

Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check handling of DBS certificate information - guidance for applicants



DBS code of practice

The DBS code of practice (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-code-of-practice>) requires that all registered bodies must have a written policy on the correct handling and safekeeping of DBS certificate information. It also obliges registered bodies to ensure that a body or individual on whose behalf they are countersigning applications has a written policy.

General principles

As an organisation using the DBS checking service to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, Rennie Grove Hospice Care complies fully with the code of practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificates and certificate information.

It also complies fully with its obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificate information and has a written policy on these matters, which is available to those who wish to see it on request.

Storage and access

Certificate information will be kept securely, in lockable, non-portable, storage containers with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

Handling

In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, certificate information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. It is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

Usage

Certificate information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

Retention

Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been made, we do not keep certificate information for any longer than is necessary. This is generally for a period of up to 6 months to allow for the consideration or resolution of any disputes or complaints, or for the completion of safeguarding audits. If, in very exceptional circumstances, it is considered necessary to keep certificate information for longer than 6 months, we will consult the DBS about this and will give full consideration to the Data Protection and Human Rights of the individual before doing so. Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding the safe storage and strictly controlled access will prevail.

Disposal

Once the retention period has elapsed, we will ensure that any DBS certificate information is immediately destroyed by secure means, i.e. by shredding. While awaiting destruction, certificate information will not be kept in any insecure receptacle (for example, waste bin or confidential waste sack).

We will not keep any photocopy or other image of the certificate or any copy or representation of the contents of a certificate. However, notwithstanding the above, we may keep a record of the date of issue of a certificate, the name of the subject, the type of certificate requested, the position for which the certificate was requested, the unique reference number of the certificates and the details of the recruitment decision taken.