

Dear colleagues

In light of the growing rates of COVID-19 infection and the potential increase in related recruitment as a result of this, we think now is the right time to update you on a number of issues, and to provide you with some supplementary guidance.

Our ability to provide free-of-charge checks and fast-track Barred List check results is a key element in both the government's and DBS' response to COVID-19. In order for the service to be maintained we must ensure that it is being used correctly and only for the purposes stated within the legislation and guidance. In order to increase confidence in use of the service, we have attached supplementary guidance to this communication which restates the types of roles that may be eligible and also draws attention to some roles which we do not believe should be submitted via this route. The latter point is illustrated by a series of scenario-based examples which we have worked with a cross-section of stakeholders to produce. We hope this guidance clarifies the situation. We would encourage you to contact us if any questions remain.

This new supplementary guidance can be found alongside the existing advice at the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-free-of-charge-dbs-applications-and-fast-track-barred-list-check-service>

In the coming weeks and months we will monitor use of the COVID-19 application route to assess whether our amended guidance has been effective. Registered Bodies may be contacted to confirm the status of groups of applications, or individual applications. Please do not be alarmed if you are contacted; our intention is to work together with you to ensure the service is used as appropriately as possible.

DBS performance remains strong, and our delivery of the emergency fast-track Barred List checks has also been maintained throughout this challenging period. We can confirm that the COVID-related free-of-charge and emergency fast-track Barred List check services will remain in place for the time being. Whilst these services will have to be reassessed in the future, we are confident that they will be in place throughout the winter months at least.

One amendment that we will be making to this service is that fast-track results will be delivered 5 days per week from 2nd November 2020. Please be assured

that should demand increase during the coming months we are able to reverse this decision and return to a 7 days per week service at very short notice.

We are also able to confirm that recent temporary amendments to our ID validation guidance will remain in place until further notice. RBs and employers have advised us that these measures have been hugely valuable, so we are keen to retain this level of flexibility as long as physical documents are examined in person, as soon as is practically possible. Please note, the change should only be implemented for cases where it is not possible to follow the normal identity checking guidelines. The applicant must present the original versions of these documents when they first attend their employment or volunteering role, and these should be checked again in accordance with DBS ID guidance at this stage.

For the avoidance of doubt, the amendments that will continue are as follows:

- scanned images or video link may be used to view original versions of the identity documents in advance of the DBS check being submitted
- expired passports that are within 6 months of their expiry date to be accepted as if they were current

We are aware that the DVLA have announced that Photocard licences or entitlement to drive that expire between 1 February and 31 December 2020 have been extended for 11 months from the date of expiry. The DBS identity guidance requires the driving the licence to be 'current' and therefore as long as the driving licence expiry date is within extension given by DVLA, it can be used for DBS identity checking purposes.