



## The Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme Guidance for organisations and applicants

The Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme was introduced in February 2011 under the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007. It replaced the previous Disclosure arrangements. The Scheme is operated on behalf of the Scottish Government by Disclosure Scotland. For the voluntary sector, the process is administered by Volunteer Scotland Disclosure Services (VSDS).

Any individual undertaking 'regulated work' with vulnerable groups should be a member of the PVG Scheme. It is an offence for someone who is disqualified from regulated work to do, or seek to do, that type of regulated work. It is an offence for an organisation to employ an individual in regulated work if they are disqualified. Any other criminal record will only be taken into account when the conviction is relevant and will not necessarily be a bar to employment or volunteering.

An individual is undertaking **regulated work with children** if their normal duties involve teaching, training, instructing, supervising, caring for, being in sole charge of, or having unsupervised access to, children or young people under the age of 18, or the day to day management of others who undertake these duties.

An individual is only defined as a 'protected adult' at the time that they are receiving a registered care, health, community care or welfare service. Some roles assisting sailors aged 16 or over with particular needs may be regarded as providing a welfare service and therefore qualify as **regulated work with adults**, but teaching or supervising do not.

There is no minimum age for PVG Scheme membership, however the applicant must confirm that they understand the implications of joining the PVG Scheme and must be able to produce sufficient evidence of identity.

A PVG Disclosure is only one part of a safe recruitment process. Organisations should also ask applicants to provide information about their previous experience, check their qualifications where relevant, take up references and explore their attitudes to children and young people or vulnerable adults.

### Application Process

If you are planning to appoint a paid employee or a volunteer in a role involving regulated work and you wish to ask them to apply for membership of the PVG Scheme or a Scheme Record Update, you can do this through the RYA, which is enrolled with Volunteer Scotland Disclosure Services (VSDS) and can act as an 'intermediary body' for affiliated clubs and recognised training centres, using the following procedure:

1. Contact the RYA Safeguarding Manager, Jackie Reid (details below) and request a PVG Information Pack. This can be sent by e-mail. It includes a Contract which must be signed and returned to the RYA before we can submit your organisation's

applications to VSDS. You will need to identify a named person who will be your PVG contact. The RYA can send them a supply of PVG application forms.

2. Decide whether the paid or voluntary role involves 'regulated work'. Conduct your normal recruitment procedure, making clear to applicants that if selected they will be required to join the PVG Scheme, if not already a member.
3. During the recruitment procedure, explain to the applicant that the role involves regulated work and that, if appointed, they will be required to be a PVG Scheme member.
4. Having decided that the applicant is suitable in all other respects, the organisation should offer the paid or voluntary post to the applicant, subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks including membership of the PVG Scheme. Other pre-employment checks should include checking relevant qualifications and seeking references.
5. The organisation should provide the applicant with a PVG Scheme application form or an Existing Member application form, as appropriate. You should ask the applicant to apply either for a Scheme Record if they are joining the Scheme for the first time, or for a Scheme Record Update if they are an existing PVG Scheme member for the same vulnerable group. The Update links the individual's record to the organisation's, so that the organisation would be informed if the individual were subsequently disqualified from undertaking 'regulated work' with the relevant vulnerable group.
6. The applicant completes the relevant sections of the form (see attached guidance) and takes it to the designated person in the organisation who will check their identity documents, record them in sections E7-E9 of the form and complete the relevant sections of the form.
7. There is no charge for volunteers. For work in a paid, rather than voluntary, capacity a fee of £59 is payable for an applicant joining the PVG Scheme. The fee for a Scheme Record Update for an existing PVG Scheme member in a paid role is £18. The organisation or the applicant (depending on your policy) should either complete the credit card section or, if that is not possible, enclose a cheque payable to RYA and we will forward the fee to Disclosure Scotland.
8. The organisation returns the form to the Safeguarding Manager at the RYA in Hamble (see address below).
9. The RYA checks the form and forwards it to Volunteer Scotland Disclosure Services, who check and counter-sign it and pass it on to Disclosure Scotland.
10. Disclosure Scotland sends the applicant their Scheme Record Certificate, with a copy to VSDS who forward it to the RYA Safeguarding Manager. If the applicant thinks any of the information contained on the certificate is incorrect, they should follow the Disputes process set out on the Disclosure Scotland website (see below).

11. The RYA contacts the designated person at the organisation and confirms that the applicant is now a member of the PVG Scheme, and whether the certificate contains any relevant vetting information. The RYA will not provide the organisation with a copy of the Certificate or divulge any other information about its contents.
12. Based on all the available information, and having discussed any concerns with the applicant, the organisation makes a final decision on whether to confirm their appointment. The RYA is not responsible for the decision to appoint or for any consequences arising from that appointment.

The RYA undertakes to comply with the Disclosure Scotland Code of Practice. The Code can be obtained from Jackie Reid at the RYA, or viewed on the Disclosure Scotland website (details below).

Contacts for further information:

Jackie Reid, RYA Safeguarding Manager  
Royal Yachting Association, RYA House, Ensign Way,  
Hamble, Southampton, SO31 4YA  
Tel: 023 8060 4104  
E-mail: [disclosure@rya.org.uk](mailto:disclosure@rya.org.uk)  
Website: [www.rya.org.uk/go/safeguarding](http://www.rya.org.uk/go/safeguarding)

RYA Scotland  
Tel: 0131 317 7388  
E-mail: [admin@ryascotland.org.uk](mailto:admin@ryascotland.org.uk)

Volunteer Scotland Disclosure Services  
Tel: 01786 849777  
Website: [www.volunteerscotland.net/disclosure-services](http://www.volunteerscotland.net/disclosure-services)

Disclosure Scotland  
[www.disclosurescotland.co.uk](http://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk)  
Helpline: 0870 609 6006