

CRB FAQs

Important information relating to FA CRB checks.

What is a CRB Check?

CRB stands for 'Criminal Record Bureau'.

The proper name for the CRB check used by The FA is 'Enhanced Disclosure' sometimes called 'CRB checks', 'Police Checks' or FA CRBs.

What is an Enhanced Disclosure?

These FAQs will call them 'FA Enhanced Disclosure (CRB)'.

An Enhanced Disclosure (CRB) is a printed record containing information from the Police National Computer, local Police intelligence and a check of Government lists of those people banned from working with children. The FA uses the information to help decide if a person with a role with U18's is suitable to help in children's football.

For more detailed information about Enhanced Disclosures (CRB) please visit www.direct.gov.uk and follow the links to 'Employment' and 'Starting a New Job'.

For more detailed information about Enhanced Disclosures [click here](#)

To watch the CRB's introductory film [click here](#)

Why do people in football need to have a CRB check?

Not everyone in football needs one. See 'Do I need an FA Enhanced Disclosure' (CRB).

The law requires that The FA does all that it can to prevent people who are barred from working with children, from becoming involved in football with U18s. The FA Enhanced Disclosure (CRB) tells The FA if a person is barred. It also helps The FA to make informed recruitment decisions about the suitability of people with criminal records who are seeking to have a role with U18s football.

Do I need an FA CRB Disclosure (CRB)?

Those who are working or volunteering directly with children and young people in football need to have an FA Enhanced Disclosure (CRB). This includes those who are teaching, training, instructing, supervising, caring, giving advice or guidance or treating or caring for children or driving children for the Club.

In order to have a check, your involvement needs to be frequent. This is usually described as once a week or more, four days or more in one month or overnight although occasionally people with lower levels of contact may still need one.

The following people helping in U18s football should have an FA Enhanced Disclosure (CRB):

- Club Welfare Officers
- Team Managers
- Coaches
- First Aiders
- Referees
- Team Assistants
- Regular Club Drivers.

Ordinarily, Club Chairmen, Treasurers and Secretaries do not require a check, if they are just or mainly administrative roles. However, if the people in these roles also help with coaching or at matches, then they will need an FA Enhanced Disclosure.

You do not need to have a check to watch your child play, if you occasionally run the line or if you drive your own child and his/her friends to games if this is a private and personal arrangement with other parents, or if your role is mainly administrative.

If you have been asked to have a check and you don't think you need one, please ring The FA CRB Unit on 0845 210 8080 or e-mail FAChecks@TheFA.com for advice.

If you have been asked to check certain individuals and are not sure if they need a check, then please speak to your County FA Welfare Officer or e-mail FAChecks@TheFA.com for advice.

It is very important that people who do not need a check are not required to have one, as this is breaking the law and has serious consequences.

How do I get an FA CRB Disclosure?

You may have more than one role in football but you only need one FA Enhanced Disclosure (CRB) to cover all your roles. Choose the role you spend most time on, from the table below:-

Your role in football	Action to take
Under 18s coach, manager, first aider or other Club based role	Speak to your Club Welfare Officer
Club Welfare Officer	Speak to your County FA Welfare Officer
Referee	Contact your County FA Referee Development Officer
Licensed Coach applicant	Ring 0845 210 8080 e-mail FAChecks@TheFA.com for advice
Working in a private soccer school or unaffiliated football	You may not be able to get a, FA Enhanced CRB. Please speak to your line manager or contact 0845 210 8080 e-mail FAChecks@TheFA.com for advice
Working in Premier League Club	Contact the Children's Services Officer at your Club
Working in Football League Club	Contact the Child Protection Officer or contact 0845 210 8080 or e-mail FAChecks@TheFA.com for advice
Unsure what you will be doing	0845 210 8080 or e-mail FAChecks@TheFA.com for advice

What is the minimum age for an FA CRB Disclosure?

The legal minimum age is ten years old but in line with Government guidance, The FA does not usually recommend the process for anyone under 16 years of age.

How much does it cost?

This depends on whether or not you are a volunteer and what application method you use. The Home Office is very strict in its definition of volunteers. The Home Office define a volunteer as:-

"Any person engaged in an activity which involves spending time, unpaid (except for travel and other approved out of pocket expenses), which aims to benefit some third party other than or in addition to a close relative".

If you are unsure whether or not you are a volunteer you must contact The FACRB Unit for advice. Making a dishonest application may have serious consequences.

You are:	Administration fee paper method	Administration fee online application (available from 1/07/11)	Government charge	Total
A Volunteer	£15.30	£10	Nil	£15.30 or £10 depending on application method
Not a volunteer	£15.30	£10	£44	£59.30 or £54 depending on application method

My Club doesn't know about the online method. What should I do?

Your Club can either email FAChecks@TheFA.com or ring 0845 210 8080 for information.

Why doesn't The FA pay for my check?

By developing the online CRB application method, costs have been reduced. To keep costs down for Clubs, they are encouraged to use this method of application. The FA has made significant investments in seeking to make children's football fun and safe. , through its education programmes, case management services and all the other support services available for clubs, leagues and individuals.

I have had a CRB for my work, sport or voluntary role. Do I need another one?

Yes. The FA has taken advice and there are serious risks in carrying Disclosures from one job to another. The Coalition Government has said they want to make Disclosures 'portable' and The FA fully supports this. As soon as details of this service are known and it is confirmed when this will be available, The FA will seek to introduce it however please note there is as yet no date for this.

If you are in a Premier League Club your check may cover you for Football League or FA activities. Contact your Children's Services Officer for advice.

For full information about the risks and dangers please [click here](#)

How long does it take to get an FA Enhanced Disclosure (CRB)?

Paper applications take on average 6-8 weeks. The online application method tends to be much quicker.

You can check the progress of your application online via the CRB website. To do this you need to keep the Form Reference Number from your paper Disclosure Application Form. This begins with an 'F' and has 10 digits. [Click here to track progress.](#)

If you are using the online application process you can track progress using the E Application number emailed to you as part of the process. [Click here to track progress.](#)

Why do some checks take longer than others?

Delays may be due to a number of reasons:-

- Complex address history
- Common name
- Delays in the local Police forces and in accessing local records.

Club Welfare Officers should use the Online Safeguarding Service accessed via Member Services to ensure the application progresses to an 'Accepted' status. People should be under supervision until their CRB is 'Accepted'.

[Click here to link to the Online Safeguarding Service.](#)

Best practice means people should wherever possible help or work in pairs or groups. This provides safeguards for everyone.

Why are some people asked for fingerprints?

In some cases the CRB and Police cannot confidently match the person against a record. Some names are more common than others and there may be two or more records with the same name and date of birth. The Police need to use another 'identifier' and finger prints are an effective way of ensuring the correct record is identified and released.

This is not at all unusual and is nothing to worry about.

If you have been asked for fingerprints and you want to find out more, please e-mail:

FAChecks@TheFA.com or ring **0845 210 8080** for advice and assistance.

[Back to top](#)

What if there is something on The FA CRB Disclosure?

The FA is very fair but it does have a duty to make sure the information released does not affect the safety of children. Every Disclosure is assessed individually taking into account the person's age at the time of the incident; the time expired since the conviction, the way the court dealt with the crime and other relevant information.

Old offences are not viewed as seriously as recent offences. Minor and financial crimes are usually not as relevant. Juvenile offending is generally less concerning than adult offending.

Recent assaults, violence with prison sentences, sexual crimes and drug supply are considered as a higher risk.

The FA will sometimes contact you about convictions or information on your CRB and ask you to provide two character references. This is to reassure The FA you are now suitable to be involved in children's football and that your convictions, or other information are not relevant to the welfare of U18s in football. If you are asked for this information it is very important you provide it quickly. The FA may suspend people who do not reply to these requests for information.

The final decision will be made by a Panel of people who are fair and careful in their decision making.

Occasionally The FA may make a decision that a person should be suspended whilst these enquiries are carried out. If this happens you will be given clear information about what you may and may not do in football and how to progress your situation.

When the enquiry process is complete and The FA is satisfied, the Disclosure will be treated as if it were clear of convictions. This means The FA Online Safeguarding Service will be updated to show

you as 'Accepted' in football and your CRB will be shredded in accordance with the law. You will receive a letter telling you when this happens.

To speak to someone in confidence about your history or to ask more about this process please call The FA CRB Unit enquiry line on 0845 210 8080 or e-mail FAChecks@TheFA.com with your query.

To find out more about the requirements on The FA to use Disclosures fairly visit www.businesslink.gov.uk and follow the links to Employment and Skills. This website can also put you in touch with organisations that support ex offenders.

What if the information on my CRB Disclosure is wrong?

You need to tell the CRB immediately. The CRB refer to this process as a 'Dispute'. If you wait more than ninety days information cannot be changed.

It is very important to tell the CRB as you might find the wrong information affects your ability to have a role in U18s football or to get a job elsewhere.

Information about how to contact the CRB will be on the back of your Disclosure. To start the process you can ring 0870 90 90 778 or visit www.direct.gov.uk and follow the links to Employment and then 'Starting a new Job'.

Sometimes The FA CRB Unit disputes a Disclosure because the postcode is wrong or a name has been printed incorrectly by the Home Office. This may result in a second Disclosure being issued to you with the correct information. If this happens you are advised to destroy the first one.

Who will see my Disclosure?

You will get a copy delivered to your home address and The FA will receive a copy. You do not need to show your Disclosure to anyone outside of The FA's recruitment process. The FA may however, ask you to share your copy with the County Welfare Officer, or in the Football League, the Child Protection Officer as they may be directly involved with assessing your suitability to be involved in U18s football.

If there is no relevant criminal history a record will be kept stating that you have completed the CRB process and there is currently no known reason why you should not be accepted into football. Club Welfare Officers and Counties can use Member Services to check the Online Safeguarding Service and see your Disclosure has been 'Accepted' by The FA. This system can also show the Club your Safeguarding Children training record. The FA's copy of your Disclosure is destroyed.

If there is a history a set process will be followed .For more about this see the FAQ 'What if there is something on The FA CRB Disclosure?'

Neither your club nor County FA will be told what is on your Disclosure. If, however, you are suspended, your club and County FA will be told of the suspension.

What happens if I change clubs or register with a new County FA?

Speak to the Club Welfare Officer at your new club. They can access The FA's Online Safeguarding Service via Member Services to ensure that your Disclosure has been accepted. You will need to provide evidence of your identity, but not your Disclosure certificate. You do not need to show your Disclosure to anyone outside of The FA's recruitment process.

Some Clubs may ask you to have a new CRB especially if your previous one is over three years old. This is nothing to worry about and is simply best practice. Some Clubs and Counties require you renew your CRB every three years and this is also best practice.

If you are a Referee your new County FA can access your previous records.

Will I need to renew my CRB?

Given that a CRB check is a snapshot in time and therefore potentially only accurate at the time it was printed, it is best practice to renew a CRB check every three years. Some Clubs, Leagues and Counties already enforce this.

The Coalition Government is planning to introduce a new system that enables CRB checks to be 'continually updated' but this is not available yet.

Where can I get more information?

For more about the CRB process visit www.direct.gov.uk and follow the links to 'Starting a new Job'. This website also carries information about organisations that support ex offenders.

How do I make a complaint?

To make a complaint about any aspect of The FA CRB process please contact The FA CRB Unit, FAChecks@TheFA.com , call 0845 210 8080 or write to:

Complaints

The FA CRB Unit,1 Wilford Business Park, Ruddington Lane, Nottingham, NG11 7EP

The FA CRB Unit will direct your complaint to the appropriate person.