

# Coalition Governments Reviews of Criminal Records Regime and Vetting and Barring Scheme

## A brief overview

**In parallel with a thorough review of the vetting and barring scheme (VBS), a separate but aligned review of the broader criminal records regime has also been undertaken.**

The first phase of the **Criminal Records Regime** focused on issues concerned with the extent and demands of pre-employment vetting systems and the role of the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). That review report has now been submitted to Government and will be given careful consideration by ministers. A Government response to the recommendations will be announced in due course

### **Amongst the recommendations are:**

children under 16 should not be eligible for criminal records checks

individual eligibility to be scaled back to focus tightly on those working unsupervised or in regular close contact with children or vulnerable adults

criminal records checks to be portable between positions within the same employment sector

the CRB to introduce an online system to allow employers to check if updated information is held on an applicant

a new CRB procedure to be developed so that the criminal records certificate is issued directly to the individual applicant who will be responsible for its disclosure to potential employers and /or voluntary bodies

the introduction of a package of measures to improve the disclosure of police information to employers

With regard to the **Vetting and Barring Scheme (VBS)** this review report was also recently published. The VBS had been created to help safeguard children and vulnerable adults, following the Bichard Inquiry and was designed to check the records of those who wanted to work with vulnerable groups. If they were assessed to pose a risk of harm to vulnerable groups then they would be barred from working or volunteering with these groups.

**The recommendations of the review include:**

The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) should be merged and a single organisation created to provide a barring and criminal records disclosure service.

The new barring regime should cover only those who may have regular or close contact with vulnerable groups.

No requirement for people to register with the scheme and there will be no ongoing monitoring.

Criminal records disclosures should continue to be available to employers and voluntary bodies but should be revised to become portable through the introduction of a system which allows for continuous updating.

The new regime should retain current arrangements for referrals to the barring body (currently the ISA) by employers and certain regulatory bodies

The new system to retain two offences; it will continue to be an offence for a barred person to work with vulnerable groups in regulated activity roles. It will also be an offence for an employer or voluntary organisation knowingly to employ a barred person in a regulated activity role.

Government should raise awareness of safeguarding issues and should widely promote the part everyone has to play in ensuring proper safeguarding amongst employers, volunteer organisations, families and the wider community.

**It needs to be remembered that the above are only recommendations and the Government have yet to determine their stance upon those recommendations.**

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