest opportunity.
- iv. The sealed envelopes of short listed candidates containing their completed criminal conviction declaration form shall be opened at this point. If any short listed candidate has declared previous criminal convictions, the relevancy of these offences and an assessment of potential risk shall be assessed by the CEO and designated members of the Board of Management, and will consider at a minimum the following aspects:
 - o Whether the conviction is relevant to the position being sought
 - o 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 applicants circumstances have changed since offending took place
- v. We ensure that those involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences. We also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to employment of ex-offenders.
- vi. Where an offence is considered a risk to the organisation and/or our service users, the short listed candidate shall not be selected for interview. A letter will be sent at the earliest opportunity, acknowledging the positives of disclosing and explaining the decision. The criminal conviction declaration form shall also be returned.
- vii. Where an offence is not considered a risk, the candidate will be invited for interview.

6. Interviews for Staff

- i. The interview panel will normally consist of CEO, Operational Manager and relevant staff member. Representative(s) from the Board of Management and other invited parties from funding bodies may also attend as appropriate. Where possible, a gender balance will be maintained.
- ii. The panel will meet prior to interview to agree questions and criteria for objective scoring. During interviews each candidate will be scored directly following each interview. The most appropriate applicant will be offered the post.
- iii. Where appropriate, skills tests (such as delivery of a presentation) will form part of the interview. However, psychometric testing will only be used if the test has been validated in relation to the job, is free of sex or racial bias and is administered and validated by a suitably trained employee.
- iv. If any candidate has previously declared criminal convictions, the chair of the interview panel will declare at the beginning of the interview that the criminal convictions shall be discussed. The purpose of this discussion is to clarify information relating to the circumstances and background of the offences, or other matters that might be considered relevant for the position concerned. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of a subsequent offer of employment.

7. Recruitment & Social Media

- i. Carers Link will not check public social media pages (Facebook, Twitter etc) about a candidate during the short-listing or interview stage of the recruitment process.
- ii. The panel, may however, check the 'Linked-in' pages of a candidate as this website has been created for the purposes of professional networking and recruitment/job-seeking.
- iii. Nevertheless, applicants should be aware that if successful and they begin employment with Carers Link, then their social media pages and other such pages *may* be monitored. Nevertheless, blogs or websites which do not identify the blogger or participant as a Carers Link staff member or Volunteer, do not discuss Carers Link or our work and are purely about personal matters would normally fall outside the guidance listed within the **ITC Policy**.
- iv. As stated within our **ITC Policy**, you will however be subject to the Discipline Policy for any blog or other website posting that Carers Link determines is rude, offensive, harassing, defamatory or disparaging to Carers, Volunteers, your Colleagues, relationships with other organisations or its day-to-day operations and/or strategic developments.

8. Post Interview and Appointment

- i. When a suitable candidate has been identified, an offer of a job, specifying salary, must be made subject to two acceptable references, receipt of PVG Scheme membership and sight of qualification documents. The candidate may also be asked to undergo a medical examination prior to confirmation. The letter of offer will contain key terms and conditions and will request a written letter of acceptance from the successful candidate.
- ii. Should satisfactory references or PVG Scheme membership not be received the panel can either appoint the next most suitable candidate or re-advertise.

- iii. We undertake to discuss any matter revealed from a PVG Scheme application with the subject of that Disclosure before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.
- iv. All unsuccessful candidates should be informed as soon as confirmation of the new appointment is received. Feedback of interview performance will also be made available on request and this should stress where the panel recorded clear evidence of the applicant's strengths and highlight areas of weakness. All candidates' information will be kept for a maximum period of 6 months, subject to the **Policy on Policy on Data Protection (Personal Data & Disclosure Information)**.
- v. In the case of internal promotions, the employee who is to be promoted must be made aware of the conditions attached to the promotion, e.g. salary, probationary period, what will happen should they be unsatisfactory in the new role, etc.
- vi. Where a suitable candidate with previous criminal convictions is appointed, they shall be informed of the **Policy on Data Protection (Personal Data & Disclosure Information)**. The candidate will be reassured that their criminal conviction declaration and Disclosure Information shall be kept confidential and duly shredded, according to the aforementioned policy.

9. Induction and Probation

- i. Carers Link aims to help new employees become integrated into the organisation as quickly as possible. All new employees, or employees assuming a new or different role, will have an Induction designed to meet the needs of the job and the employee. Please refer to the separate **Induction Policy** for details.
- ii. All new employees will be subject to a probationary period. The length of the period will be determined by the levels of skills and responsibility demanded by the job and may be split into two periods, not exceeding six months in total.
- iii. New employee's progress will be monitored closely and interviewed at the end of probation period. If an employee has failed to meet the necessary standards the probationary period may be extended or a new period established.
- iv. If the period is extended for reasons of poor performance, misconduct or extended absence the employee will be notified in writing of the deficiencies in performance and the date at which the extended probationary period will end (see again the **Policy on Probation Periods**).

10. Subsequent Criminal Convictions

- i. If you are appointed as a member of Staff and then are later convicted of a crime, you *may* be subject to the Disciplinary Procedure, even if that crime is committed outside of the work place or hours.
- ii. A Risk Assessment will be carried out to determine the facts of the case and consider whether the matter is serious enough to warrant starting the **Disciplinary Procedure**.
- iii. The main consideration will be whether the offence, or alleged offence, is one that makes the employee unsuitable for their type of work. Other considerations will include:
 - o Whether the conviction is relevant to the position held
 - o The seriousness of the offence revealed
 - o Whether the staff member has a pattern of offending behaviour
 - o Whether the staff member's circumstances have changed since offending took place
- iv. A criminal conviction will be treated as Gross Misconduct which *may* result in dismissal, if - after the risk assessment - it is considered to be relevant to the nature of your work and/or a potential risk to one or more of the following:
 - o The organisation
 - o Other Staff
 - o Other Volunteers
 - o Carers (of any age) or their families
 - o Partnership Organisations (or their Staff, Volunteers or clients)
 - o Members of the Public or other professionals who use our services

- v. Please refer to the full policy relating to **Disclosures SE 02**.

11. Recruitment of Volunteers

- i. Carers Link encourages the involvement of Volunteers at all levels in the organisation and within all appropriate programmes and activities. We recruit Volunteers in a variety of methods with the aim of ensuring no discrimination takes place. These methods include but are not limited to:
 - o Local Volunteer Centres
 - o Article, letters or advertisements in local, trade and national papers.
 - o Posters within health centres, community centres, places of worship, libraries etc.
 - o Websites
 - o Targeted recruitment in response to requests
- ii. We will request membership of the PVG Scheme only where this is considered proportionate and relevant to the particular position. This will be based on a thorough risk assessment of that position. Where membership is deemed necessary for a position, all application forms and information packs shall contain a statement to this effect.
- iii. Applicant's packs in the appropriate format shall be provided to all potential enquirers following an informal meeting. These include Information Booklet, Application Form, Criminal Conviction Declaration Form and Freepost Envelope. Applicants are asked to return the Application and Declaration Forms in the Freepost Envelope addressed to the Volunteers Co-ordinator.
- iv. If any applicant has declared previous criminal convictions, the relevancy of these offences shall be considered, taking into account the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of the offences. The relevancy of these offences and an assessment of potential work shall be assessed by the Volunteers Co-ordinator and CEO.
- v. Where an offence is considered a risk to the organisation and /or Carers or those being Cared-for, the Volunteer applicant shall not be processed further. A letter or e-mail will be sent at the earliest opportunity, acknowledging the positives of disclosing and explaining our decision. The criminal conviction declaration form shall also be returned. Details of other appropriate voluntary organisations who may be able to provide assistance shall also be provided.
- vi. All applicants must have satisfactory receipt of PVG Scheme membership. If a Scheme Record contains details of criminal convictions not previously declared by the Volunteer, they shall not be accepted as a Volunteer.
- vii. If a Scheme Record contains non-conviction information, the relevancy of this information and an assessment of potential risk shall again be assessed by the Volunteers Co-ordinator and CEO and the Volunteer application turned down if necessary.
- viii. All applicants must have two full and satisfactory references received on their behalf. Should a referee feel that they are unable to complete a reference form, the applicant shall have the opportunity to submit a further name.
- ix. If accepted as a Volunteer with Carers Link, a letter of confirmation and a copy of the Volunteer Handbook shall be sent.
- x. Where a Volunteer with previous criminal convictions is appointed, they shall be informed of the **Policy on Personal Data and Disclosure Information** and this Policy shall be duly followed.
- xi. No volunteer shall be accepted without completing an application form, providing satisfactory references, becoming a PVG Scheme member (if appropriate), completing all required training and attending an informal interview.

12. Policy Review

- i. This Policy will be reviewed annually or as appropriate and in accordance with legislation.

Date	Activity	Date	Activity
April 2004	Policy Created		Choose an item.

Policies Relating to Equal Opportunities**Carers Link East Dunbartonshire**

May 2006	Reviewed & Updated		Choose an item.
January 2009	Reviewed & Updated		Choose an item.
January 2011	Reviewed & Updated		Choose an item.
March 2011	Reviewed & Updated		Choose an item.
February 2013	Reviewed & Updated		Choose an item.
March 2014	Reviewed & Updated		Choose an item.
January 2015	Reviewed & Updated		Choose an item.
June 2015	Reviewed & Updated		Choose an item.
	Choose an item.		Choose an item.