

Guide to Basic DBS checks

Your guide to the importance and benefits of Basic DBS checks



Disclosure &
Barring Service

Making Recruitment and Employment Safer





On average...

2.6m

Basic DBS checks
are requested
each year



Disclosure &
Barring Service

Making Recruitment and Employment Safer

Source: DBS | 2019 to 2024

A smiling man with glasses, wearing a green and white patterned shirt, is talking on a smartphone and holding a tablet. The background is a blurred office setting.

88%

of Basic DBS
checks are
completed
within 48 hrs



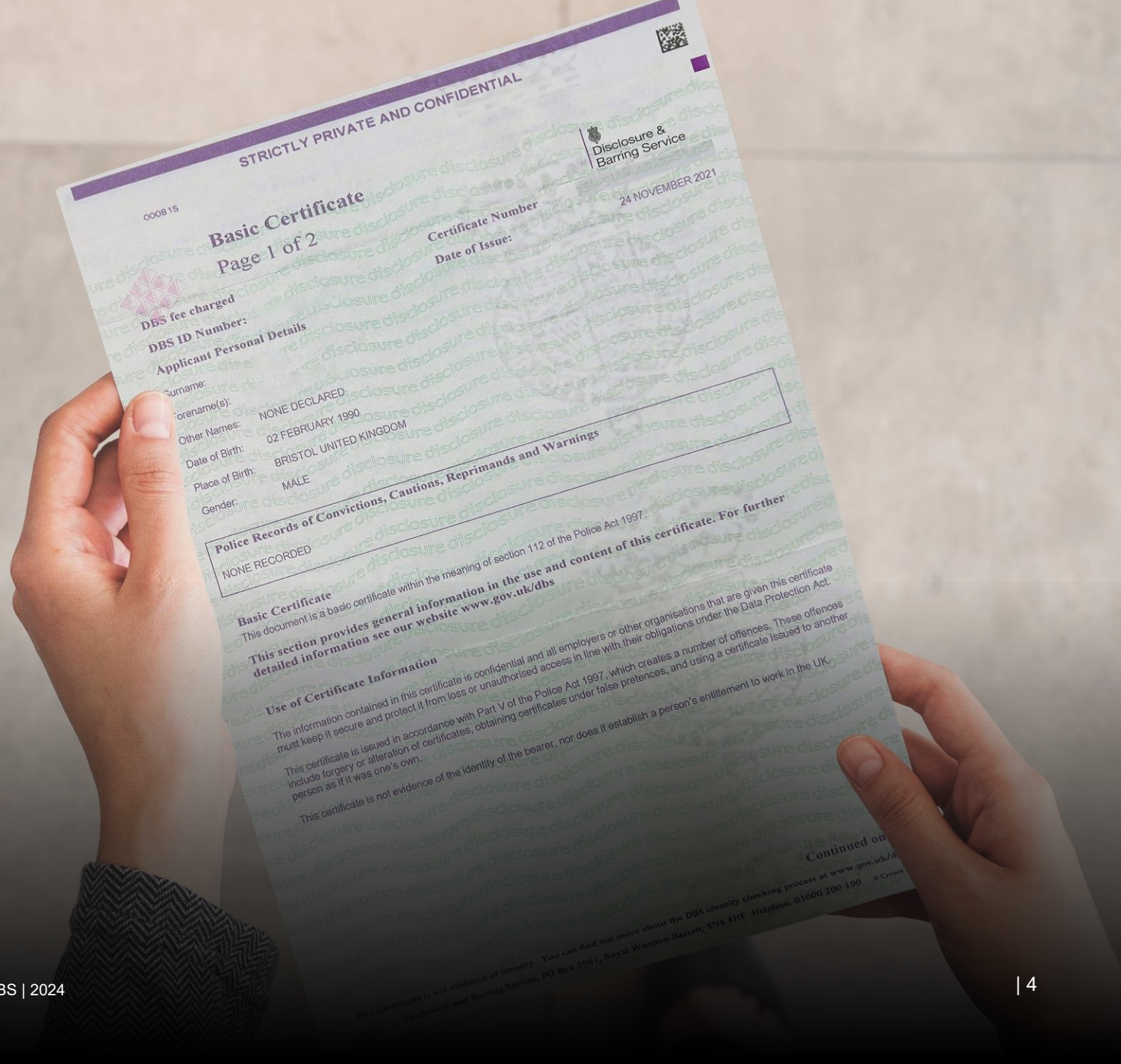
Disclosure &
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Source: DBS | 2024

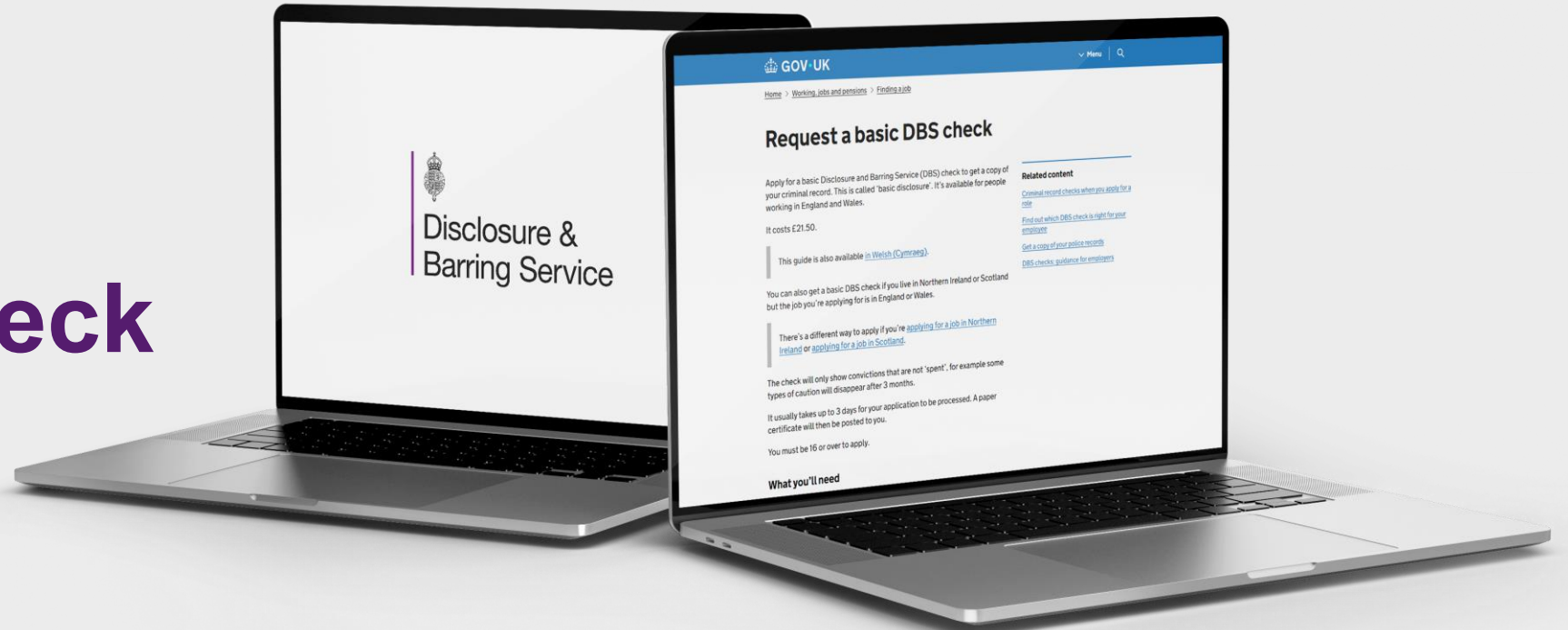
36k

Basic DBS
checks reveal
a conviction
each year





Basic DBS check





Basic DBS check.

A **Basic DBS check** is a check of any conditional cautions and unspent convictions, under the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (ROA) 1974.

A Basic DBS check can be obtained by anyone over the age of 16 living or **looking to live and work in England and Wales**.

An individual **can apply for a Basic DBS check directly to DBS** through our online application route, or an **employer can apply for a Basic DBS check on an individual's behalf**, through a Responsible Organisation (RO), if they have consent.

There are **no legislative or eligibility requirements to have a Basic DBS check**, so anyone aged 16 or over can apply at any time and you can request this as part of your recruitment process.





Why are Basic DBS checks important?

Basic DBS checks from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) are important because they **provide relevant information about an individual's criminal history**. This information can serve as a useful tool in supporting informed recruitment decisions.

Anyone can apply or be requested to apply for a Basic DBS check. Conducting a Basic DBS check on an individual before hiring them can **help to inform job role suitability**, strengthen recruitment decisions and protect an organisation's reputation.

Basic DBS checks **focus on unspent convictions and cautions**. This can include both minor and serious offences, such as theft, fraud, or assault. Employers can use this information to assess an individual's suitability for the role they are applying for, **reducing the risk of hiring someone who has a history of criminal behaviour that may pose a risk to their organisation**.

Basic DBS checks can **contribute to determining an individual's reliability, particularly** when they are handling sensitive information.





What is disclosed on a Basic DBS check?

Convictions are classified as either **spent** or **unspent** under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. The rehabilitation period varies in time depending on the **sentence given and any subsequent convictions** that might overlap it. A **Basic DBS check** will disclose any **unspent** convictions.

The rehabilitation period.

This is the **period before a conviction becomes spent**. For more serious offences with longer sentences, the rehabilitation period is longer. Some convictions never become spent.

What is a spent conviction?

A **spent conviction** is one for which the rehabilitation period has passed and therefore it should no longer be disclosed.

What is an unspent conviction?

An **unspent conviction** is one that is still **within the rehabilitation period**.

0008 15

STRICTLY PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Basic Certificate
Page 1 of 2

Disclosure & Barring Service

DBS fee charged

DBS ID Number:

Certificate Number

Date of Issue: 24 NOVEMBER 2021

Applicant Personal Details

Surname:

Forename(s):

Other Names: NONE DECLARED

Date of Birth: 02 FEBRUARY 1990

Place of Birth: BRISTOL UNITED KINGDOM

Gender: MALE

Police Records of Convictions, Cautions, Reprimands and Warnings

NONE RECORDED

Basic Certificate

This document is a basic certificate within the meaning of section 112 of the Police Act 1997.

This section provides general information in the use and content of this certificate. For further detailed information see our website www.gov.uk/dbs

Use of Certificate Information

The information contained in this certificate is confidential and all employers or other organisations that are given this certificate must keep it secure and protect it from loss or unauthorised access in line with their obligations under the Data Protection Act.

This certificate is issued in accordance with Part V of the Police Act 1997, which creates a number of offences. These offences include forgery or alteration of certificates, obtaining certificates under false pretences, and using a certificate issued to another person as if it was one's own.

This certificate is not evidence of the identity of the bearer, nor does it establish a person's entitlement to work in the UK.

This Certificate is not evidence of identity. You can find out more about the DBS identity checking process at www.gov.uk/dbs

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Continued on page 2





Serious violent, sexual or terrorism offences **listed on Schedule 18** of the Sentencing Act 2020, where the prison sentence is more than 4 years **will always be disclosed** on a Basic DBS check.

If a sentence has been given for the **Protection of the Public**, **this will never be spent** and will always be shown on a Basic DBS check.

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STRICTLY PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Basic Certificate
Page 1 of 2

DBS fee charged
DBS ID Number:
Applicant Personal Details

Certificate Number
Date of Issue:

Disclosure & Barring Service
24 NOVEMBER 2021

Surname:
Forename(s):
Other Names:
Date of Birth:
Place of Birth:
Gender:

NONE DECLARED
02 FEBRUARY 1990
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MALE

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Key benefits of the Basic DBS check.

No ties to eligibility

There is no legislative or role-based eligibility criteria that must be met for a Basic DBS check, making it a simple addition to any recruitment process.

Quick turnaround

Basic DBS checks are processed in 48 hours, in 88% of cases.

Widely accepted

Basic DBS certificates are respected by a wide range of employers and organisations, giving your customers confidence.



Peace of mind

You can demonstrate that you've taken steps to ensure that criminal unspent convictions of your workforce is disclosed.

Protect the vulnerable

Basic DBS checks help provide additional reassurance, empowering better recruitment decisions.

Simple process

Basic DBS checks can be applied for online, directly to DBS needing only personal details and ID.

Value for money

A Basic DBS check costs just £21.50, making it an accessible option for employers on a budget.





“ The Basic DBS check from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) is an **affordable and accessible** way to obtain a **criminal record check**.

It is **widely accepted** and can provide **peace of mind** for both individuals and employers. By using the Basic DBS check, you can make more **informed decisions** regarding job suitability and ensure a **safer working environment**. ”

Jeff James
DBS Chief Executive
Disclosure & Barring Service





Rehabilitation of offenders.

Considering ex-offenders as a part of your recruitment process:

- **Access to a wider talent pool:** You can tap into a pool of individuals who may possess various skills, experiences, and unique perspectives. This can bring diversity to the workforce and help fill skill gaps.
- **Increased loyalty and commitment:** You can often find higher levels of commitment and employee loyalty. These individuals appreciate the chance to re-integrate into society through gainful employment and often strive to prove themselves.
- **Positive impact on re-offending:** Stable employment plays a crucial role in reducing re-offending rates, as ex-offenders with jobs are less likely to re-offend. By offering employment opportunities, you can contribute to building safer communities, reducing overall crime rates, and enhancing your corporate social responsibility.





Rehabilitation of offenders.

Considering ex-offenders as a part of your recruitment process:

- **Potential financial benefits:** Increased loyalty and reduced staff turnover can decrease costs. These financial benefits can offset potential risks associated with recruitment or training costs. **Sector specific advice** and case studies are available if you want to find out more.
- **Rehabilitation and personal growth:** You can serve as a rehabilitative tool for ex-offenders, allowing them to acquire new skills, build self esteem, and reintegrate into society. It offers a chance for personal growth and a fresh start, giving back to your community.
- **Responding to Disclosure information:** If the Basic check shows unspent cautions or convictions and you are unsure on what decision to take next, visit our **website**.





Choosing an application route.

Choose an
application route



Basic Digital Service

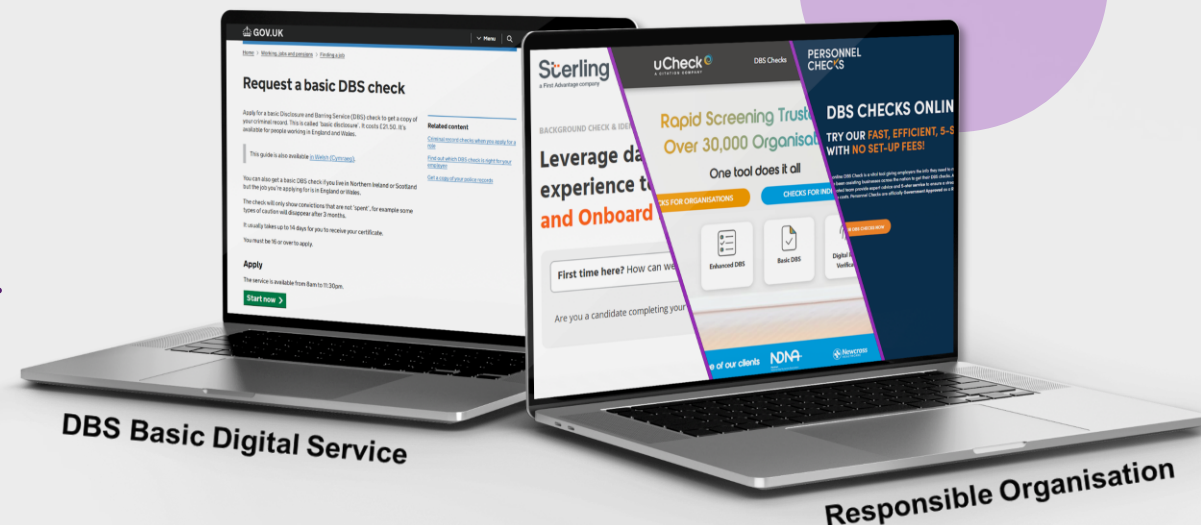


Individuals can apply directly to DBS
via our **Basic Digital Service**

Responsible Organisation



Employers can also ask individuals to
apply for a Basic DBS check via a
Responsible Organisation (RO)



DBS Basic Digital Service

Responsible Organisation





Choosing an application route.

Choose an application route



Basic Digital Service



Individuals can apply directly to DBS via our **Basic Digital Service**

The **Basic Digital Service** is an online system that allows individuals to apply for Basic DBS checks quickly and efficiently. The **service is provided by GOV.UK** and it streamlines the process by offering a fully digital method for submitting applications, tracking progress, and receiving results.

Responsible Organisation



Employers can also ask individuals to apply for a Basic DBS check via a **Responsible Organisation (RO)**

Individuals can also apply for a Basic DBS check through a **Responsible Organisation (RO)**. This is a third-party provider that is registered with the DBS to process applications on behalf of individuals or employers. This method is **often used by companies that require DBS checks for multiple employees or also use other services** from that Responsible organisation such as right to work checks.





Ways to apply.

	Basic 	Standard	Enhanced	Enhanced with Barred List(s)
Unspent convictions and conditional cautions	✓	✓	✓	✓
Spent convictions and conditional cautions, subject to filtering	✗	✓	✓	✓
Relevant non-conviction information from the police	✗	✗	✓	✓
Children's and/or Adults' Barred List check	✗	✗	✗	✓
Who can apply?	Anyone 16 or over	<u>Eligible roles</u>	<u>Eligible roles</u>	<u>Eligible roles</u>
How do I apply?	<u>Online or through a Responsible Organisation (RO)</u>	Through a Registered Body (RB)	Through a Registered Body (RB)	Through a Registered Body (RB)
Can I link to the Update Service?	✗	✓	✓	✓
What does it cost?	£21.50	£21.50	£49.50	£49.50





Useful links.



Basic DBS check

Online application route for Basic DBS checks.



Basic DBS check guidance

Guidance on Basic DBS checks including how to apply, the cost, and what information is disclosed on a Basic DBS certificate.



DBS checks | detailed guidance

A collection of guidance documents and information about DBS checks and processes.



DBS eligibility guidance

A collection of documents that you can use to decide whether a role is eligible for a Basic, Standard, Enhanced or Enhanced with Barred List(s) DBS check.



Rehabilitation periods

A table of rehabilitation periods for the most common sentences and disposals, and example scenarios.



Transgender applications

Guidance and information regarding the sensitive applications route for transgender applicants.



DBS checks | guidance for employers

Guidance for employers about DBS checks, including how to apply, registering with DBS, and the code of practice.



Responsible Organisations

A list of Responsible Organisations (RO) and their responsibilities.



Update Service

A page linking to an online subscription that allows you to keep your Standard, Enhanced, or Enhanced with Barred List(s) DBS certificates up-to-date, and allows employers to check a certificate online.

