

Safer Recruitment Policy

Introduction

As part of our commitment to Safeguarding, we carry out a range of checks to ensure that all of our volunteers are suitable for their roles.

Some people may not be suitable due to conduct and/or values that are not in line with what we expect of Durham Nightline volunteers. We also have a responsibility to ensure that a volunteer does not pose a risk to service users, other volunteers, or themselves.

This policy explains the checks which we carry out, and how decisions are made.

Responsibility

Responsibility for vetting & suitability decisions lies with the Safeguarding Lead.

If there are any potential causes for concern, the decision on whether to admit a potential volunteer **must** be referred to the Safeguarding Lead.

Confidentiality & Data Protection

The vetting & suitability checks are carried out separately from the main recruitment process so as not to influence the decision-making of that process. Any concerns raised during the checking process are not shared any further than necessary to make a decision.

The only records stored for volunteers after they have been appointed will be a list of the checks carried out, and the date of each check. The results of the checks will not be stored for any longer than one month after they are carried out.

We keep these records to evidence that this policy was followed in making the appointment.

Vetting & Suitability Checks

With all checks, if there is anything to suggest an applicant is unsuitable, the information will be referred to the Safeguarding Lead, who will then investigate if necessary, and decide whether or not the person is suitable to be appointed.

Application Questions

As part of the application process, we ask potential volunteers about their motivations for volunteering, to ensure that they are volunteering for the right reasons. If we have any concerns arising from the answers we receive, we refer the matter to the Safeguarding Lead.

Criminal Convictions

We ask all applicants if they have any unspent convictions, conditional cautions, and any ongoing criminal investigations as part of the application process. We do not ask for any details of the conviction/caution/investigation at that stage however.

If the applicant declares any unspent convictions/cautions, or declares that they are subject to an ongoing criminal investigation, we will refer the matter to the Safeguarding Lead, who will contact the applicant for more details.

Volunteering with Nightline is not regulated activity under section 5 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and so a standard or enhanced DBS check is not required. The Safeguarding Lead may require a basic DBS check to be carried out at their discretion.

Mental Health

Based on advice from the Helplines Partnership, we suggest additional consideration is given to any potential volunteer who has experienced serious or acute mental health difficulty in the past 6 months (e.g. trauma, bereavement).

However, every application will be treated on a case-by-case basis.

We ask all applicants whether, in the last 6 months, they have experienced serious or acute mental health difficulties. We do not ask for any details at that stage however.

If the applicant indicates that they have had serious or acute mental health difficulties in the past 6 months, we will refer the matter to the Safeguarding Lead, who will contact the applicant for more details.

Parent Body records

We will provide a list of all new volunteers to the parent body before they are formally accepted. This is so that the parent body can check if they are aware of any reason why a particular volunteer is unsuitable for volunteering with Nightline.