

COVID 19 - DBS Free-Of-Charge applications and Fast-Track Barred List Check Service

In response to COVID 19, the Home Office and the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) will put temporary arrangements in place to provide DBS checks and fast-track emergency checks of the adults' and children's barred lists free-of-charge to healthcare and social care workers being recruited in connection with the care and treatment of COVID 19 in England and Wales. A full list of eligible roles within NHS health services, social care services or social services functions in connection with the provision of care and treatment of coronavirus disease can be found in **Annex A**.

Please note that roles eligible for fast-track emergency checks are different to those defined as 'key workers' for the purposes of childcare etc.

These arrangements will provide employers with the option to appoint new recruits into regulated activity with adults and/or children, as long as the individuals are not barred and appropriate measures are put in place to manage the individual until the full DBS check is received.

Misuse of this emergency fast track COVID 19 provision will delay the urgent deployment of health and social care personnel and therefore undermine the national effort to fight Coronavirus.

This service will be available from Monday 30th March 2020.

Applications received before this date will not benefit from the service.

Before accessing this new Fast-track emergency DBS service, here are some key facts and prompts to inform your emergency planning risk assessment:

- About 95% of all Enhanced with Barred List DBS checks have no information included on them.
- Only 0.02% of Enhanced with Barred List DBS checks state that the person is on a barred list.
- If the person you are looking to employ as part of these emergency measures has had an Enhanced with Barred List DBS check in the last 3 years, as long as it is for the same workforce (i.e. children and/or adults), consider whether you can use the recent check to determine suitability for the role applied for.
- If the person you are looking to employ as part of these emergency measures has an existing subscription to the Update Service using a DBS Enhanced with Barred List check, assess the suitability of the applicant using the original certificate and a check of the Update Service.

Please note; as a temporary measure where you are recruiting into paid employment you may consider accepting checks previously issued for volunteer roles. This measure should only be taken for roles eligible for the Fast-track service.

How do we apply for COVID 19 Fast-track Barred List Checks?

In order to benefit from the free-of-charge fast-track service Registered Bodies (RB) and Umbrella Bodies (UB) should submit enhanced applications through the usual channels following the steps described below.

The application form / online application should be completed as follows:

1. **Question:** “position applied for?”: include the text “**COVID 19**” in addition to the usual workforce and job title information. These three pieces of information (“COVID 19”, workforce, and job title) can appear in any order. e.g. **CHILD AND ADULT WORKFORCE COVID 19 DOCTOR**
2. **Question:** “are you entitled to know whether the applicant is barred from working with children?”: **Place an X in the Yes Box**
3. **Question:** “are you entitled to know whether the applicant is barred from working with adults?”: **Place an X in the Yes Box**
4. **Question:** “is this application for a free of charge volunteer?”: **Place an X in the Yes Box.**

The Fast-track service will provide a check of both barred lists.

For the check to be processed free-of-charge please ensure that it is submitted as a volunteer application. We are unable to refund fees if applications are not completed as detailed above.

Please note that Workforce details should be included in the “position applied for” field as usual.

What DBS will do, and how results are returned?

DBS will check all the relevant applications against the Adults’ and Children’s Barred Lists and will email the results to the RB/UB via the address held for the countersignatory, or to an alternative address as agreed specifically for this service. DBS aim to provide results to RBs by the end of the next working day.

The results provided to RB/UBs will state that no match has been found, or that they should await the full completed DBS check before making a recruitment decision.

When to apply for Fast-Track Barred List Checks

This service must only be used where organisations are recruiting staff that fall within the definition provided in **Annex A**. All other appointments that are eligible for an Enhanced with Barred List DBS check must be processed in the usual way. This is to ensure emergency checks can be processed without delay.

Employers are reminded that they may accept previously issued DBS checks. Any decision to use previously issued checks should be made at a local level as part of a wider risk assessment. Employers should also establish whether potential staff are subscribed to the DBS Update Service which may allow recruitment to take place more quickly.

Using the Adult First Service

Where applications are submitted using the guidance above you should not submit a separate Adult First check.

Joining the Update Service

Applicants should not subscribe to the Update Service using a check submitted according to the process described above. Also, these checks should not be added to an existing subscription.

Any free-of-charge Fast-track checks that are added to an Update Service subscription will be de-linked and subscriptions cancelled where appropriate.

ANNEX A

The following list of roles that will receive free of charge DBS checks and a Fast-track barred list check is taken from The Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 (Commencement No. 16) Order 2020.

The Fast-track service is available from Monday 30th March 2020, with the exception of those 'emergency volunteers' referenced in point 'h'. Services for this group will commence at a later date to be advised.

No fee is payable and a Fast-track barred list check will be provided in relation to an application made:

- a. by a person who is registered, or who the Registrar is considering registering, as a nurse, midwife or nursing associate (individually or as part of a specified group) under article 9A of the Nursing and Midwifery Order 2001 (temporary registration in emergencies involving loss of human life or human illness etc);
- b. by a person who is registered, or who the Registrar is considering registering, as a member of a relevant profession (individually or as part of a specified group) under article 9A of the Health Professions Order 2001 (temporary registration in emergencies involving loss of human life or human illness etc);
- c. by a person who is registered, or who the regulator is considering registering, as a social worker (individually or as part of a specified group) under regulation 12A of the Social Workers Regulations 2018 (temporary registration in emergencies involving loss of human life or human illness etc);
- d. by a person who is registered, or who the registrar is considering registering, as a social worker (individually or as part of a specified group) under section 83A of the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 (temporary registration in emergencies involving loss of human life or human illness etc);
- e. by a person who is registered, or who the Registrar is considering registering, as a fully registered medical practitioner (individually or as part of a specified group) under section 18A of the Medical Act 1983 (temporary registration with regard to emergencies involving loss of human life or human illness etc);
- f. by a person who is registered, or who the Registrar is considering registering, as a pharmacist or a pharmacy technician (individually or as part of a specified group) under article 34 of the Pharmacy Order 2010 (temporary entry with regard to emergencies involving loss of human life or human illness etc);
- g. for the purposes of considering the applicant's suitability for employment for the purposes of providing, or being engaged to provide, NHS health services or social care services* (see definitions at the end of this annex) in connection with, or in consequence of, the provision of care or treatment to a person who has, or is suspected of having, coronavirus disease as defined by section 1 of the Coronavirus Act 2020, whether or not in respect of that disease.
- h. from a person who is approved by the appropriate authority, or who the appropriate authority is considering approving, as an emergency volunteer in health or social care under section 9(8)(a) of the Coronavirus Act 2020.

***Definition of NHS health services and social care services:**

“NHS health services” means—

- (a) in relation to England, any kind of health services provided as part of the health service continued under section 1(1) of the National Health Service Act 2006 (Secretary of State’s duty to promote comprehensive health service); and
- (b) in relation to Wales, any kind of health services provided as part of the health service continued under section 1(1) of the National Health Service (Wales) Act 2006 (Welsh Ministers’ duty to promote health service);

“social care services” means—

- (a) in relation to England—
 - (i) adult social services as defined in section 97(1) of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (general interpretation) and services which are the same as services which could be provided by a local authority in exercise of any of its adult social services functions as defined in section 97(1) of the Health and Social Care Act 2008, whoever provides them; and
 - (ii) services provided or commissioned in relation to children by a local authority in the exercise of its social services functions as defined in section 1A of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970 (meaning of “social services functions”) and the duties described in sections 23C to 24D of the Children Act 1989 (duties in relation to relevant former children and other young persons);
- (b) in relation to Wales, services provided or commissioned by a local authority in Wales in the exercise of its social services functions as defined in section 143 of, and Schedule 2 to, the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (social services functions of local authorities) and services which are the same as services which could be provided by a local authority in Wales in exercise of any of its social services functions, whoever provides them.