

# What are Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks?

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## Introduction

As employers we have a responsibility to make sure that those we employ or allow to volunteer in our clubs present no potential danger to any children (or vulnerable adults) with whom they come into contact. We can minimise the risks by checking for any past convictions or suspicions of misbehaviour. This is the basis of DBS checks.

In December 2012 the Disclosure and Barring Service was formed, taking on the functions of the former Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA). The DBS is responsible for DBS checks, which replace the old CRB check system. These provide, in defined circumstances, for a check on the past criminal record of an employee (standard check) and in addition a check for information from local police records and from ISA “barred lists” (enhanced check).

## Do Real Tennis clubs need to apply for DBS checks?

The short answer is **YES**. The two ISA “barred lists” list individuals who are deemed unsuitable for working with either children or vulnerable adults, especially in a supervisory capacity. It is illegal for an employer to employ someone or allow them to volunteer in this kind of work if they're on one of the barred lists. In the context of real tennis professionals this includes coaching and training children. So clubs should apply for an enhanced DBS check for all current or prospective professionals and for volunteers for example tournament organisers, working on a voluntary basis.

## How do you apply for an enhanced DBS check?

It is the employer who must apply but only those employers who undertake large numbers (more than 100 a year) can do so directly. Small employers like most real tennis clubs must apply through what is known as an umbrella body, registered with the DBS. The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) has agreed to be the umbrella body for all T&RA affiliated real tennis clubs, though clubs may use any umbrella body.

Please see the instructions on ‘**How to Apply for a DBS Check**’ through the T&RA, available on our website at: [https://www.tennisandrackets.com/assets/downloads/child-protection/How\\_to\\_Apply\\_for\\_a\\_DBs\\_check.pdf](https://www.tennisandrackets.com/assets/downloads/child-protection/How_to_Apply_for_a_DBs_check.pdf)

## When should a DBS check be performed?

You can only apply for DBS check once employment has been offered. You might consider some wording which makes the offer conditional on a satisfactory DBS check so that if anything of relevance is discovered you would be able to withdraw the offer.

A DBS check reflects the position at a point in time. Generally it is wise to do a new check when an employee is appointed even if they have previously been checked.

***Once in relevant employment, the T&RA requests that DBS checks are performed at least every three years, and recommends applicants to sign up for the online updating service now offered by the DBS.***

When an applicant registers for the update service, they are provided with an online account that allows them to take their DBS certificate with them from one job to another, and allows their employer to check their certificate online. This service costs £13 per year (potentially more cost effective than reapplying ever 3 years), and an individual may register for the DBS update service when they apply for their DBS certificate online, or within 14 days of the issuing of the DBS certificate itself.

A new system has been introduced for volunteers. Once registered as a volunteer with the DBS, volunteers are also eligible for the online updating service, allowing them to port their DBS certificate with them if they take on further volunteering, rather than repeating the whole process. This will be free for volunteers.

DBS checks should be considered in the context of a child protection policy, which all clubs should have. There is a model child protection policy statement available on the T&RA website (see below).

If you believe that an employee or a volunteer has abused their position of trust and is a potential danger to children or vulnerable adults in their charge then as an employer you are legally required to report your suspicions to the DBS.

## **Further information**

You can find more detail, including the list of identity documents to choose from at: [www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check/overview](http://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check/overview), and on the T&RA website at: <https://www.tennisandrackets.com/executive/child-protection>.

For further information on the DBS online updating service for both volunteers and professionals, please see: [www.gov.uk/dbs-update-service](http://www.gov.uk/dbs-update-service), and also [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/237334/Applicant\\_guide\\_v3\\_4\\_6\\_9\\_13.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/237334/Applicant_guide_v3_4_6_9_13.pdf)

The T&RA model child protection policy statement can be found at: <https://www.tennisandrackets.com/assets/uploadedContent/Safeguarding-Policy-Statement.pdf>

Arrangements in Scotland are slightly different. More information from Disclosure Scotland, see: [www.disclosurescotland.co.uk/apply/employers](http://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk/apply/employers).