

# Self-directed support

## Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks

A CRB check tells you about someone's criminal history. If you want to employ your own staff, it is sensible to know if someone has a criminal history. If you are employing someone to support a child or vulnerable adult, you may have to get a CRB check.

Your local council can tell you about CRB checks. This fact sheet tells you basic information about CRB checks.



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## The basic facts

You have to get a CRB check to help protect children and vulnerable adults who are recruiting people for positions of trust.

Recruiting and employing your own staff can be a great way of getting support that works for you. However, employing people is a serious responsibility. A CRB check is one of the things you can do to make sure you get the right staff.

You usually get a CRB check when you've found someone you want to employ – so long as their references and checks are good. Your local council can do the check for you or it will recommend an umbrella organisation to do the check.

### Useful but still limited

A CRB check is very useful but it is limited. It only shows someone's criminal history. It can't tell you if someone is doing something illegal now or if they will in the future. It only tells you if someone has offended – if they've been caught doing something illegal. So it isn't a 100% fail safe system.

So it is wise to follow up other references, including character references. You can also ask other people who know the person you're thinking of employing. You could even use social network websites like Facebook to check people out.

### What if the CRB check shows a conviction?

If the CRB check tells you that the person has offended, it can still be difficult to decide what to do. The question is does the person pose a risk to the one who needs support? If, say, someone was caught stealing a bar of chocolate some years ago, does it mean they are a threat to someone who needs support?

You have to deal with the problem in the right way and you shouldn't ignore it.

You may need help to make the right decision. The council or umbrella body should offer you support and advice about what to do.

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## More information – the Criminal Records Bureau

The CRB is run by civil servants. It's part of the Home Office.

It was set up to help organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors to identify job candidates who may pose a risk to children or vulnerable adults. It was set up in 2002 under the Police Act.

There are two kinds of check: enhanced and standard checks. Both checks have to be paid for. But there is no charge to volunteers. The CRB acts as a 'one-stop-shop' for organisations, checking police records and, in some cases, information held by the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA).

The CRB also works with the Department of Health and the Department for Children, Schools and Families. These departments also keep information on people they consider unsuitable or barred from working with children and vulnerable adults.

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## An example

David got a personal budget after sustaining a brain injury in a motorbike accident. He lost the use of both his arms. He was in rehabilitation for nine months. He came back to live in his bachelor pad. (His mum had managed to hang onto his council property.)

David was known as a bit of a 'jack the lad'. His mum says he kept some 'quite colourful company'. David used a provider organisation to manage his money and his support through an individual service fund, but wanted to be involved in recruiting the staff. Many of his mates were out of work and he suggested they would be great at supporting him.

The support provider insisted that the staff he chose would need to be CRB checked and references followed up, but David didn't agree. The debate went on for a period of time. Finally David agreed to the CRB checks on the basis that, if the check didn't come back clear, it didn't instantly mean the person couldn't be employed to work with David.

David needed five staff to support him. Three of the seven who applied were from David's own network. David opted to recruit all three of his mates and two people who he didn't know. One of the applicants admitted to having a criminal record before they filled in the CRB form. But when all five checks came back, it was evident that two people had criminal records.

### Lemonade theft

David talked to the provider and the umbrella body about what to do. In the end, David recruited all three friends and one of the people he didn't know. One of his mates had disclosed his criminal conviction before the CRB. He had stolen a bottle of lemonade as a dare when he was 14. David and the provider were happy to employ him.

They only found out about the other conviction when the CRB check came back. It was a conviction for grievous bodily harm. David and the provider decided not to employ this person.

If you ask David about CRB checks now, he is all for them. He says you never know what surprises people have up their sleeve.

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There is a lot of information about self-directed support on In Control's website:  
[www.in-control.org.uk](http://www.in-control.org.uk)

For more information about the Criminal Records Bureau, and for application and registration enquiries:

Criminal Records Bureau, PO Box 110, Liverpool L69 3EF

[www.crb.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.crb.homeoffice.gov.uk)

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#### About the **In Control and Me** project

A three-year project to produce accessible information for everyone who wants to direct their own support, funded by the National Lottery through the BIG Lottery Fund. You can find out more at [www.mencap.org.uk/incontrol](http://www.mencap.org.uk/incontrol) or [www.in-control.org.uk/icandme](http://www.in-control.org.uk/icandme)