



Help A Neighbour In Distress Scheme

Ex-Offenders Recruitment Policy

(This Notice is effective from 17 May 2021)

Policy

HANDS is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff, volunteers and users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/ mental disability or offending background. We support equal opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records.

As a charity providing support to vulnerable adults, HANDS requires all staff and volunteers to undergo an enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check before being offered a position.

As an organisation assessing applicants' suitability for positions which are included in the [Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 \(Exceptions\) Order](#) using criminal record checks processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), HANDS complies fully with the code of practice (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-code-of-practice>) and undertakes to treat all applicants fairly.

HANDS undertake not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.

Procedure

HANDS can only ask an individual to provide details of convictions and cautions that HANDS is legally entitled to know about. Where a DBS certificate at either standard or enhanced level can legally be requested (where the position is one that is included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended, and where appropriate [Police Act Regulations](#) as amended), HANDS can only ask an individual about convictions and cautions that are not protected.

HANDS' written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders is made available to all DBS applicants at the start of the recruitment process.

HANDS select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience. At interview, or in a separate discussion, HANDS ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer.

HANDS undertake to discuss any matter revealed on a DBS certificate with the individual seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer.

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HANDS Help A Neighbour In Distress Scheme Reg. Charity Number: 1185942

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar an individual from working with or volunteering for HANDS. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of the offence(s).

In order to protect the vulnerable groups with whom HANDS work, staff and volunteers recruited into positions involving work with these groups are exempt from the Rehabilitation and Ex-Offenders Act for these positions only and so HANDS is entitled to ask the individual to disclose both spent and unspent convictions.