



BRIGHTON AND HOVE LGBT SWITCHBOARD

Disclosure and Barring Service Checks Policy

Introduction

As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to assess the suitability of applicants working with vulnerable individuals, Brighton and Hove's LGBT Switchboard complies fully with the DBS code of practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure information. It also complies fully with its obligations under the Data Protection Act and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosure information and this is our written policy on these matters.

DBS Checks

It is recognised that some of Brighton and Hove's LGBT Switchboard's service users would be classed as vulnerable adults for the purposes of the 2006 Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act.

Informed by an assessment of roles, the charity requires all Trustees, help-line and counselling volunteers and Employees to be subject to an enhanced criminal records check as defined by the DBS, and the DBS checks will be renewed every 3 years.

Volunteers of switchboard will not work unsupervised at an event until we have a positive DBS check for them and that all volunteering with Switchboard will be terminated, including volunteering at events, if we decide their DBS precludes them from working with children and /or vulnerable adults.

Negative Disclosures

In the event that a certificate is returned to Brighton and Hove LGBT Switchboard with a negative disclosure, the Director will discuss the disclosure with the Chair and the applicant will be informed. It may not be necessary to terminate the applicant's involvement with the organisation and each case will be considered on an individual basis taking into account the nature of the disclosure, timescales and its relevance to the role. The applicant will be given the opportunity to respond to the disclosure and will be informed in writing of the outcome by Brighton and Hove LGBT Switchboard.



In the event that a certificate is returned disclosing that the applicant is listed on the Independent Safeguarding Authority's list as being barred from working with either children or vulnerable adults all involvement with Brighton and Hove LGBT Switchboard will cease immediately and the applicant will be informed in writing.

Applicants are expected to self disclose any information that might be relevant to the process in advance of the Disclosure information being sought as failure to do so will compromise the integrity of the individual when the information is returned. Applicants are also expected to disclose any criminal record that occurs at any time during their volunteering or employment with Brighton & Hove LGBT Switchboard.

Working without a DBS check

Individuals cannot work unsupervised with service users who may be considered vulnerable – for counsellors this means no client work can be done until the DBS check has been returned – for help-line volunteers this means that they can work on the help-line supervised by their mentor during the training stage, but cannot work independently on the help-line until their DBS check is complete.

DBS checking and additional roles within LGBT Switchboard

Where new volunteer or staff roles are created within the charity, each role will be assessed as to whether there is a need for that role to be subject to a DBS check and the decision will be made by the Management Committee (MC) and Director.

The DBS provides an applicant sensitive service for Transgendered people that require a DBS check. (sensitive@dbsgsi.gov.uk) and Switchboard will make this available where required.

Storage

Disclosure information is never kept on an applicant's personnel file and is always 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, Disclosure information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. Brighton and Hove's LGBT Switchboard maintains a record of all those to whom Disclosure and Disclosure information has been revealed and recognises that it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

Usage Disclosure 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, Brighton and Hove's LGBT Switchboard does not keep Disclosure information for any longer than is absolutely necessary. This is generally for a period up to six months, to allow for consideration and resolution of any disputes and complaints. If, in very exceptional circumstances, it is considered necessary to keep Disclosure information for longer than six months, Brighton and Hove's LGBT Switchboard will consult with 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 safe storage and strictly controlled access will prevail.

Disposal

Once the retention period has elapsed, Brighton & Hove's LGBT Switchboard will ensure that any Disclosure information is immediately destroyed by secure means, i.e. by shredding. While awaiting destruction, Disclosure information will not be kept in an unsecured container e.g. waste bin or confidential waste sack. Brighton and Hove's LGBT Switchboard will not keep any photocopy or other image of the Disclosure or any copy or representation of the contents of the Disclosure. However, notwithstanding the above, the organisation may keep a record of the date of issue of a Disclosure, the name of the individual, the type of Disclosure requested, the position for which the Disclosure was requested, the unique reference number of the Disclosure and the details of the recruitment decision taken.

LGBT Switchboard's DBS checking procedure

LGBT Switchboard uses an umbrella body to undertake the checks. The process for completing DBS checks is as follows:



1. Personnel subject to DBS checks must complete stage 1 of the application process on-line
2. When LGBT Switchboard receives notification that stage 1 has been completed the individual must bring the required ID to the Switchboard office to enable verification of their identity. If an individual is not able to provide the required ID documents they must inform the administrator – no reason has to be given. They will then be subject to a fingerprint check instead of the usual DBS check. The umbrella organisation responsible for carrying out these checks for LGBT Switchboard will arrange for the police to contact the individual to arrange this.
3. Switchboard will formally complete the process by confirming that they have seen the required ID.
4. The umbrella body will confirm the DBS check to Switchboard and a copy will be sent to the individual concerned

For trans individuals who have a different name and identity to that which was assigned to them at birth and do not wish to disclose this, they must complete stages 1 and 2 above then call the sensitive applications team on 0151 676 1452 who will ensure their check is completed without their previous identity being disclosed to LGBT Switchboard. This policy and the way in which it operates will be reviewed every 2 years.

The policy was reviewed in.....

Signature.....

Chair

Date.....