

Explaining the Disclosure & Barring (DBS) Check and Update Service

The DBS Check

A DBS check involves searching through an individual's criminal record to highlight any convictions or prior offences. It is one aspect of ensuring that people working with children, young people or adults at risk are suitable to do so. The checks help identify people who may be unsuitable for this work; for roles involving certain activity a check is made to ensure someone is not legally barred from working with children or adults at risk.

The DBS Update Service

Friends are encouraged to join the DBS Update Service. This makes it possible for the DBS verifier to initiate a DBS check periodically without the need for you to repeat the process of being DBS checked.

Once you have received your DBS certificate, **you must act within thirty days of the issue date on the certificate**. The issue date counts as Day 1.

To subscribe to (ie join) the Update Service, you will need your DBS certificate number.

- Go to <https://www.gov.uk/dbs-update-service> and follow the *Register* link to a *Subscribe* form
- Complete the form, selecting "Use my certificate number instead" for that field
- Sign in (thereby giving permission for future checks)

Tell your DBS verifier that you have signed up and give them permission to check your DBS record every three years.

As a volunteer, your subscription lasts for one year. Thirty days before it expires, you will receive an email from donotreply@dbs.gov.uk asking you to confirm that you wish to renew, and a further reminder fourteen days later. **Please follow the link in the email taking you to the update service to sign in and renew your subscription.** It is important to do this otherwise you would have to go through the process of applying for a check again. You could also add the email address to your "safe senders" list.

Note: This requirement was introduced in December 2024. Prior to that, renewal was automatic.