

How is my identity checked for Disclosure application purposes by the Catholic Church of England & Wales?

Until August 2012, organisations using Disclosures as part of their Safer Recruitment process had to validate each DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service, formerly known as CRB) applicant's identity by checking a prescribed number of original documents. As of August 2012, the Home Office instructed the then CRB to revise their identity verification requirements to make the system more robust.



What were the changes?

The first change is a reduction in the number of acceptable forms of documentation. The revised document types are listed on the reverse of the ID Verification Form used by the Catholic Church.

The second change is that if insufficient "primary" documents can be produced e.g. a Passport or valid Photo-card UK Driving Licence, then the applicant will be required to produce at least 1 Group 2a document and a further 2 Group 2a or 2b documents. In addition to this the Church is required to check the "address footprint" of the applicant via an external identity validation service.



The third change is that in the event that the applicant cannot produce sufficient prescribed documents or be unable to evidence their identity via the external check, then the applicant may be required to have their fingerprints taken.

What is meant by "external identity validation service"?

The Home Office has stipulated that in those circumstances where an applicant doesn't have a primary document, then their identity must be verified through a company that specialises in data matching and has access to numerous data sources for that purpose.

Who will the Church be using should I need to be subject to an "external identity check"?

Should your identity need to be checked via an external check, the Church will be using the services of GB Group Limited. This is a specialist identity management company who enable the authorised CSAS Counter-Signatories to do a simple online check to hopefully validate your identity so we can quickly progress your DBS application. GB Group Limited is NOT a credit referencing agency; the Church will not be privy to nor will be able to access information concerning your credit rating or your credit history. The check obtained via GB Group Limited will merely validate details you supply for example your name; date of birth; current and previous addresses; EU National ID card etc.



The check is carried out at the Diocesan Safeguarding office and Conference of Religious Counter-Signatory office level only. The contents of the ID check will not be shared at a parish or local level. The result of the online check will merely confirm if sufficient data matches have been made to confirm your identity or not.

What affect would an external identity check have on my credit file?

An identity check does not impact on your credit file in any way as the Church is not accessing your financial data nor is this check related to any financial product. You will however be able to see on any reports you obtain via a credit reference agency, any identity checks that have been carried out on you and which organisation sought the identity check. This is called leaving a “soft footprint” on your record. In order to carry out such a check, your consent is required and this is contained within the Declaration on the ID Verification Form used by the Church.



How can I be reassured what information will be accessed if an external identity check is undertaken?

Please contact your local Diocesan Safeguarding Office, the CoR Counter-Signatory Office or CSAS who can confirm the types of information against which your identity is checked. If you have very specific concerns and anxieties about the external check, should this be necessary to validate your ID for DBS purposes, it may be possible to supply you with a copy of the check report once the check has been undertaken.

What if I am not willing to have an external ID check carried out?

In the event that you are unable to provide sufficient Group 1 documents and are unwilling to let the Church carry out the external ID check, then your identity will have to be validated via “Route 3” and if you are have insufficient Route 3 documentation, you will be contacted in writing by the DBS supplying you with details of where you need to attend to have your fingerprints taken.

Sadly unless each DBS applicant can have their identity successfully verified by one of the 3 prescribed routes which may conclude with the necessity to present yourself for fingerprinting, it is not possible to submit the DBS application for processing and therefore it would not be possible to proceed with your application to work with vulnerable groups.

I have further questions, who can I contact?

The National Safer Recruitment policies and procedures of the Catholic Church are available online from www.csasprocedures.uk.net and they contain more detail about the ID verification aspect of Disclosure applications. Should this not answer your questions you can:

- Contact your local Diocesan Safeguarding office or the Conference of Religious Counter-Signatory office
- Contact the Catholic Safeguarding Advisory Service
- Refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) either online (via the Home Office website) or alternatively by phone.