

## GUIDANCE ON HANDLING CRIMINAL RECORD DISCLOSURES FOR UNITED REFORMED CHURCHES

### **1. AIM**

The aim of this guidance is to clarify the United Reformed Church's procedure for handling criminal record disclosures for risk assessment and clearance purposes.

### **2. Introduction of an Applicant-Only Disclosure Certificate from 17 June 2013**

From 17 June 2013, once a criminal record check has been completed the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) will issue a disclosure certificate to the applicant but will no longer send a copy to the registered body as it currently does. This means that Churches Agency for Safeguarding (CAS) will no longer receive a copy of an applicant's disclosure certificate, and this will change the way it handles disclosure certificates for United Reformed Churches. To that effect, the central office of the United Reformed Church will now be responsible for handling disclosure certificates for clearance purposes and has agreed the following disclosure handling procedure with CAS, **which verifiers and applicants should follow.**

### **3. New Disclosure Handling Procedure**

- a. Verifiers should advise applicants of the United Reformed Church's new disclosure handling procedure when verifying a DBS application form.
- b. When the applicant receives their disclosure certificate from the DBS they should first check that the name(s), surname(s), date of birth and address on the certificate are correct. If any detail on the disclosure certificate is wrong, **it will make the certificate invalid, therefore**, the applicant should contact the DBS on 08709 090 811 to inform them of the error, and a new disclosure certificate with the correct information will be issued.
- c. If the disclosure certificate contains criminal record information, the applicant should check that the information is accurate. If it is inaccurate, **the disclosure will be invalid** and the applicant should contact the DBS on 08709 090 811 to raise a dispute so that the information can be authenticated and a new disclosure certificate issued with the correct information.
- d. If the applicant is satisfied with the information on their disclosure (or if a new certificate has been issued as a result of a dispute), the applicant should send a **copy** of the **original disclosure certificate** to the Safeguarding Department of the United Reformed Church;  
DBS Administrator, 86 Tavistock Place, London, WC1H 9RT.
- e. The United Reformed Church's Safeguarding Department will authenticate the disclosure certificate, and if it does not contain any relevant criminal record information, they will advise CAS to issue a clearance letter to the applicant's verifier or alternative/or additional contact as indicated on the CAS form.
- f. In the event that a disclosure certificate contains unclear information, the United Reformed Church will pass the certificate on to CAS who will contact the applicant to discuss the disclosed information. CAS will pass the applicant's response to the United Reformed Church's Safeguarding Department for risk assessment.
- g. The URC will advise CAS to inform the applicant and their verifier or alternative/or additional contact in writing regarding the outcome of the risk assessment and whether or not the applicant has been cleared to work in the role.
- h. Please contact the United Reformed Church's Safeguarding Team by email at [safeguarding@urc.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@urc.org.uk) or telephone on 02075 202 729 if you have any questions regarding this procedure.