

# FA CRIMINAL RECORD CHECKS GUIDANCE FOR CLUBS



**VITAL INFORMATION FOR EVERY  
CLUB RUNNING YOUTH TEAMS**



**PLEASE TAKE A FEW MINUTES TO READ THIS LEAFLET**  
Compliance with FA CRC requirements as stated within this guidance  
is now part of the affiliation criteria for clubs with youth sections

LET'S MAKE SURE FOOTBALL'S **SAFE – NOT SORRY**

**Most children have a really great time playing football – and long may that continue. With you, our job is to ensure they continue to enjoy the game in a fun and safe environment. The FA and County FAs recognise their collective responsibility for children and young people within football. Clearly, this same duty of care is shared by every club in the country which runs youth teams. So this document is a reminder of your responsibilities in respect of Criminal Record Checks (CRCs). Anyone working in an eligible role, directly working with children and young people – such as managers and coaches – must have an in-date, FA Accepted, CRC as part of responsible recruitment practice before they work or volunteer within football. Compliance with FA CRC requirements as stated within this guidance is part of the affiliation criteria for season 2015/16**

**Note: When the word/phrase ‘children’ or ‘children and young people’ is used in this document, this means persons aged 18 and under, playing in organised leagues. It currently does not include this age group playing in open-age football.**

### **WHAT’S THE FIRST THING MY CLUB SHOULD DO?**

Identify everyone at your club who should hold a FA CRC. Then establish the status of their Check – i.e. is it current (‘in-date’)? Establishing the answers to these questions should be carried out by your Club Welfare Officer (CWO), using the Online Safeguarding Service accessed via your County FA’s Members’ Services portal. This can be accessed by following this link at the top of your County FA’s website. For more information follow this link: [www.TheFA.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/online-safeguarding-service](http://www.TheFA.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/online-safeguarding-service)

### **WHO NEEDS A CHECK?**

Everyone aged 16 years or over who undertakes any unsupervised roles with children.

These roles could be managing, training, coaching and supervising. They include giving advice or guidance on well-being, caring for children or driving a vehicle solely for children on behalf of a club or organisation. And by children, we mean anyone under 18.

Anyone performing these roles MUST obtain an Enhanced Criminal Record with Children’s Barred List Check. This Check is made against the Government’s national list of those people barred from working with children (the ‘Children’s Barred List’). Then the checked person has to be approved to work in youth football.

For a full list of those eligible go to: [www.TheFA.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/criminal-records-checks](http://www.TheFA.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/criminal-records-checks) or follow this link

### **WHY DO YOU NEED ONE?**

Mainly because of football’s overall responsibility to children, their parents and carers.

Rightly, parents and carers are increasingly asking people in football two questions:

1. Are you following the correct procedures when recruiting people to work with children?
2. Are all the relevant people checked?

The response has to be ‘yes’ in both cases if the integrity of clubs, leagues, County FAs and The FA is to be preserved.

If those eligible don’t have an in date accepted FA CRC check in place, we will not be able to use them in their vital and valued role in youth football – and no-one wants that.

It all comes down to the strapline on the front of this leaflet: Let’s make sure football’s safe – not sorry.

**Act now to ensure your coaches and managers hold an in-date FA accepted CRC before the 1 September deadline.**

## HOW LONG DOES A CRC LAST?

Three years. Criminal Records Checks are a snapshot in time and therefore need to be renewed. We do this every three years to ensure The FA has current conviction and barring information on the people working with children and young people.

## WHAT CONSTITUTES AN 'IN-DATE' OR CURRENT CRC?

To be 'in-date' means:

- CRBs with an issue date prior to 2010 should have been renewed before 1 September 2014.
- CRB/CRCs with issue dates of 2010, 2011 or 2012 MUST be renewed by 1 September 2015 (CRB/CRCs issued in 2012 need to be renewed as they reach the three-year point)
- CRCs issued 2013 onwards should be renewed in line with The FA three-year renewal policy

## CAN YOU APPLY FOR A CRC ONLINE?

Yes – and we'd prefer you to use this method. It's cheaper, easier and faster.

When you apply for – or renew – a CRC online, your Club Welfare Officer (CWO) will still need to see your original ID documents. But they can now verify these online as well.

For more information on how to register your club to use the online CRC application service, please contact The FA Criminal Records Body on **0845 210 8080** or via email to: [FAchecks@TheFA.com](mailto:FAchecks@TheFA.com)

## DO YOU NEED A NEW FA CRC IF YOU ALREADY HAVE A CURRENT FA CRC, BUT HAVE STARTED AS A VOLUNTEER WITH ANOTHER GRASSROOTS CLUB?

No. If you already have an in-date FA CRC you do not need another one for your new role within grassroots football.

Also, if you have a CRC from outside football which you wish to bring into football, you may not need a new one, provided it meets the portability criteria:

- It has been registered for the DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) update service.
- It is for the right work force (Child).

There is a one-off charge of £10 for 'porting' a CRC from outside football into The FA. For most volunteers it is quicker and cheaper to apply for an FA CRC.

Yes. You can now have life-time renewals of your FA CRC which means you will not need to reapply every three years.

To take advantage of this you will need to:

- Register your CRC with The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)\*
- Inform The FA Criminal Records Body who administer the Checks. They will charge an annual £10 administration fee.

*\*you must register your CRC disclosure with the DBS update service within 19 days of Issue.*

Once registered for this service, The FA CRB will make annual checks on your CRC status for as long as you remain in football.

**For more information and guidance on The FA's CRC policy, the DBS update service and FA CRC life-time checks please visit: [www.TheFA.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/criminal-records-checks](http://www.TheFA.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/criminal-records-checks)**



## CAN I RENEW MY FA CRC AUTOMATICALLY?

## ISN'T HAVING A CRC A BIT INTRUSIVE?

It's certainly not meant to be – it's simply a way any organisation involved with children should operate and is a requirement under the Protection of Freedoms Act, 2012.

However, we fully understand that as soon as your Welfare Officer informs someone they need a CRC, that person may be affronted by the implication that there may be something inappropriate or untoward in their behaviour. This is perfectly understandable.

Nevertheless, The FA, County FAs and clubs with youth teams have a responsibility to ensure that no-one barred from working with children is allowed to work or volunteer within youth football.

Everyone would surely agree that we must provide

a safe infrastructure for children and young people to participate in our national game.

Carrying out the right checks, ensuring those in key roles are educated on the indicators of abuse – and know how to refer any concerns – are fundamental to creating a fun and safe environment.

Approximately 300,000 Checks have been undertaken in football within the last 10 years. That covers coaches, managers, referees, welfare officers and regular first-aiders within youth football, as well as all other types of roles within the game.



### **DOES YOUR CLUB WELFARE OFFICER NEED ADDITIONAL SUPPORT OR ADVICE?**

If your club has a number of teams, your CWO may feel their task is too big or they do not have an adequate level of support. This might mean it becomes difficult to retain them in this role. In such cases, we suggest you discuss with your CWO whether they would benefit from having an additional CWO to support them. Similarly, if your CWO has any queries about the CRC process, they should contact your County FA Welfare Officer. A full list of County FA contacts can be found at: [www.TheFA.com/my-football/more/county-fa](http://www.TheFA.com/my-football/more/county-fa)

This is one of a series of information guides The FA has produced about the importance of having a current Criminal Records Check in place for those in football working with children and young people. These can be read and downloaded by going to the Governance tab on The FA .com and clicking on Safeguarding and going to the CRC information or by following this [link](#)



**“APPLYING FOR AN FA CRC IS SIMPLE AND QUICK. IT’S ALSO A VITAL BUILDING BLOCK IN ENSURING CLUBS CONTINUE TO OFFER SAFE, FUN ENVIRONMENTS WHERE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE CAN PLAY THE NATIONAL GAME.”**

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