



Southampton City Council's Policy on Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

Southampton City Council is working to create equal access to opportunities for employment and voluntary work while continuing to base selection and promotion solely on ability to meet the requirements of the post. This is irrespective of race, colour, ethnic and national origins, religion, disability, gender, sexuality, age, marital status, responsibility for dependants, economic status, political values or offending background.

With some exceptions, having a criminal record will not necessarily prevent an individual from working with us in either a paid or unpaid capacity. This will depend on the nature of the position sought, the circumstances and background of the offences.

As an organisation we use the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, Southampton City Council complies fully with the CRB Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants fairly. A copy of the CRB Code of Practice is available from Human Resources or from www.crb.gov.uk

A disclosure is only requested for those positions where it is considered both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions requiring a Disclosure, all recruitment materials, e.g. application form and person specification/competency statement contain a statement that a disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position.

Where Disclosure forms are part of the recruitment and selection process, applicants will be asked to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage and we guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment and selection process, e.g. recruiting manager, HR Division.

Unless the nature of the position allows Southampton City Council to ask questions about an applicant's entire criminal record, i.e. posts exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offender Act 1974 (ROA) such as those involving working with children or vulnerable adults, we only ask about "unspent" convictions as defined by the Act. A conviction carrying a sentence of more than 2 and half years in prison can never become "spent".

We ensure that all those involved in the recruitment and selection process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences. We also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance in the relevant legislation relating to employment of ex-offenders, e.g. ROA.

At interview, or in a separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that may be relevant to the position.

We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a Disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

Please note that failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.