

Handling of DBS certificate information

Secure storage, handling, use, retention and disposal of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificates and certificate information.

The code of practice requires that all registered bodies such as the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich must have a written policy on the correct handling and safekeeping of DBS certificate information. It also obliges registered bodies to ensure that a body or individual, on whose behalf they are countersigning applications, has a written policy.

General principles

As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checking service to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich complies fully with the Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificates and certificate information. It also complies fully with its obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998 and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificate information and has a written policy on these matters, which is available to those who wish to see it on request.

Storage and access

Certificate information should be kept securely, in lockable, non-portable, storage containers with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

Handling

In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, certificate information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. It is a criminal offence to pass certificate information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it and the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich ensures that it does not pass such information to any person not so entitled.

Usage

Certificate information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

Retention

Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been made, the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich does not keep certificate information for any longer than is necessary. This is generally for a period of up to six months, to allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints. If, in very exceptional circumstances, it is considered necessary to keep certificate information for longer than six months, the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich will consult the DBS about this and will give full consideration to the Data Protection and Human Rights of the individual before doing so. Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding the safe storage and strictly controlled access will prevail.

Disposal

Once the retention period has elapsed, the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich will make best endeavours to ensure that any DBS certificate information is immediately destroyed by secure means, i.e. by shredding, pulping or burning. While awaiting destruction, certificate information will not be kept in any insecure receptacle (e.g. waste bin or confidential waste sack).

The Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich will not keep any photocopy or other image of the certificate or any copy or representation of the contents of a certificate. However, notwithstanding the above, the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich may keep a record of the date of issue of a certificate, the name of the subject, the type of certificate requested, the position for which the certificate was requested, the unique reference number of the certificates and the details of the recruitment decision taken.

Acting as an Umbrella Body

Before acting as an Umbrella Body (an Umbrella Body being a Registered Body which countersigns applications and receives certificate information on behalf of other employers or recruiting organisations), the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich will take all reasonable steps to satisfy ourselves that they will handle, use, store, retain and dispose of certificate information in full compliance with the Code of Practice and in full accordance with this policy.

We will also ensure that anybody or individual, at whose request applications for DBS certificates are countersigned, has such a written policy and, if necessary, will provide a model policy for that body or individual to use or adapt for this purpose.

Owner:	Gavin Stone		Published:	Website	
Created:	July 2015	Last amended:	July 2015	Last approved:	TBC