

BRIEFING PAPER

Vetting and Barring Scheme (VBS)

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Vetting and Barring Scheme (VBS)

This new Scheme was set up as a result from the Bichard Enquiry, which followed the Soham Murders. The VBS is a partnership of the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) (a new body) and the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). The VBS is supported by the legal framework provided for in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. The ISA will be responsible for maintaining two barred lists (1. people barred from working with children and 2. people barred from working with vulnerable adults) and making decisions regarding the barred lists. The ISA is a non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Home Office.

The VBS is meant to ensure that anyone who presents a known risk to vulnerable groups is quite simply prevented from working with them. This Scheme is to be launched on 12th October 2009. After the 12th October 2009, employers, social services and professional regulators will have a duty to refer to the ISA any information about individuals who may pose a risk to vulnerable people. There will be criminal penalties for barred individuals who seek work with vulnerable groups and also for employers who knowingly take them on (this will also apply to trustees of charities).

The scope of activities covered by the VBS will be broad and will be based on the *specified nature* of the activity e.g. teaching, training, care, supervision, advice, treatment or transport or the *specified place* the activity is carried out e.g. schools (i.e. a caretaker), children's homes and hospitals, juvenile detention facilities, adult care homes and will be based on the frequency of the activity (i.e. more than once a month, 3 or more occasions in 30 days and /or overnight. **No distinction will be made between paid and voluntary work.** This type of activity will be called 'Regulated Activity'.

From July 2010, individuals who wish to start working regularly with vulnerable groups will be able to offer themselves for ISA registration and a CRB check. Being ISA-registered will mean that no information is held that demonstrates the person concerned poses a risk of harm to children or vulnerable adults. Once checked and registered with the ISA, they will be *continuously* monitored and their status will be reassessed against any new information which may come to light.

If new relevant and concerning information comes to light the ISA will be proactive in keeping employers/trustees informed.

The Scheme is to be rolled out over a 5 year period, starting on the 12th October 2009. Registration for new workers will apply from July 2010 with registration of existing workers being phased in.

Other key points of the new Scheme are that:

- It will be portable, unlike the present CRB checking system
- Registration will not be optional when a regulated activity is to be carried out
- There will be an online checking system
- The current system only provides a 'snapshot' of an individual on a particular day, whereas the new system will provide a continuous check

- Prospective employers can register an “interest” in an individual and the ISA will update them should any new information come to light
- Self-employed people such as home tutors, music teachers, voice coaches etc. will be able to register

Further information can be found here:

Home Office FAQ pdf link

http://www.iel.org.uk/resources/resources_pdf/vbs-faq.pdf

ISA website www.isa.gov.org

ISA helpline 0300 123 1111

As this is a complex area and will take time to be both implemented and effective, we recommend that you consult with appropriate authorities such as ISA, CRB, CCPAS etc.

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