

RECRUITMENT OF EX-OFFENDERS PROCEDURE

This Procedure and its associated Policy, are expressly excluded from your contract of employment with Bryson Charitable Group.

1. INTRODUCTION

This policy and the associated procedure derive from our Equal Opportunities Policy and set out Bryson Charitable Group's (Bryson) approach to equality of opportunity in the workplace with regards to the recruitment of ex-offenders. As an equal opportunity employer we will make every good faith effort to comply with the spirit and letter of the equality laws with regards to the procedures we establish to check the background of prospective new employees.

The purpose of this policy and its associated procedure is to provide a framework for the equitable selection of new employees. One which complies with all relevant statutory legislation, demonstrating that Bryson recognises its legal responsibilities to applicants including ex-offenders; and highlighting its commitment to fulfilling those responsibilities.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily debar you from working with Bryson. This will depend on the nature of the position, together with the circumstances and background of your offences or other information contained on a Disclosure Certificate.

This policy and the associated procedure apply to all prospective employees and volunteers of Bryson Charitable Group. ***Please check this is correct for this policy or if there are any exclusions to staff categories.***

Hard copies of all HR Policies and Procedures are available: to inspect in hard copy in your local HR Department; and/or in soft copy on request to the HR Department or your line manager.

2. SELECTION CRITERIA

Bryson actively promotes equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential, and welcomes applications from a wide range of people, including those with criminal records. The selection of candidates for interview and for posts will be based on those who meet the required standard of skills, qualifications and experience as outlined in the essential and desirable criteria.

3. USE OF ACCESS NI DISCLOSURE

We will request an Access NI Disclosure only where this is considered proportionate and relevant to the specific role. This requirement will be determined through a thorough risk assessment of the position and by considering the relevant legislation which specifies whether a Standard or Enhanced Disclosure is necessary.

Where an Access NI Disclosure is deemed necessary for a role, all applicants will be informed at the outset of the recruitment process that the position is subject to a Disclosure check. Bryson will request the individual being offered the position to undergo the appropriate Access NI Disclosure check.

4. DISCLOSURE OF CONVICTIONS

In line with the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Exceptions) (Northern Ireland) Order 1979 (as amended in 2014), Bryson will only ask about convictions that are "not protected" for the purposes of obtaining a Standard or Enhanced Disclosure.

5. DISCLOSURE DISCUSSION PROCESS

If a criminal conviction is revealed, we will undertake an open, measured, and recorded discussion with the applicant regarding any offences or other matters that may be relevant to the role. For example, an applicant applying for a driving role may be asked to discuss driving-related offences.

Failure to reveal information directly relevant to the position may result in the withdrawal of a conditional offer of employment.

6. DISCLOSURE PANEL

If a criminal conviction is disclosed, a Disclosure Panel will consider the information. The panel will:

- Undertake a measured assessment of the relevance of the offence(s) to the role.
- Record the discussion and the decision-making process.
- Ensure that all panel members have appropriate training and guidance in the relevant legislation related to employing ex-offenders.

7. WITHDRAWAL OF JOB OFFERS

A conditional job offer may be withdrawn if:

- The applicant fails to reveal information directly relevant to the position.
- The Disclosure Panel decides, based on the information, that the applicant is unsuitable for the role.

Applicants will be informed in writing of any decision to withdraw a job offer. Offers may also be withdrawn if the applicant fails to meet the appropriate standard of background checks which include satisfactory references, Access NI Disclosure Certification and NISCC registration where required.

8. CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information regarding criminal convictions will be treated with the highest confidentiality and will only be disclosed to those involved in the recruitment decision-making process. Handling of such information will comply with the organisation's Information Management and Data Protection and Access NI policies and procedures.

9. COMPLIANCE

To ensure the effectiveness of this policy, compliance will be monitored by HR in line with statutory requirements and current employment law. Any breaches or instances of poor practice will be reported and addressed promptly.

10. FURTHER INFORMATION

Applicants subject to an AccessNI Disclosure will be made aware of the AccessNI Code of Practice, and a copy will be available upon request.

