

## **DBS – Handling of certificate information**

### **Secure storage, handling, use, retention and disposal of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificates and certificate information**

#### **Policy Statement**

##### **General principles**

As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checking service to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, the company complies fully with the code of practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificates and certificate information.

It also complies fully with its obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998 and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificate information and has a written policy on these matters, which is available to those who wish to see it on request.

##### **Storage and access**

Certificate information should be kept securely, either as encrypted digital files or in lockable, non-portable, storage containers with access to either, strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

##### **Handling**

In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, certificate information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. We maintain a record of all those to whom certificates or certificate information has been revealed and it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

##### **Usage**

Certificate information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

##### **Retention**

Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been taken or the check has been made to comply with NHS or other regulatory authority requirement, we do not keep certificate information for any longer than is necessary which is usually only six months. This retention will allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints or be for the purpose of completing safeguarding audits.

Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding the safe storage and strictly controlled access will prevail.

If, due to auditing reasons, it is considered necessary to keep certificate information for longer than six months, we will give full consideration to the Data Protection and Human Rights of the individual before doing so.

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### **Disposal**

Once the retention period has elapsed, we will ensure that any DBS certificate information is immediately destroyed by secure means, for example by shredding, pulping or burning. While awaiting destruction, certificate information will not be kept in any insecure receptacle (e.g. waste bin or confidential waste sack).

We will not keep any photocopy or other image of the certificate or any copy or representation of the contents of a certificate. However, notwithstanding the above, we may keep a record of the date of issue of a certificate, the name of the subject, the type of certificate requested, the position for which the certificate was requested, the unique reference number of the certificates and the details of the recruitment decision taken.

**I have read and understood and am working to this policy – Electronic signature recorded via the Policies Declaration Sheet PDF.**