



Community Scrutiny Panel

Title: CFRS DBS Checks

Date: 29 August 2024

Agenda Item No: Item 08

Originating Officer: Kristine Ward Head of People and Talent

CC: Helen Clark and Jemma Taylor HR Manager (job share)

Executive Summary: (max 100 words)

On 6th July 2023, the National Fire Chief's Council (NFCC) successfully passed a new piece of legislation regarding the inclusion of Fire and Rescue Authorities in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions).

All who work or volunteer for a Fire and Rescue Authority will be eligible for a Standard DBS check. Depending on activities undertaken, the frequency of those activities, and a risk assessment undertaken by CFRS, there was some discretion for employees to be eligible for Enhanced levels of DBS checks (with or without Barred List checks).

This report details the approach CFRS have taken in phase two of the project to implement the new legislation.

1. Introduction & Background

- Employees have now completed their DBS via an online system. ID checks have been done either via an online verification process or via a manual line manager check.
- Employees receive their completed DBS certificates to their home address once they have completed the online checking process. They are required to show this to their line manager and their line manager then completes a verification form (CFRS have decided this is no longer needed as the online system notifies us if there is an issue with their check)
- HR maintain up to date statistics on completion rates, any issues are flagged with SLT on a regular basis
- Should a DBS check be returned with a positive disclosure the line manager is required to meet with the employee and complete a risk assessment. The risk assessment then needs final sign off at an appropriate level (Head of People & Talent and CFRS Safeguarding Lead)

- Part way through phase two CFRS introduced the need for manager's to also document a fact find discussion with any staff whom there was a positive disclosure yet the employee had either failed to disclose during our amnesty period or had failed to have an early discussion with their line manager
- CFRS have a separate process for chase up and refusers. None of our employees have refused to undertake a DBS check there are 2 employees for whom their ID verification is outstanding who have been invited to stage 3 meetings (could result in potential dismissal on 16 September 2024)
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2. Current Statistics

(** Please note this information is correct as at 21.8.2024)

Total Positive Disclosures 29 current employees (1x leaver)

Risk Assessments Complete and Signed 45 -

Risk Assessments in progress 8 -

Awaiting manager to complete risk assessment 7

The panel are asked to dip sample processing of 15 completed risk assessments and provide feedback as necessary

3. Risk assessment

A risk assessment form was developed for managers to complete with staff should a positive disclosure feature on a DBS check. The risk assessment was adapted from a toolkit developed by the National Fire Chiefs Council and feedback provided by an earlier meeting of the Ethics and Integrity Panel.