



GUIDANCE NOTES NO:

**10.8**

# SAFER RECRUITMENT OF VOLUNTEERS IN OPEN-AGE ADULT DISABILITY FOOTBALL

**FOR CLUBS AND LEAGUES**

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**FOR ALL**

# SAFER RECRUITMENT OF VOLUNTEERS IN OPEN-AGE ADULT DISABILITY FOOTBALL

The intentions of most people who work in football are good. However, as part of football's commitment to provide safe and enjoyable environments, sound recruitment and selection procedures are essential. When clubs or leagues recruit new volunteers, all reasonable steps must be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working in open-age adult disability football.

Involving adult players throughout the process and consistently following these eight steps will help ensure fair and safer recruitment across the game.

## STEP 1. ROLE PROFILE

- Describe the main tasks and responsibilities;
- Identify the skills and experience required to fulfil the role;
- Ensure the final role profile is agreed by the committee.

## STEP 2. ADVERTISING

- Ensure club/league members are aware of volunteering opportunities, as well as advertising outside the club/league;
- Make use of club/league websites/newsletters/e-zine, social media e.g. Twitter/club Facebook page, local sports hall and school notice boards;
- Ensure the advert reflects the club/league's Safeguarding Children and Safeguarding Adults policies, details the skills/experience required and the duties to be undertaken;
- Do not discriminate in terms of age, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital status or civil partnership, race, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, religion or belief, ability or disability, pregnancy and maternity and encourage equal opportunities.

## STEP 3. APPLICATION FORM

- Use The FA's Volunteer Application Form – see Appendix 1; Some volunteers may need support to complete the form;
- At least two officials must be involved in considering the application forms;
- Official photo identification documents must be seen to confirm the identity of the person e.g. passport, driving licence, bus/train pass, parking badge.

## STEP 4. MEETING/INTERVIEW

- Club/league officials need to meet/interview everyone who has offered to volunteer; more than one official must be present;
- The meeting/interview questions (prepared in advance) must provide the applicant the opportunity to recount experiences and give examples of how they have or would handle situations;
- While it is important to gain information about an applicant's technical abilities, it is also necessary to explore their attitudes and commitment to player welfare. Below are some suggested questions to ask:

- Can you tell us about any previous experience you have working with adults in disability sport?
- Give a scenario related to the player pathway, and ask the applicant what they would do e.g. 'It's a winter evening and training has finished. A player's lift has not arrived. What would you do?'
- The applicant would be expected to say that this would depend on the person, their independence and needs for support when travelling. You would look to see a supportive approach. This could include supporting the person to make a call or alternative arrangements.
  - Is there anything we should know that could affect your suitability to work with players in our club?'

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## STEP 5. REFERENCES

- Two references must be requested from individuals who are not related to the applicant; use The FA's Volunteer Application Form (see **Appendix 1**);
- One reference should be from the applicant's place of work or place where they volunteer – and one that ideally demonstrates they have been involved in sport;
- References must be followed up. If either reference raises any concerns, you are advised to contact your County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer for advice and guidance.

## STEP 6. DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE (DBS) CHECKS

- The FA is currently considering the circumstances in which DBS Checks are, or may be, required for people working with adults (over 18s) in open-age disability football. Further guidance will be provided on this issue in due course;
- The FA Safeguarding Children Policy applies wherever under-18s play football. Therefore, where there are under-18s in an open-age team, DBS Checks must be requested for

those working with them. For more information, see Appendix 5 (A Guide for Clubs with 16/17-year-old Players) in Guidance Notes 10.1: Safeguarding Adults in Open-age Disability Football.

## STEP 7. RECRUITMENT DECISIONS

**Consider all the information you receive via:**

- The application form;
- Confirmation of identity;
- Outcome of the take-up of references;

This information should then be considered alongside the outcome of the meeting/ interview to make an informed decision as to whether or not the person is suitable to work or volunteer.

## STEP 8. RECRUITMENT DECISIONS

**Ensure new volunteers:**

- Are clear about and have signed up to the role and its specific responsibilities;
- Are made aware of the club's/league's Safeguarding Adults policy and when appropriate, the club's/league's Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures and any Codes of Conduct;

- Complete The FA's 'Safeguarding Adults' free online course (see **Guidance Notes 10.4**);
- Are supported in-post for the first few weeks. This may simply be via observation or more pro-active mentoring;
- Are introduced to relevant people and especially to the Welfare Officer (Adult Disability Teams);
- Are encouraged to attend further training specific to their role, as appropriate.

**It's important to recognise that volunteers may have limited relevant experience but can offer transferable skills, enthusiasm, an appetite to learn and an understanding of the ethos and behaviours required at your club/league. Investing time and energy in supporting committed individuals to gain experience and skills is often the way to find much-needed volunteers.**

# FURTHER ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

Safeguarding adults is about putting in place the best possible practices and procedures. This will protect not only the adult themselves, but also everyone in the club/league. If you require any further support or guidance relating to adults, please contact your County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer.

It is recognised that some larger clubs/leagues are in the fortunate position to be able to employ staff. While these guidelines have special emphasis on recruiting volunteers, they could easily be applied to recruitment of paid staff.

Volunteers and others who are required to have a DBS should be assured that The FA will take into account the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (ROA), 1974 and only consider offences which we are entitled to in relation to the ROA Exceptions Order, 1975. The FA will only share information with those who are involved in the recruitment decision.

## **SAFER RECRUITMENT IN PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL**

Professional clubs are advised to seek advice and support directly from their respective leagues via [premierleague.com/safeguarding](https://premierleague.com/safeguarding) and [efl.com/-/more/governance/safeguarding](https://efl.com/-/more/governance/safeguarding).



# VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM

## APPENDIX 1

PART A: PERSONAL DETAILS	
Title:	<i>Mr.</i> <i>Mrs.</i> <i>Miss</i> <i>Ms.</i> <i>Other</i>
Surname:	
First name:	
Any other names you are/have been known by:	
Date of Birth:	
National Insurance number:	
Current address:	
Postcode:	<i>If you have lived at your current address for less than 5 years, please provide any previous addresses on an additional sheet of paper</i>
Telephone – daytime:	
Telephone – evening:	
Mobile:	
Email:	

PART B: EMPLOYMENT DETAILS	
Current job title:	
Name of employer:	
Address:	
Postcode:	
Telephone:	
Nature of duties:	

# VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM CONT'D

APPENDIX 1

## PART C: PREVIOUS VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Name of organisation(s):			
Start date:		Finish date: (if applicable)	
Address:			
Telephone:			
Nature of duties:			
If you have any other relevant voluntary experience please list it here.			

## PART D: QUALIFICATIONS

Academic/vocational, e.g. GCSE/NVQ:			
Sporting qualifications:			
Address:			
Are you an FA Licensed Coach? If yes, please provide your licence number:			
Have you attended The FA Safeguarding Workshop?	Yes	No	
Nature of duties:			

# VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM CONT'D

## PART E: REFERENCES

Please provide the names the names and addresses of two people who know you well (but are not related) who have knowledge of your work in disability sport or work with adults whom we can contact. You must have known these people for a minimum of two years.

Names:		
Address:		
Telephone:		
How is this person known to you?		

## PART F: QUALIFICATIONS

I confirm the information that I have provided in support of my application is a complete and true record.

Signature:		Date:	
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