

Guidance and Policy for Enhanced Disclosures at GMFRS

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GREATER MANCHESTER
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

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Introduction

This Policy applies to recruitment and employment to some posts (refer to advert and job description) with Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service. It also applies to certain voluntary positions and other roles within the Service which are positions of trust with access to vulnerable adults or young people. An Enhanced Disclosure may also be required in some cases for promotions or transfers of role within the Service.

Examples of positions that require an enhanced Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) Disclosure:

- Community Firefighter
- Other relevant Operational roles
- Princes Trust-CYP

The purpose of the Policy is to assist GMFRS protecting the vulnerable by making safer recruitment and employment decisions and to ensure that Disclosure Information is used properly and fairly.

A Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) Disclosure is a document containing impartial and confidential criminal history information held by the police and government departments which can be used by employers and voluntary organisations to make safer recruitment decisions. Disclosures are provided by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB), an executive agency of the Home Office.

The Disclosure Service offers organisations a means to check the background of job applicants to ensure that they do not have a history that would make them unsuitable for posts they are trying to fill. Disclosures will provide details of a person's criminal record including convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings held on the Police National Computer (PNC).

A Code of Practice has been issued by Ministers covering the use and handling of Disclosure Information. The Code requires that such information is used properly and fairly and that Disclosure Information must not be used to unfairly discriminate against individuals when considering them for positions.

Enhanced Disclosure

This level of Disclosure involves an additional level of check to those carried out for the Standard Disclosure. Enhanced disclosures include all conviction information, spent and unspent, and any other non conviction information considered to be relevant by the police or other Government bodies.

GMFRS will seek Enhanced Disclosures where this is relevant to the particular position. This will be based on a risk assessment of the position, based on the likelihood and consequences of the risk. In general, GMFRS will ask for a Disclosure where there is access to vulnerable adults or young people through the appointment or where the post is in a position of trust as defined in the Act.

In case of positions requiring an enhanced disclosure as part of the selection process GMFRS will ask all applicants to provide details and declare criminal convictions prior to interviews. This information will only be seen by those directly involved in the recruitment process.

GMFRS will use Disclosure Information Fairly:

Information will be used only for purposes for which it has been provided, permission for any other use will be sought from the subject e.g. notification to a relevant third party.

- Recipients of Information will have regard to any guidance issued by Disclosure Scotland on the use of the information.
- GMFRS will not unfairly discriminate against the subject on the basis of any conviction or other details revealed.
- Where disclosure information raises concerns about an individual's suitability to undertake a position, GMFRS may withdraw an offer of appointment. The individual will be advised of the reason for the withdrawal.

Frequent Questions on Enhanced disclosures

How do I apply for the Disclosure?

There are two ways of applying for a Disclosure. You will either be asked to:

- Telephone the Disclosure application line on 0870 609 6006, or
- Complete an [online application form](#)

In both instances, you will be asked to provide information that relates to you personally. This will help the CRB to confirm your identity

How much does it cost?

The cost of Enhanced Disclosure is £36 for each application. If you apply through an umbrella body, you may have to pay a higher fee to cover their administration costs.

Can I refuse to apply for a Disclosure?

There is no general obligation to apply for a criminal record check. But other rules may make it compulsory to check the lists held by the DH or the DfES (Department of Health and Department for educational skills respectively) of those who are banned from working with children. In either event, an employer may choose to withdraw the offer of a position if a candidate declines to apply for a Disclosure. You may wish to take advice from your employer, trade union or another qualified person in these circumstances.

What if I already have a Disclosure?

If you already have a Disclosure and would like to use it for a second position, you can ask if the organisation is willing to accept it. When making this decision they will take into account the length of time that has elapsed since that Disclosure was issued; the level of Disclosure; the nature of the position for which the Disclosure was issued; and the nature of the position for which you are now applying.

What if I have lived overseas?

If you've lived overseas for a substantial period of time, it may be worth applying for a Disclosure, as the CRB does not generally have access to overseas criminal records. We can, however, advise you on how to obtain equivalent information from the overseas authorities, where available. You may wish to discuss this with your prospective employer.

However, some organisations have a duty to check a prospective employee against one or both of the lists held by the DH (those individuals considered unsuitable to work with children) and the DfES (those considered unsuitable to work in the teaching profession). Therefore, if you are a foreign national (with either a limited or no prior period of residence in the UK) and your prospective employer has a duty to check the lists, you will be required to apply for either a

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Standard or Enhanced Disclosure. Applying for these higher-level Disclosures is the only way to check individuals against the lists held by the DH and DfES (Department of Health and Department of educational skills). If, as a foreign national, you have also lived in the UK for a substantial period of time, a Disclosure may be required, in addition to any overseas information your prospective employer deems necessary.