GUIDANCE NOTES NO:

10.6

SAFER RECRUITMENT OF VOLUNTEERS IN OPEN-AGE ADULT FOOTBALL

FOR CLUBS AND LEAGUES

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The FA
FOR ALL

SAFER RECRUITMENT OF VOLUNTEERS IN OPEN-AGE ADULT FOOTBALL

INTRODUCTION

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 safer recruitment or adult safeguarding, please contact your County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer (CFA DSO).

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 football.

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.

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 club/league's 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 and local community websites, newsletters, social media and notice boards.
- Ensure the advert reflects the club or league's commitment to Safeguarding Children and Adults in line with policies and procedures.
- Ensure the advert details the skills and experience required and the duties to be undertaken.
- Promote equal opportunities - do not discriminate and ensure inclusion of all members of the community.

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 club/league 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 or driving licence.

STEP 4. MEETING/INTERVIEW

- Club/league officials need to meet or interview everyone who has offered to volunteer; more than one club/league 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 motivations, attitudes and commitment to player welfare relevant to your specific context (e.g. if this relates to open-age adult disability football, ensure questions relate to this format).

Below are some suggested questions to ask:

- Can you tell us about any previous experience you have working with adults in 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 CFA DSO for advice and guidance.

STEP 6. DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE CHECKS (DBS)[1]

The FA Safeguarding Children Policy applies wherever under-18s play football. Where under-18s are involved in open-age teams, individuals who regularly supervise, instruct, care for, or have responsibility for them may be required to undergo an appropriate DBS Check in line with The FA's safeguarding requirements.

STEP 7. RECRUITMENT DECISIONS

Consider all the information you receive from the application form, the confirmation of identity, the references and the meeting/interview to make an informed decision as to whether or not to the person is suitable to work or volunteer.

STEP 8. RECRUITMENT DECISION

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 Children and Adults and other relevant policies;
- Have signed any relevant Codes of Conduct;
- Complete The FA's free 'Safeguarding Adults' & 'Player Welfare in Open Age Football' online courses;
- Are supported in-post for the first few weeks. This may simply by via observation or more pro-active mentoring;
- Are introduced to relevant people including the Club Welfare Officer;
- Are encouraged to attended further training specific to their role, as appropriate;
- Know how to raise any concerns.

[1]In accordance with Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975, only relevant convictions and cautions that are legally disclosable for safeguarding purposes will be considered. Any disclosed information will be handled confidentially and shared only with those directly involved in the recruitment or safeguarding decision-making process.

VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM

APPENDIX 1

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

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:	

VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM CONT'D

PART E: REFERENCES				
Please provide the names the contact details of two people we can contact who know you well (but are not related to you), and who can speak to your experience in sport or working with adults and your character. You should have known these people for a minimum of two years. Please note: if you are employed, one referee should be your current or most recent employer.				
Names:				
Address:		Postcode:		Postcode:
Telephone:				
Email address:				
How is this person known to you?				

PART F: DECLARATION			
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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