POLICY ON THE RECRUITMENT OF EX OFFENDERS

Community Advice Antrim & Newtownabbey

**Policy Statement**

1. Community Advice complies fully with the code of practice issued by the Department of justice, in connection with the use of information provided to registered persons, their nominees and other recipients of information by Access NI under Part V of the Police Act 1997, for purposes of assessing Applicant’s suitability for employment purposes. We undertake to treat all applicants for positions fairly and not to discriminate on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.
2. This policy is made available to all Disclosure applications at the outset of the recruitment process.
3. Community Advice are committed to equality of opportunity, see separate Equal Opportunities Policy, to following practices, and to providing a service which is free from unfair and unlawful discrimination\*. We ensure that no applicant or member of staff is subject to less favorable treatment on the grounds of gender, marital status, race colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, age, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependents, physical or mental disability, political opinion or offending background, or is disadvantaged by and condition which cannot be shown to be relevant to performance.
4. Community Advice actively promotes equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential, and welcomes applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. The selection of candidates for interview will be based on those who meet the required standard of skills, qualifications and experience as outlined in the essential and desirable criteria.
5. We will request an Access NI Disclosure only where this is considered proportionate and relevant to the particular position. This will be based on a thorough risk assessment of that position and having considered the relevant legislation which determines whether or not a Standard or Enhanced Disclosure is available to the position in question. Where an access NI Disclosure is deemed necessary for a post or position, all applicants will made aware at the initial recruitment stage that the position will be subject to a Disclosure and that Community Advice will request the individual being offered the position to undergo an appropriate Access NI Disclosure Check.
6. In line with the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Exceptions)(Northern Ireland) Order 1979 (as amended in 2014), Community Advice will only ask about convictions which are defined as “not protected” within the terms of that order, unless the nature of the position is such that we are entitled to ask questions about an individual’s entire criminal record.
7. We undertake to ensure an open and measured and recorded discussion on the subject of any offences or other matters that might be considered relevant for the position concerned e.g. the individual is applying for a driving job but has a criminal history of driving offenses. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of employment.
8. Community advice may consider discussing any matter revealed in a Disclosure Certificate.
9. We ensure that all those in Community Advice who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of Disclosure information. We also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to employment of ex – offenders (e.g. the Rehabilitation of offenders (Northern Ireland) Order 1978).
10. We Undertake to make every subject of an Access NI Disclosure aware of the existence of the Code of Practice, and to make a copy available on request.