

ORKNEY ALCOHOL COUNSELLING & ADVISORY SERVICE

POLICY ON THE RECRUITMENT OF EX OFFENDERS

1. Orkney Alcohol Counselling & Advisory Service (OACAS) complies fully with the Code of Practice, issued by Scottish Ministers, in connection with the use of information provided to registered persons and other recipients of information by Disclosure Scotland under Part V of the Police Act 1997, for the purposes of assessing applicants' suitability for positions of trust. The organisation undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly and not to discriminate unfairly against the subject of a Disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.
2. The organisation has a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders, which will be made available to all Disclosure applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.
3. The organisation is committed to equality of opportunity, to following practices, and to providing a service which is free from unfair and unlawful discrimination. The organisation will ensure that no applicant or member of staff is subject to less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, marital status, race colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, age, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, physical or mental disability, or offending background, or is disadvantaged by any condition which cannot be shown to be relevant to performance.
4. OACAS 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 skills, qualifications and experience.
5. The organisation will request a Standard or Enhanced 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. Where a Disclosure is deemed necessary for a post or position, all application forms, job adverts, careers literature, website, and any other appropriate literature will

contain a statement that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position.

6. Where a Disclosure is to form part of the recruitment process, OACAS will encourage all applicants selected for interview to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process. The organisation will request that this information be sent under separate, confidential cover, to a designated person within OACAS and we guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.
7. In line with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, OACAS will only ask about convictions which are defined as "unspent" in terms of that Act, unless the nature of the position is such that we are entitled to ask questions about an individual's entire criminal record.
8. At interview, or under separate discussion, the organisation undertakes to ensure an open and measured discussion on the subject of any offences or other matters that might be considered relevant for the position concerned. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.
9. The organisation undertakes to discuss any matter revealed in a Disclosure with the subject of that Disclosure before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.
10. The organisation will ensure that all those in OACAS who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences. The organisation will 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 Act 1974).
11. The organisation undertakes to make every subject of a Disclosure aware of the existence of the Code of Practice for Staff & Volunteers, and to make a copy available on request.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily debar the individual from working with Orkney Alcohol Counselling & Advisory Service. This will depend on the nature of the position, together with the circumstances and background of the offences

Adopted by the Board of Management on March 19th 2003

Amended on September 9th 2004