



Disclosure & Barring Service

Public running schemes and associated roles

Jurisdiction: England & Wales

Background

There has been an increase in public running groups across England and Wales. The roles associated with these groups have titles such as Run Leader or Run Director. Their roles involve choosing the route of the runs, checking for hazards, organising marshals, timing and recording details of the events.

There have been several queries around the positions associated with public running groups regarding eligibility for DBS checks and barred list checks.

The first thing to look at is who is assessing an individual's suitability for the role:

- Are they being approved by an organisation to undertake this role, or are they undertaking this role themselves without external approval?

A person undertaking the role of Run Leader without an approving organisation or employer cannot apply for a standard or enhanced DBS check because no one is making a suitability decision on them. The individual can request a basic check themselves though.

Level of check

If there is an organisation or employer making a suitability decision, then you need to look at what activity the run leader would be doing, who it would be for, and how often it would be done to see if any eligibility exists.

The role of Run Leader is not listed in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (ROA) 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975. Because of this you need to look at the activities undertaken by the individual and the frequency at which they are undertaken to see if they are eligible for any level of check.

For example: UK Athletics (UKA) submit DBS checks for two running schemes – ‘Run Together’ and ‘Park Run’. UK Athletics make the suitability decision on these run directors. Those directors are in charge of children’s runs and sometimes open runs where children may attend.

If the run leader is responsible for a running group for under 18s and is responsible for teaching, training or instruction, care for or supervision of children during a run and they do this on more than 3 days in a 30 day period then they would be in regulated activity with children and therefore eligible for an Enhanced DBS with a children’s barred list check. If they do this on fewer occasions they could be in ‘work with children’ which would make them eligible for an Enhanced DBS check without a check of the children’s barred list.

Our current understanding is that the role of a run leader does not meet eligibility in the adult workforce as none of the activities they do would equate to ‘work with adults’ or regulated activity with adults.

If the run leader does not run a group specifically for children as detailed above, they would only be able to obtain a basic level check.

This guidance is correct at the time of printing. If you require further information, please contact DBS Customer Services or seek legal advice.