



Respect



Appointing a Club Welfare Officer (CWO)

Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility – including The FA's, as the game's governing body in this country.

It is FA policy that, to be able to affiliate **every club which runs an under-18 team that club must have a Club Welfare Officer who has:**

- An 'accepted' CRB check via The FA CRB Unit
- Completed The FA Safeguarding Children Workshop
- Completed The FA Welfare Officer Workshop

Key Roles and Responsibilities

The Club Welfare Officer has two key responsibilities these are:

1. To be clear about the clubs responsibilities when running activities for children and young people.
This involves:
 - Ensuring these responsibilities are well understood by others
 - Working with the Youth League Welfare Officer
 - Working with the County FA (CFA) Welfare Officer and other CFA staff as appropriate, (e.g. CFA Disciplinary staff)
 - Helping to develop best-practice processes and promoting The FA's Respect Programme
2. To help club personnel understand what their 'duty of care' towards children and young people actually means and entails on a day-to-day basis

It is essential that the Club Welfare Officer is perceived as being approachable, having a child centred approach and the ability to maintain this perspective when carrying out their role.

The type of person that would make a good Club Welfare Officer is someone who:

- Always puts children's welfare first
- Is a good communicator
- Has a common sense approach
- Is willing to learn and seek advice
- Is over the age of 18
- Is committed to working collaboratively within footballs designated persons network

Where to start

- Make it known amongst your club's members including parents/carers that you need to appoint a Welfare Officer onto the committee.
- Provide all members including parents/carers with the relevant information about this role
- Find out if anyone involved with the club or who is known by someone in the club has any professional child protection expertise, you may have someone with a family member who is or was a police officer, teacher or social worker that might be willing to take on the role.
- Ensure you have a fair and open recruitment process in line with your club constitution, you may wish to advertise the role on your club website, through quarterly/monthly communications you already have in place.
- Before appointing your Welfare Officer ensure that you have considered their appropriateness for this role by checking them against The FA's Safeguarding Children Person Specification and Suitability Checklist.



Welfare Officer Person Specification and Suitability Checklist

1. Person Specification

Essential

- Experience of dealing or working with young people
- Knowledge and understanding of safeguarding children issues¹
- A good communicator in a variety of situations with people from diverse backgrounds
- Committed to and ability to abide by The FA Rules and Regulations and promote The FAs Respect programme and safeguarding children education programme
- Empathy when dealing with individuals, sometimes in demanding situations
- Ability to listen and assess situations fairly
- Ability to handle confidential information sensitively and with integrity
- Reasonable level of administration experience and how to deal with confidential documentation
- Willingness to attend in-service training facilitated by either The FA or the local County FA

Desirable

- Knowledge and understanding of grassroots football
- Access to the internet
- Ability to use Emails

2. Suitability Checklist

Essential

- Willing and able to provide relevant current references
- Previous experience of dealing or working with children
- Knowledge of and positive attitudes to equal opportunities
- Commitment to treat all children as individuals and with equal concern
- Physical health – appropriate to carry out tasks
- Integrity and flexibility
- At least 18 years of age

- Completion of The FA CRB Disclosure process² and acceptance by The FA of the outcome³
- Understanding of the need for confidentiality when dealing with issues
- Reasonable level of administration experience and how to deal with confidential documentation
- Completion of The FAs Safeguarding Children and Welfare Officer Workshop
- Willingness to update skills and knowledge and attend in-service training facilitated by The FA or the local County FA
- Has signed up to and agree to abide by the Code of Conduct for volunteer Welfare Officers

Desirable

- Knowledge of child protection issues
- Knowledge of safeguarding children legislation
- Relevant football knowledge/understanding

NB If anyone is known to be unsuitable to work with children his/her application should be refused by the Club/League. If in any doubt about an applicant contact your County FA Welfare Officer.

More information

If you need any further advice or information please contact your County FA Welfare Officer who will be happy to help you. More information about the role of the welfare officer is available on www.TheFA.com/Safeguarding and clicking on Welfare Officer FAQs under the Welfare Officer section and also on the Respect pages under 'My Role' simply click on Welfare Officer.

The Football Association reserves the right to refuse to accept any individual as a Welfare Officer where there is significant information held by The FA or County Association to suggest that they do not meet the suitability criteria provided.

Foot notes:

¹ This can be gained through The FA's Safeguarding Children Education Programme; see www.TheFA.com/Safeguarding for further information or speak to your County FA Welfare Officer.

² The policy on CRB Enhanced Disclosures will be subject to change, in light of the implementation of the Protection of Freedoms Act (PoFA), 2012 due to come into effect in the Spring of 2013. Further information will be provided on this via TheFA.com and the County FA Welfare Officers.

³ Some people with a history of offending can still be considered for this role. If you wish to find out more about this visit the CRB FAQ on www.TheFA.com/Safeguarding or email crb@TheFA.com or call 0845 210 8080. The policy on CRB Enhanced Disclosures will be subject to change, in light of the implementation of the PoFA.