

# **RCDOW Safer Recruitment Policy and Procedure**

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## **1.Policy**

The Diocese of Westminster follows the policies and procedures set out by CSSA (Catholic Safeguarding Advisory Service), <https://www.catholicsafeguarding.org.uk/national-safeguarding-standards/national-safeguarding-policy/>

### **Policy and Procedure for Safer Recruitment**

#### **Policy statement**

1.1 As part of its commitment to ensuring that children, young people and adults are kept safe from harm, the Catholic Church in England and Wales will apply robust selection and appointment processes to anybody who is applying to work or minister within the Church in a role which gives them direct access to children or adults.

1.2 Reliance on a practice of untested trust is insufficient and we aim to adhere to the highest standards of practice and public accountability, while continuing to foster a spirit of trust and openness that reflects the values of the Church.

1.3 As of December 2019, the Diocese of Westminster has a 3 year re-check policy and all those in DBS eligible roles must have a DBS issued within the last 3 years. If there are any delays in processing the DBS, then the person in question must complete a new Safeguarding Self Declaration Form to confirm that there have been no changes to their circumstances to remain in pending the processing of their re-check application.

Anyone who refuses to be re-checked will be asked to step down from their role until this process has been completed.

## **2.Process followed by Westminster Safeguarding Office**

See [DBS Procedure Manual](#) – internal process

## **3.Clergy**

Process DBS applications for all Clergy ministering in Westminster unless they are a member of a religious order not aligned to Westminster. These include the following:

- Diocesan Priest
- Overseas priests
- Ethnic Chaplains
- Religious Order priests
- Seminarians
- Deacons

For clergy not aligned to Westminster, the application can be started by Westminster i.e. preparing forms and ID verification, but completed application must be sent to aligned Diocese for processing.

### **Re-checks**

Check Clergy spreadsheet on a weekly basis and contact Clergy 3 months before 3-year anniversary of DBS issue date to begin re-check process. If priest does not respond, then contact the relevant Dean to report the matter.

#### **4. Staff**

Liaise with HR on the following:

- Process DBS applications for all new staff who will be in regulated activity – HR will send email to DBS Administrator with applicants contact details and Job Description as soon as the person has undertaken a successful interview. DBS administrator will then make contact with the new member of staff to initiate their DBS application.
- Staff will not start in role until confirmation is received from the DBS administrator that the DBS has been returned and is cleared to be appointed. The DBS Administrator will provide HR with the DBS certificate details for their records.
- Update database with leavers – HR will update the DBS administrator with a list of leavers on a monthly basis.
- Process re-checks for existing staff – HR to establish a system to identify when staff DBS checks require renewal. It is the responsibility of HR to contact employees 3 months before the 3-year anniversary of their DBS issue date requesting that they contact the DBS Administrator to renew their certificate.

#### **5. PSR**

PSR to liaise with Parish Priest and activity group leaders to ensure that all parish staff (paid staff and volunteers) are recruited in accordance to the CSSA guidance, [CSSA Safer Recruitment Policy and Procedure](#)

PSR must ensure that the following Safer Recruitment forms are completed for all volunteers to confirm the applicant's suitability for the parish role;

- Applicant Consent for DBS Processing
- Volunteer Registration form
- X2 References
- Confirmation of ID form
- Safeguarding Self Declaration Form

The forms can be downloaded from either the [RCDOV Safeguarding website](#), or the [CSSA website](#).

For parish staff and volunteers that require a DBS check, the PSR must forward the above forms to the SO along with the DBS application. This will provide the Countersignatory with the information needed to Countersign the application. Applications will not be submitted to DBS until these forms have been received at the SO.

PSRs to use following tools to check which roles are eligible for a DBS:

- [CSSA Role List](#)
- DBS Eligibility tool - <https://www.gov.uk/find-out-dbs-check>

PSRs must not progress applications to the DBS stage until they are satisfied that the applicant is suitable for the role.

On completion of the DBS, the DBS Administrator will email the PSR with an appointment decision. No one should be allowed to start in role until this appointment email has been received by the PSR.

## **6.Overseas Criminal Records Check**

- Who needs to provide one – anyone who has lived overseas within the last five years for a period of six months or longer.
- Who does this apply to – all clergy, chaplains and paid staff who require a DBS check.
- How to apply – applicants can apply for the check themselves, or we can apply for it directly through First Advantage as set up by CSSA:-
  - a) Apply themselves and provide us with evidence of application within 2 weeks. If this is not received, we will proceed with a First Advantage application and invoice the parish/chaplaincy.
  - b) Apply directly through First Advantage and invoice the parish/chaplaincy

## **7.Parishes**

Provide ongoing support to Parish priests and parish secretaries on matters relating to the Safer Recruitment process – answer general enquiries by phone and email.

## **8.Religious Orders**

Process DBS applications for all Religious Orders aligned to RCDOW.

It is the responsibility of the Religious Order Safeguarding Lead to keep DBS checks of their members in active ministry up to date. Upon notification from the Safeguarding Lead, the RCDOW DBS Administrator will undertake the DBS process on their behalf.

## **9. Ethnic Chaplains**

Process DBS applications for Ethnic Chaplains under RCDOW.

Share Ethnic Chaplain list with Bishop with Pastoral Responsibility (currently Bhp Paul McAleenan) every 6 months to ensure list up to date.

## **10. Umbrella Bodies**

Process DBS applications for Catholic charities and organisations who have an Umbrella Body Agreement with CSSA.

It is the responsibility of the Organisation's Safeguarding Lead to keep DBS checks of their employees up to date. Upon notification from the Safeguarding Lead, the RCDOW DBS Administrator will undertake the DBS process on their behalf.

## **11. Blemished DBS**

See CSSA Blemish policy - <https://www.catholicsafeguarding.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Policy-DBS-Processing-10-21.docx> (pages 10-14)

### **Internal process**

CSSA Blemish Risk Assessment form is sent to the 6 members of the Westminster DBS Commission panel – this panel includes the Commission chair. The 5 commission members (excluding commission chair) must reply within 14 days.

Responses from the 5 commission members is forwarded to the commission chair who reviews the replies and provides the Safeguarding office with the final recommendation. Safeguarding office informs the applicant and the person making the final recruitment decision of this recommendation as per the CSSA guidance.

## **12. Training/Awareness raising**

- Safer Recruitment training during induction
- Ebulk training – training video sent to all ID verifiers
- Document Awareness Training – provided by Met Police. Organise training every quarter to ensure all PSRs have opportunity to attend.
- Newsletter – produced seasonally with DBS Matters section highlighting any new policies, procedures and frequently asked questions
- Safeguarding Resource Area – update with any new policies and procedures

## **13. Data and where it is reported**

The following information is recorded on a quarterly basis and reported to the commission, Trustees and COO:

- Number of new applications received
- How many appointments made
- Number of Risk assessments carried out
- Clergy – Number with no DBS
- Clergy - Re-checks needed
- Employees - Re-checks needed

## **14. Records and data retention**

DBS information recorded on the following:

- Post log – record of DBS related post received at the Safeguarding office
- DBS Tracking Spreadsheet – records tracking information for all submitted applications
- CSSA National Database – applicant contact information and DBS certificate details
- DBD Database (Archive) – diocesan forms stored in DBD archive and deleted once retention period reached.

See [CSSA retention schedule](#)

Retention periods also printed on all Diocesan forms used in the safer recruitment process.