

# VETTING POLICY

(Draft) – July 2017

Vetting is a requirement for certain roles working with young people who are under the age of eighteen. This is required by law and is in line with the best practice within our organisation.

## Legislation and further information:

The National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 to 2016 together with the Criminal Justice (Spent Convictions and Certain Disclosures) Act 2016 Part 3 provides the legal framework for persons working in relevant work or activity to undergo a vetting check prior to working with young people.

## Relevant legislation

Civil Service Commissioners Act 1956

Child Care Act 1991 – Sections 5; 61; 65

Data Protection Act 1988/2003 Children's Act 2001 – Section 258

Private Security Authority Act 2004

National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 to 2016

Criminal Justice (Spent Convictions and Certain Disclosures) Act 2016 Part 3

## General Information

### Why do I need to be vetted?

Vetting is a legal requirement for people working with or with access to children, in any official or voluntary capacity.

Vetting is one of the measures to protect Fencing Ireland and affiliated clubs against possible perpetrators of child abuse by being a barrier to an individual who is unsuitable to work with children.

### Who is responsible?

Fencing Ireland is responsible for processing and submitting applications to NVB and for making the decision regarding an applicant's suitability to be in the role based on the information returned.

Club committees are responsible for ensuring recruited and appointed individuals are vetted in accordance with this policy.

Fencing Ireland is responsible for ensuring individuals operating at national level are vetted in accordance with this policy.

### Who is required to be vetted?

All persons applying for a role that provides an opportunity for unsupervised access to children must undergo the vetting process. These positions are defined as undertaking relevant work or activity defined in the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Adults) Act 2012 to 2016.

Individuals who must be vetted are those applying for roles within clubs or volunteers at club/competition level, including, but not limited to:

- Committee member U18 Club
- National Children's Officer
- Club Children's Officer
- Coach
- Chaperone
- Official referees (except timekeepers)
- Volunteers at children's competitions
- National Committee
- Youth Committee
- Other personnel as may be considered where these positions will have unsupervised access to young people and/or information that may be deemed sensitive or personal regarding young people.

### Re-vetting

All individuals will undergo re-vetting after three years or as required by future circumstances.

### Vetting Cost

Currently, there is no cost to clubs or to the individual to be vetted. Fencing Ireland assumes any cost arising from the vetting process at this point in time.

### Vetting Process

Club committees must identify people needing to be vetted before they take up a position within the club.

Vetting forms can be obtained from the Secretary of the Federation, Nuala McGarrity, (email) and should be returned to her in a sealed envelope, together with two forms of ID, one of which must show both full name and address of the individual applying for vetting.

The vetting process can take some time, so it is essential that all vetting applications are submitted as soon as possible.

### Information received from the National Vetting Bureau

Any assessment of suitability depends on the relevance of any conviction/disclosed information to the position or role applied for, the self-disclosure of such information, the seriousness of the offence/disclosed information, the timing of the offence and any possible pattern of offences.

The integrity of the applicant regarding self-disclosure or lack of disclosure on the initial application form is considered important. The information disclosed is used for only the specific purpose for which it was obtained.

On receiving information that may potentially result in exclusion from taking up the regulated position any original documentation is checked to ensure it is correct and that the disclosed information refers to the applicant. If the applicant has self-disclosed the information and this agrees with the disclosure from the vetting body a decision will be made depending on the type and nature of the offences

disclosed. If the applicant has not self-disclosed and information is received from the vetting body this will be checked with the applicant.

Disclosure of certain types of convictions/prosecutions or specified information automatically disqualify the applicant from a position working with children. Examples of offences that will automatically disqualify an applicant are:

- Any offence of a sexual nature
- Any offence against a child or of child abuse or pornography
- An offence that causes gross bodily harm
- Any offence of murder or manslaughter
- An offence of kidnapping
- A series of repeat offences that might cause concern for the well-being of children (e.g. continuous traffic offences where the individual would be responsible for the transport of children, etc)
- Any charge brought by the Director of Public Prosecutions concerning abuse of a child

All decisions on the suitability of an applicant made by Fencing Ireland.

## Confidentiality

In accordance with the Fencing Ireland Data Protection Policy, information received will be treated with the strictest confidentiality.

A copy of the Vetting Application Form and IDs provided, together with the information received from the National Vetting Bureau is held by Fencing Ireland for the validity of the vetting period, currently three (3) years. This information is held in a securely locked cabinet, accessible only by the Secretary of Fencing Ireland.

Information on suitability for working with children is recorded strictly as 'vetted' or 'withdrawn', where 'withdrawn' is defined as either the request for vetting has been withdrawn by the individual, or where the individual has been deemed as ineligible for working/volunteering with Fencing Ireland.

No information concerning any disclosures is provided to clubs, other than the status 'vetted' or 'withdrawn'.

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