



FordHaven – Safer Recruitment Policy – Staff and Volunteers

Introduction

FordHaven aims to provide a safeguarding culture and environment where users feel confident to raise issues and disclose incidents relating to their welfare and safety knowing that management will respond appropriately to these.

This policy sets out how FordHaven will ensure this through safe recruitment practices that ensure only those suitable to work with children are recruited and by holding expectations of high standards of personal and professional conduct from Directors, Team Members & Volunteers.

1. Recruitment

When recruiting, FordHaven will ensure that all advertisements for posts are clear that the role is a safeguarding role for which successful candidates should be considered suitable to work with children and that successful applicants will be expected to agree to undergo DBS and other checks as part of safer recruitment practices.

FordHaven will only accept applications using the FordHaven application form in order to capture important information about the candidate to enable FordHaven to make informed decisions about their suitability for the role.

A CV may be submitted with a completed application form but will not be sufficient for an application.

2. Candidate Specification.

Essential:

- Applicants should have a genuine interest in the human rights of children and young people. Also and understanding of their right to an education suitable to their needs.
- Applicants will be expected to be able to work well in a team situation.
- Applicants should be able to deal both sensitively and firmly (as appropriate) with those using FordHaven.
- Applicants should have a basic understanding of safeguarding of children and adults and be willing to undertake regular refresher training in this area.
- Applicants will be expected to undertake any other training considered necessary by FordHaven.
- Reliable and in keeping to the agreed schedule of dates and times for the role.

Desirable:

- Experience of working/volunteering with children/young people and their families.
- Some awareness of trauma and attachment and its impact on children/ young people.
- Be willing to look proactively for ways in which the hub's services might be improved.

3. Job Advertisement

FordHaven will ensure the following information is included in any advertisement:

- a statement of FordHaven's commitment to safeguarding and that all applicants will be subject to checks.
- information about the role (job description/person specification) and the safeguarding responsibilities that are part of the role
- the skills, experience, knowledge, abilities, attitudes, and behaviours required
- the safeguarding requirements of the role, including level of contact with children and whether the post involves regulated activity
- whether the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (where specific spent convictions must be disclosed).

4. Application

Prospective employees/volunteers will be required to complete an application form giving their personal details, skills and details of other posts- paid and voluntary. Notification of the requirements as to DBS disclosure will be included in accordance with the Centre's Policy

FordHaven's equal opportunities policy will be made available and will be applied. Applicants will be required to confirm they have permission to work in the UK.

FordHaven will ensure all candidates for posts are able to access FordHaven's Safeguarding Policy as well as this Safer Recruitment Policy and the expectations on management in implementing these.

The information will include a clear statement that it is an offence to apply for posts involving regulated activity when barred.

Application forms will ask for the following information:

- personal details of the candidate including current and former names, current address and National Insurance number;
- details of their present (or last) employment and reason for leaving;
- full employment history, (since leaving school, including education, employment and voluntary work) including reasons for any gaps in employment.
- qualifications, the awarding body and date of award.
- details of referees/references (see section 5 for further information).
- a statement of the personal qualities and experience that the candidate believes are relevant to their suitability for the post and how they meet the person specification.

5. References

These should be requested for all those selected for interview.

Applicants will be asked to provide a full employment history and details of at least 2 referees, including previous and recent employers, and who should be a senior member of staff with the authority to provide references. References from colleagues will not be acceptable.

- All references will be taken up prior to interview and will be requested directly from the referee, including references for internal candidates.
- Any information provided by applicants as part of an application process will be verified with independent sources and any reference received electronically will be checked to verify the originating source.
- Referees will be contacted to resolve any issues that emerge from the references provided, for example to clarify and verify information provided by the applicant and explore any discrepancies from the information provided on the application form.
- References will be taken up from current employers only; if the applicant is not currently employed, verification of will be sought from their previous employers as to the dates the applicant was employed and the reasons for leaving the post.

6. Shortlisting

Three members of the Board of Directors will form a panel to consider all applications received and will take account of the job description and person specification alongside the application submitted in the shortlisting process.

7. Interview & Selection

Those applicants selected will be invited for interview by the panel and those not selected will be notified as soon as possible.

One of the key purposes of the interview is to establish whether the candidate is suitable to work with children. For this reason, FordHaven will structure interviews to enable a full exploration of the candidate's knowledge, skills and experiences of teaching and/or working with children as well as their attitudes and motivations to safeguarding.

The interview will also explore any unexplained gaps in employment or frequent changes of employment, any information on allegations or disciplinary actions, or any other areas of concern.

8. Checks to be completed

FordHaven will keep copies of the following documents on staff personnel files:

- documents used as proof of identity such as passports or driving licences.
- a summary of the DBS certificate (but all other documents relating to the DBS check must be destroyed).
- documents that prove the staff member's right to work in the UK (failure to do so can result in a fine for employing illegal workers).

Where the applicant has been living abroad, similar enquiries will be made in the country of origin relating to the applicant's qualifications and suitability to work with children, including DBS checks.

9. Interview

A set of questions and any other assessment activities will be prepared to be put to each candidate on interview to enable responses to be compared fairly.

At least one question should seek to probe candidates' attitudes towards safeguarding and their motives for applying.

Each will be given opportunity to cover any other matters and to ask any questions of the interview panel about FordHaven's work and the job applied for. Notes will be taken of responses given. Following completion of all interviews, the panel will decide as to appointment, keeping a record as to reasons for the decisions taken. Check identity documents. Discuss any criminal convictions history. Check any gaps or issues from the application form.

10. Notification of employment

All those who have been interviewed will be notified no later than the end of the following day as to whether they will be offered the employment.

11. Appointment

Any offer of employment will be conditional upon receipt of a satisfactory enhanced DBS check and a check on the applicant's qualifications and any professional registrations. Once those have been received, a written offer of employment will be made, setting out the terms in full, including the following:

- a. probationary period
- b. salary and expenses
- c. hours
- d. start date
- e. holiday entitlement
- f. notice period

On acceptance, a formal contract of employment will be prepared including these terms for signature by the employee and on behalf of the Board of Directors.

12. Induction

This will be provided by FordHaven as stated in their Training Policy.

Policy Statement on the Recruitment of Ex-offenders

It is a requirement of the DBS's Code of Practice that all Registered Bodies and organisations using their service must treat Disclosure applicants who have a criminal record fairly and must not discriminate because of a conviction or other information revealed. It also obliges organisations to have a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders, a copy of which can be given to all applicants at the outset of the recruitment process. This policy is based on the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and its subsequent amendments.

Policy Statement

As an organisation using the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, FordHaven complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed. This policy will be given to all applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.

FordHaven is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities

for dependents, age, pregnancy, physical/mental disability or offending background.

- We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.
- Having a criminal record will not automatically bar you from working with us. It will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of your offences.
- Within organisations that work directly with children, staff require an Enhanced Disclosure and all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position.
- An Enhanced Disclosure asks questions about an entire criminal record.
- Where a Disclosure is to form part of the recruitment process, we encourage all applicants called for interview to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process as stated in part a of this policy. We request that this information is sent under separate, confidential cover, to a designated person within FordHaven and we guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process. Information about what to disclose can be obtained on the DBS website under DBS Filtering Guide.
- We ensure that all those in FordHaven who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences. We also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and its amendments from November 2020.
- At interview, or in a separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Unless the nature of the position allows us to ask about your entire criminal record, we will only ask about 'unspent' convictions.
- Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment. Failure to consent to this risk assessment process will lead to a withdrawal of the offer of employment.
- We make every subject of a DBS Disclosure aware of the existence of the DBS Code of Practice and make a copy available on request.



- We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a Disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

Approved by: Roxana Ford - Director
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