



WE DISCOVER, WE GROW

Girlguiding

Disclosure checks and rechecking

Frequently Asked Questions

What are disclosure checks?

The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) have merged to become the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). CRB checks are now called DBS checks, also known as 'police checks'. This is a criminal record history that contributes towards the assessment of the suitability of a volunteer. Girlguiding also undertakes Access NI for members in Ulster and PVG for members in Scotland. These checks are specific to the Country concerned and may be undertaken alongside - but not instead of - the DBS.

You are likely to have had a disclosure check when you first became a volunteer. We are now introducing rechecks for volunteers every five years.

What does a disclosure check involve?

When you have a disclosure check, your identity documents (such as your passport or driving licence) are first verified by an ID Verifier, who may be your Commissioner, and then your details are checked against local and national police databases. The information is then updated on the Girlguiding disclosure system. Although your ID Verifier will need to see the originals of your identity documents, they will not keep a copy and you will not need to send them anywhere. You do not have to pay for a Girlguiding disclosure check.

How can I find out who is an ID Verifier in my area?

Your local Commissioner will be able to inform you who completes disclosure checks with volunteers in your area - this individual is known as an ID Verifier. In some cases this may be the Commissioner herself. Alternatively, contact your County Coordinator for ID Verifiers, who will be able to assist you further.

I already have a valid DBS certificate as I am a teacher/social worker/nurse - will I need another check?

Although the procedure may seem unnecessary and duplicating what you have already been through, Girlguiding currently does not accept external disclosure checks and will do its own. This is to ensure that the check is valid for our purposes and to ensure consistency in our approach.

What if I have a motoring or financial conviction?

Girlguiding recognises that criminal record disclosure is a very sensitive and complex area. Disclosure of any kind is dealt with on an individual basis.

What if I was cautioned for an offence when I was a teenager?

We will take such an offence into account only if it is relevant. Having a conviction, whether it is spent or unspent, does not necessarily bar a volunteer from a role within Girlguiding. This will depend on the circumstances and background of the offence, and the role to be undertaken.

What will happen if I have a criminal record?

Girlguiding may contact you directly to discuss your criminal record history. However, please be assured that this information remains confidential and is considered on a case-by-case basis.

Why do I need to be rechecked if I have already been checked for Girlguiding?

Safeguarding our membership is of paramount importance to us all, and our procedures state that all adults working directly with children and adults must be checked. As part of Girlguiding's commitment to safer recruitment practice, we are introducing rechecking at five-year intervals. In addition, individuals who have not been part of Girlguiding for three or more years and are returning to a membership role that requires a check will need to complete a new disclosure check.

Could I use the DBS Update Service rather than undergo a disclosure recheck?

The DBS Update Service lets applicants keep their DBS certificates up to date online. At present Girlguiding will not be using the DBS Update Service to check volunteers, as it is our understanding that no historical information will be available on this system - we will continue to use the existing DBS process for recruitment checks. If this position changes, we will let you know.

Why does the disclosure recheck for Girlguiding have to be done every five years?

It is considered to be best practice to do renewal of disclosure checks every three or five years. The trustees of Girlguiding have decided to go with the five-year option. As there will be a very large number of volunteers who will now need to have their rechecks done, we will be rolling out the process in a phased manner, based on the date of your initial recruitment check. You will not have to complete a recheck until you are notified by the system to do so.

What if I refuse to undergo a recheck?

We hope that you will understand the reasons why we have to do this, but ultimately if you do refuse to undergo a new disclosure check after five years then the organisation would have to consider your future position within Girlguiding.

Will the rechecking cost me anything?

As a volunteer, you will not incur any costs in completing a disclosure check. If you do have to spend any money in meeting your ID Verifier (eg transportation costs), you can claim it back from your local level.

What is the process for rechecking?

Two months before your disclosure certificate expires, you and your local Commissioner will be sent an email about it. The Commissioner can start the recheck then. If, for some reason, the recheck has not been started, an email will be sent to you, your local Commissioner and your County Commissioner on the date the certificate expires. We will then give you 60 more days for your recheck to be done

before your role is made 'active-pending' on Go!. This means there is a period of four months between initially being notified and the role becoming 'active-pending'.

I have received an email notifying me that I need a new disclosure check but I haven't heard from my Commissioner or ID Verifier. What do I do?

If you have not been contacted by your Commissioner or ID Verifier to make arrangements for a new disclosure check to be undertaken, get in touch with them directly to enquire about what arrangements need to be made.

How long will the rechecking process take?

A disclosure check takes around 60 days to complete, but in some cases it could take longer. Please be aware that checks have to be processed by the Police National Computer (PNC). This stage is external to Girlguiding and can have an impact on the length of time that your check takes to complete.

What happens if my disclosure check has not been completed in time?

If you have been unable to complete a new disclosure check, your role will change to 'active-pending' on Go! and you will be unable to attend residential events, stay overnight or be left unsupervised with girls and young women until your new disclosure check has been completed. You will also be unable to access membership records relating to any level.

What happens for residential events if my recheck hasn't completed in time?

If your disclosure check has expired and you have not completed a new disclosure check within 60 days (ie your role becomes 'active-pending'), you will be unable to attend residential events or stay overnight until your new disclosure check has been completed.

I am a Commissioner. Who will be notified that I need a recheck?

As is the case for all members, you and your next-level Commissioner will be notified that a new disclosure check is required. Your County Commissioner will be notified if a disclosure check expires before a new check has been completed.

I do not have an email address - does that matter?

Girlguiding will contact you by post to notify you that a new disclosure check is required if you do not have an email address. Your local Commissioner or ID Verifier will contact you by post or telephone to arrange a recheck meeting.

Will I need to provide new references?

No, because references are not needed for the disclosure process.

Does every volunteer need to be rechecked?

No. We are able to complete a disclosure check only for individuals who are aged 18 or over, and are in regulated activity. These roles are shown in the *Guiding Roles* document as requiring a disclosure check. Only individuals who have at least one role which requires a disclosure check need to complete a recheck, and no other volunteer will be asked to complete one.

I had my disclosure check in (or before) 2010 - do I need a new one now?

Not necessarily. You need to complete a recheck only when you are notified by the system. Owing to the number of volunteers affected, we will be rolling this process out in stages. You are asked to adhere to this roll out.

When I have completed a disclosure recheck, what happens?

Once a disclosure recheck has been completed, Girlguiding and the ID Verifier will be notified. Overnight your Go! record will be updated with your new disclosure check number and you will receive no further emails until your next recheck is due.

In order for records to update quickly and smoothly, you need to ensure that:

- the forename, surname, date of birth and postcode on the disclosure application matches your legal name and documentation
- the forename, surname, date of birth and postcode on your Go! record matches the disclosure application information
- your Girlguiding membership number is entered on your disclosure application.