

SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

Policy number	36	Version	1
Drafted by	Hanna Taylor	Approved by Council	9 February 2021
Responsible person	David Dickens	Scheduled review date	December 2022

Policy Statement

The safety and wellbeing of our clients is our top priority, and we take all reasonable and sensible measures to ensure they are kept safe from harm.

We operate a Safer Recruitment policy which ensures that all our staff are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our clients.

This helps ensure the safety of the individuals we work with and staff and volunteers who provide services to them.

Introduction

The safe recruitment of staff at the Fishermen's Mission is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our clients. The Fishermen's Mission is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of clients, donors, staff and volunteers and anyone else our staff or volunteers come in to contact with during the course of their employment. As an employer, the charity expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Aims and Objectives

The aims of the Safer Recruitment Policy is to help deter, reject or identify people who might cause harm to our clients or are otherwise unsuited to working with them, by having appropriate procedures for appointing staff and volunteers.

The aims of the Charity's recruitment policy is as follows:

- to ensure that the best possible staff are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities and suitability for the position;
- to ensure that all job applicants are considered equally and consistently;
- to ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds as protected by the Equality Act 2010 ;
- to ensure that volunteers undergo the same rigorous process of recruitment checks as potential employees
- to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, recommendations and guidance provided by the Charities Commission, the Fundraising Regulator and other relevant statutory bodies and any guidance or code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) or Scottish Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG);
- to ensure that the Charity meets its commitment to safeguarding by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.

Employees involved in the recruitment and selection of staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with and complying with the provisions of this policy.

The Fishermen's Mission has a principle of open competition in its approach to recruitment and will seek to recruit the best applicant for the job. The recruitment and selection process should ensure the identification of the person best suited to the job at the charity based on the applicant's abilities, qualification, experience and merit as measured against the job description and person specification.

The recruitment and selection of staff will be conducted in a professional, timely and responsive manner and in compliance with current employment legislation, and relevant safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance.

If a member of staff involved in the recruitment process has a close personal or familial relationship with an applicant they must declare it as soon as they are aware of the individual's application and avoid any involvement in the recruitment and selection decision-making process.

The Fishermen's Mission aims to operate this procedure consistently and thoroughly while obtaining, collating, analysing and evaluating information from and about applicants applying for job vacancies at The Fishermen's Mission, while complying with all relevant GDPR legislation.

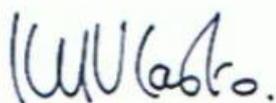
Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Council of Management to:

- Ensure the charity has effective policies and procedures in place for recruitment of all staff and volunteers in accordance with all the legal requirements.
- Monitor the charity's compliance with them.

It is the responsibility of the Executive, Human Resources and anyone involved in recruitment to:

- Ensure that the charity operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and volunteers who work at the charity.
- Promote the welfare of clients at every stage of the procedure.



Michael Vlasto
Chairman
Date 9 February 2021

SAFER RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES

Procedures	36	Version	1
Drafted by	Hanna Taylor	Approved by Chief Executive	1 February 2021
Responsible	David Dickens	Scheduled review date	December 2022

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCEDURE

All advertising for recruitment is managed centrally through the Executive Personal Assistant who manages the Human Resources function.

Advertising

To ensure equality of opportunity, The Fishermen's Mission will advertise all vacant posts to encourage as wide a field of applicant as possible, normally this entails an external advertisement.

Any advertisement will make clear the Fishermen's Mission's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of those we interact with.

All documentation relating to applicants will be treated confidentially in accordance with GDPR regulations.

Application Forms

The Fishermen's Mission uses its own application form, and all applicants for employment will be required to complete an application form containing questions about their academic and full employment history and their suitability for the role (in addition all applicants are required to account for any gaps or discrepancies in employment history).

Incomplete application forms will not be shortlisted.

The application form will include the applicant's declaration regarding convictions and CV's will not be accepted.

All applicants will be made aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected, and referral to the police and/or the DBS/PVG.

Job Descriptions and Person Specifications

A job description is a key document in the recruitment process and must be finalised prior to taking any other steps in the recruitment process. It will clearly and accurately set out the duties and responsibilities of the job role.

The person specification is of equal importance and informs the selection decision. It details the skills, experience, abilities and expertise that are required to do the job.

Interviews

There will be a face-to-face interview and a minimum of two interviewers will see the applicants for the vacant position. The interview process will explore the applicant's ability to carry out the job description and meet the person specification. It will enable the panel to explore any anomalies or gaps have been identified in order to satisfy themselves that the chosen applicant can meet with the Fishermen's Mission safeguarding criteria.

Any information regarding past disciplinary action or allegations, cautions or convictions will be discussed and considered in the circumstance of the individual case during the interview process if it has been disclosed on the application form.

At least one member of any interviewing panel will have undertaken safer recruitment training or refresher training as applicable.

All applicants who are invited for an interview will be required to bring evidence of their identity, address and qualifications. Original documents will only be accepted, and candidates will be expected to bring photocopies for retention by the Fishermen's Mission. Unsuccessful applicant documents will be destroyed one year after the recruitment programme.

Offer of Appointment and New Employee Process

The Fishermen's Mission carries out a number of pre-employment checks in respect of all prospective employees.

If it is decided to make an offer of employment following the **formal interview**, any such offer will be conditional on the following:

- the agreement of a mutually acceptable start date and the signing of a contract incorporating The Fishermen's Mission standard terms and conditions of employment;
- verification of the applicant's identity (where that has not previously been verified);
- the receipt of two references (one of which must be from the applicant's most recent employer) which The Fishermen's Mission considers being satisfactory;
- confirmation that the applicant is not subject to a direction under section 79 of the Charities Act 2016 which prohibits, disqualifies or restricts them from working at a charity, taking part in the management of an independent charity;
- verification of the applicant's right to work in the UK; (if this has not been provided as part of the identity check.
- any further checks which are necessary as a result of the applicant having lived or worked outside of the UK; and
- verification of professional qualifications which The Fishermen's Mission deems a requirement for the post, or which the applicant otherwise cites in support of their application (where they have not been previously verified).
- A basic DBS check, which will be repeated every three years for frontline staff and home visiting volunteers and every six for all other members of staff and Trustees.

A personal file checklist will be used to track and audit paperwork obtained in accordance with Safer Recruitment Training. The checklist will be retained on personal files.

References

References for successful applicants will be sent for immediately after the job offer.

All offers of employment will be subject to the receipt of a minimum of two references which are considered satisfactory by The Fishermen's Mission. One of the references must be from the applicant's current or most recent employer. The referee should not be a relative.

References will always be sought and obtained directly from the referee, and their purpose is to provide objective and factual information to support appointment decisions.

All referees will be asked whether they believe the applicant is suitable for the job for which they have applied and whether they have any reason to believe that the applicant is unsuitable to work in the areas outlined in the job description. Referees will also be asked to advise if the applicant has been subject to any safeguarding concerns.

Please note that no questions will be asked about health or medical fitness prior to any offer of employment being made.

Any discrepancies or anomalies will be followed up with each referee to verify the reference.

The Fishermen's Mission does not accept open references, testimonials or references from relatives.

DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) Check

In line with the Charity Commission guidance the Fishermen's Mission applies for the highest level of disclosure available from the DBS based on the work undertaken. This is currently a basic disclosure.

It is the Charity's policy that the DBS disclosure **must be** obtained before the commencement of employment of **any** new member of frontline staff or home visiting volunteer. For other staff or volunteers the check must be made within 2 weeks of the commencement of duties.

It is the Charity's policy to re-check employee's DBS Certificates every three years for frontline staff and voluntary home visitors and every six for all other staff and volunteers, including Trustees.

Members of frontline staff or home visiting volunteers at The Fishermen's Mission are required to inform the designated Safeguarding lead of any cautions or convictions that arise between these checks taking place.

DBS checks will still be requested for applicants with recent periods of overseas residence and those with little or no previous UK residence.

Dealing with convictions

The Fishermen's Mission operates a formal procedure if a DBS Certificate is returned with details of convictions. Consideration will be given to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and also:

- the nature, seriousness and relevance of the offence; how long ago the offence occurred;
- one-off or history of offences; changes in circumstances,
- decriminalisation and remorse.

A meeting will take place to establish the facts with the Chief Executive. A decision will be made following this meeting. In the event that relevant information (whether in relation to previous convictions or otherwise) is volunteered by an applicant during the recruitment process or obtained through a disclosure check, the Chief Executive will evaluate all of the risk factors above before a position is offered or confirmed.

If an applicant wishes to dispute any information contained in a disclosure, they may do so by contacting the DBS. In cases where the applicant would otherwise be offered a position were it not for the disputed information, The Fishermen's Mission may, where practicable and at its discretion, defer a final decision about the appointment until the applicant has had a reasonable opportunity to challenge the disclosure information.

Proof of identity, Right to Work in the UK & Verification of Qualifications and/or professional status.

All applicants invited to attend an interview at the charity will be required to bring their identification documentation such as passport, birth certificate, driving licence, etc. with them as proof of identity/eligibility to work in the UK in accordance with those set out in the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 and DBS identity checking guidelines. The Charity does not discriminate on the grounds of age.

Where an applicant claims to have changed their name by deed poll or any other means (e.g. marriage, adoption, statutory declaration) they will be required to provide documentary evidence of the change.

Induction Programme

All new employees will be given an induction programme which will clearly identify the charity's policies and procedures, including the Safeguarding Policy, the Whistleblowing policy, the Code of Conduct, and make clear the expectations which will govern how staff carry out their roles and responsibilities.

Records of Checks

Included in the various staff records kept in the charity on individual personnel files, a record of recruitment and vetting checks is kept. This is kept up-to-date and retained by HR for all staff.

Ongoing Employment

The Fishermen's Mission recognises that safer recruitment and selection is not just about the start of employment, but should be part of a larger policy framework for all staff. The charity will, therefore, provide ongoing training and support for all staff, as identified through the Annual Review/appraisal procedure.

Leaving Employment at The Fishermen's Mission.

Despite the best efforts to recruit safely, there will be occasions when allegations of serious misconduct or abuse are raised. This policy is primarily concerned with the promotion of safer recruitment and details the pre-employment checks that will be undertaken prior to employment being confirmed. While these are pre-employment checks the Charity also has a legal duty to make a referral to the DBS in circumstances where an individual:

- or has been removed by the Charity from working due to safeguarding concerns (whether paid or unpaid),
- or has resigned prior to being removed, because they have harmed, or pose a risk of harm to individuals.

Volunteers

Under no circumstances will The Fishermen's Mission permit an unchecked volunteer to have unsupervised contact with a client in their home.

It is the Charity's policy that a new DBS certificate is required for volunteers who will engage in home visiting activity but who have not been involved in any activities with The

Fishermen's Mission for one year or more. Volunteers on a break are asked to declare any new convictions since their last DBS check within the one year period.

In addition, the Charity will seek to obtain such further suitability information about a volunteer as it considers appropriate in the circumstances. This may include (but is not limited to the following):

- formal or informal information provided by staff and other volunteers;
- character references from the volunteer's place of work or any other relevant source;
- and an informal safer recruitment interview;
- online background checks.

Safeguarding

At the Fishermen's Mission, safeguarding is paramount and we are fully committed to ensuring the welfare and safety of those we interact with.

If any behaviour is a concern in relation to safeguarding procedures and processes will be followed at all times in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy.

Any concerns will be referred to the designated Safeguarding Lead and reported to the Council of Management.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Dickens', with a horizontal line underneath.

David Dickens
Chief Executive
Date: 1 February 2021