



Encircle Housing

SAFEGUARDING OF VULNERABLE ADULTS - CRB POLICY

March 2019

ENCIRCLE HOUSING

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In accordance with the requirements of the various Inspectors and Regulators of Encircle Housing's services, we are required to hold a policy on protection of vulnerable adults and children, if the latter is appropriate for the organisation also.

Anyone who applies to work for Encircle Housing in any service must be made aware on application and interview that their employment is subject to a clear disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau and is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. This is also made clear on the requests for references for the employee. This means any sentence in other circumstances that may have been considered spent does not apply for Encircle Housing. This is a vital part of our work as there were situations such as the Ian Huntley case where the procedures were not followed, and the consequences were dreadful. Therefore, the law has changed and tightened up considerably since this case. Failure to comply could mean that Encircle Housing as an organisation are put at risk of being struck off as a service provider. An Inspector from Supporting People or Care Quality Commission can ask to see any record of any person employed by Encircle Housing, not just someone who is in direct support work.

Procedure

The checks should be completed prior to employment and a policy for this needs to be approved by the Local Authority.

If Encircle Housing does decide following a full risk assessment that the individual should be given an opportunity to be employed, and in their view there is no risk, then full details need to be put on file and this information may be required by the Local Authority in relation to name, offence, risk assessment and date of offence.

The Human Resources Manager (or equivalent) would need to liaise with the relevant Authorities if this is in the contract documentation. However, it would certainly need to be in Encircle Housing's internal practice because of our routine inspections.

In deciding whether someone who has admitted having offences should be employed, there is a fine balance on the risk to the persons we support, risk to the public, risk to the company and the chance for the person to redeem themselves. It will be a decision for the Chief Executive to take with advice from the Local Authority and/or Board Members when appropriate.

ENCIRCLE HOUSING QUALITY MONITORING POLICY

Encircle Housing operates a customer monitoring process that is user friendly and places the customer at the heart of the process. It uses accessible information and processes to find out what is at the heart of its services and the requirements of individuals who use our services and other stakeholders such as statutory bodies who commission us and views of parents and carers. Encircle Housing are part of a national monitoring process known as REACH and were joint authors of the process. REACH can be used to monitor various levels of services and meet many of the requirements of such statutory bodies as the Care Quality Commission and Supporting People (Local Authority Commissioners) and Domiciliary Contract services. There are also other monitoring tools that can be used to measure customer satisfaction and efficiencies that Encircle Housing are developing in the organisation. As an organizational monitoring tool Encircle Housing Ltd uses PQASSO. See page 6. This document sets out Encircle Housing's policy for monitoring of services and the processes that all our monitoring activities must follow.

The process identifies firstly the key stakeholders and customers of the service

It follows by identifying areas that are essential for the efficient, effective and best value delivery of services to all our identified customers and stakeholders.

Our Quality Mission

Encircle Housing operate a system of continuous improvement, which aims to address the aspirations, changing needs, wishes and dreams of those we work with both as users of the services and other stakeholders. The direction of the company will directly relate to the monitoring process and the evaluation of the information that we receive.

Methodology

- Statistical processes, collection of quantitative data, essential for returns to outside bodies and internal evaluation.
- Quality control such as customer satisfaction surveys face to face interviews, monitoring of customer complaints and complements, tenants' meetings, meetings with external stakeholders. This is measured against Best Value principles sustainability, affordability, & customer satisfaction, outcomes in line with level of inputs.

PQASSO Quality Standard

PQASSO is the Quality Standard under which SAVS operate and also support other member organisations and local Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) projects.

PQASSO is the only Quality Standard that is split into 3 distinct levels, enabling groups to start the introduction of Quality in a straightforward manner and to move to more advanced procedures and improvements once "on board" the Standard.

When an organisation decides to focus in on the review of their Quality it is an ongoing process of checking the current position, identifying and prioritising actions and, installing new or updated processes and procedures. The Quality implementation cycle is then repeated on a steady and regular basis going forwards. In many cases the Quality review

process will become a routine part of the groups organisational control with Quality team meetings each month whether or not a higher level of Paso is being sought.

PQASSO supports this gradual but continuous approach to the achievement of a culture of Quality within an organisation. In itself it will not automatically deliver Quality. Quality must always be implemented and delivered by the people in an organisation. For most voluntary groups this is the Trustees (or management committee), management, staff and volunteers, always in consideration and by reference to actual user needs.

PQASSO will assist an organisation in their review by asking all the relevant questions needed for the delivery of quality. Similar to a jigsaw puzzle it will put all the pieces of the jigsaw on the table and provide the structure by which people in the organisation can create the completed picture. The key issues are, where are we now, what do we need to action and what do we need to do to ensure the continuing wellbeing of our organisation in the future.

PQASSO Level 1 provides a gentle but essential introduction to quality review by setting the minimum standards under which an organisation should operate. It will help groups identify and meet all legal obligations and lay the foundations for effective planning, while ensuring that some focus is given to user needs. As a norm, it will ask groups to review their plans and monitor progress with a year ahead perspective.

PQASSO Level 2 builds on what has been achieved at Level 1. More emphasis is given on the need for written procedures and development. Strategic Planning requirements will now extend beyond the current year's perspective to a 2 - 3 year planning cycle. Monitoring of output and outcomes is introduced together with enhanced feedback from users. In my opinion this is the heart of the PQASSO standard and organisations achieving this level will have moved beyond the minimum essential requirements of any organisation to a mode of good practice.

PQASSO Level 3 requires organisations to thoroughly review their processes and procedures in a continual and detailed manner. In the quest for total quality it requires management, staff and volunteers to co-ordinate activities and communicate in an effective way. Organisations at this level are seen as leaders in their respective fields with, user feedback and monitoring of satisfaction fully integrated in their approach. Strategic Planning is now carried out with a 3 – 5-year outlook. The Standard recommends that groups seeking PQASSO Level 3 should have consistently achieved and maintained the requirements of Levels 1 & 2 for a minimum of a year.

Essentially the ingredients of any good quality standard are CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT; USER CENTRED SERVICE and EVIDENCE. Whichever level is sought after and reached, these should remain as the key criteria under which effectiveness and efficiency is maintained and accreditation is confirmed.

Should it be discovered that after taking someone into employment that there is in fact a criminal, bound over or caution that has not been disclosed despite informing the individual that all matters need to be disclosed, then this is considered to be a serious matter subject to Encircle Housing's disciplinary procedures which may result in summary dismissal, depending on the circumstances.

This lack of disclosure would be considered in all cases to be a serious breach of contract and would affect the trust and confidence of the employer and employee relationship and will be taken as an extremely serious matter.