

Garda Vetting

Introduction

Garda Vetting (vetting) is now available through the ISA. The aim is to assist in the recruitment of suitable candidates to positions within the ISA and our affiliated Clubs, Class Associations and Training Centres. The intention is that it should form one part of the checks made on candidates prior to appointment and will support rather than replace those checks already recommended as forming part of good recruitment practice. The system has been structured in order to;

- Protect children and vulnerable adults.
- Identify if candidates for a position or role have convictions or have been prosecuted for crimes which may mean that they are unsuitable for the position.
- Protect the rights of the candidates.
- Protect ISA affiliated organisations.

What is vetting?

Vetting identifies if a candidate has any convictions or prosecutions. This information may then be used in deciding if they are suitable to take up position or role within an organisation.

Vetting checks are made on the Garda Central Database by the Garda Central Vetting Unit (G.C.V.U.) based in Thurles.

ISA organisations may access Garda Vetting through the ISA. THE G.C.V.U. will not process applications made directly to them from individuals or organisations not registered with them.

In order to protect the rights and privacy of the candidate, details obtained from the Gardai are not passed directly onto ISA organisations. Instead the ISA will forward completed reports onto the candidate in respect of whom vetting has been requested. The ISA will inform the organisation applying for the check that the check has been completed and that the report has been sent onto the candidate.

The organisation recruiting the candidate may then ask the candidate to show them the report. A decision to recruit the candidate may then be based on the nature of the disclosure or the fact that the candidate is unwilling to show the disclosure to the organisation.

A Vetting Liaison Officer may contact Tony Wright, ISA Training Manager and the ISA's "Authorised Signatory", in order to confirm that the details they are looking at on the candidates completed vetting form as the same as those received by the ISA from the GCVU. The ISA will only confirm or otherwise those details described by the VLO. We will not provide details on any disclosures.

A disclosures may or may not have any bearing on the suitability of a candidate for a particular position. The recruiting organisation needs to make this call in light of the nature of the prosecutions or convictions listed and the willingness of candidate to tell them what they are.

Candidates do have the right to appeal the results of the vet if they believe that information provided by the GCVU is incorrect.

It is important to remember that a completed vetting is not a certificate as it only looks at information available at the time of the check. Consideration needs to be given to when repeat vettings are required as a person may have acquired convictions or prosecutions since any previous vettings were completed.

Who can access vetting?

ISA vetting may be accessed by any organisation affiliated to the ISA or ISA accredited Training Centres which have met the minimum criteria laid down by the Association. These include;

- Acceptance of the conditions and processes laid down by the ISA.
- The appointment of a Vetting Liaison Officer (VLO).
- Submission of policies & procedures to be used when recruiting.

Applications may only be submitted through the Vetting Liaison Officer in an ISA affiliated / accredited organisation. Individuals may not apply for vetting for themselves or anyone else.

Who should be vetted?

In January 2013 the Government passed the "National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Bill 2012" while this act has not yet been commenced, this will happen sometime during or after March 2013. When it does, it will make it an offence under the act to knowingly employ / deploy someone to work with children or vulnerable adults. The information below indicates the ISA's advice as set out in "common law" prior to the commencement of the new act for the providers of sporting activities.

All ISA organisations running activities for children or vulnerable adults must have in place a policy stating who should be vetted and when.

As a guide, people in the following positions within ISA affiliated organisations should be vetted by the organisation as part of their recruitment process.

- Designated Officers
- Club / Organisation's Children's Officers
- Junior Organisers
- Senior / Chief Instructors
- Youth Team Managers
- Instructors / Coaches leading or working on activities or sessions where they will have substantial unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults.
- Full time "Shore Mums".

The ISA does not consider it necessary to vet all instructors or coaches employed.

The ISA will, on its own instigation, vet;

- Centre Principals
- Instructor Trainers
- Vetting Liaison Officers
- ISA employed / appointed Youth Coaches

- ISA staff & volunteers leading or working on activities or sessions where they will have substantial unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults.
- ISA Staff & volunteers involved in the processing of Garda Vetting Applications and associated procedures.

The GCVU will only process applications from candidates who are 16 years old and over. Any candidate under 18 must submit a parental / guardian consent form along with their application. This form is available from the ISA.

How is vetting carried out?

- 1. The candidate fills in the Garda Vetting Form. (Copies available from the ISA).
- 2. The organisations Vetting Liaison Officer checks the forms and sends them to ISA.
- 3. The ISA checks and logs the forms and sends them onto Garda Vetting Unit (GVU).
- 4. The GVU send ISA results of vet.
- 5. The ISA send candidate the results.
- 6. The ISA informs organisations submitting vetting request that the candidate has been sent the results.

What does it cost?

No charge is made by GCVU or ISA for the processing of vetting applications. However, since each vet submitted places a significant administrative load on the Gardai, ISA and the organisation submitting the vet, organisations should consider carefully which positions require vetting, only requiring vetting to be used where necessary.

The ISA will not process vetting applications submitted through organisations that have outstanding affiliation or accreditation fees.

What is done with the information received?

The Garda Vetting Unit informs the ISA by post of the results of each vet. The ISA retains the original disclosure. This information is kept in a secure store within the ISA Office to which only authorised members of ISA staff have access.

The ISA will not send the results of a vetting application to anyone except the candidate.

Each application is logged on the ISA database. However no information relating to the application or disclosure is recorded other than the date it was sent onto the GCVU, the date it was received back into the ISA office and whether there were "No disclosure found" or "Disclosures found".

Can under 18s be vetted?

Yes. The ISA can process vetting applications over the age of 16 provided that the written consent of a parent or guardian is provided on the appropriate form.

Where can I get the relevant forms?

All of the relevant forms are available on the ISA website. A sample vetting policy document for use in ISA affiliated organisations is also available on the website.

