

# HOW DO I APPLY FOR A DBS CHECK IN THE DIOCESE OF EXETER?

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## Overview of how to apply for a DBS check

In the Diocese of Exeter, DBS checks are carried out online, managed on behalf of the Diocese by ThirtyOne:Eight. **Whilst ThirtyOne:Eight promote the option of conducting a DBS check via paper application, the Diocese of Exeter, under the current restrictions and for reasons of audit and accountability, is unable to accept paper applications, and would invite all applications to be submitted using the on-line process.** Applicants need the registered organisation details specific to their parish or mission community (or other appointing body) in order to start their DBS application online. If you are a lay (non-clergy) person in a parish role, you should contact your Parish Safeguarding Representative who will provide you with the contact details of a local DBS Verifier (evidence checker) for your parish or mission community.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A parish without its own registered DBS Verifier may have to refer applicants to a neighbouring parish or a Diocesan office who can initiate the process on their behalf. This may mean that the 'Employer' field on the resultant DBS certificate has a church or organisation name other than your normal parish. All parishes in the Diocese of Exeter are registered for DBS checking under the umbrella organisation of the Exeter Diocesan

The DBS Verifier will provide you with the instructions on how to apply, the website link to use and what login details to use for a check in your parish/mission community. If you are in a clergy/licensed role or other non-parish based role, you should contact your local Archdeacon's PA or the Diocesan DBS Coordinator to enquire about initiating your check (see contact details below). If you are a Reader then you should contact the Readers Administrator to enquire about initiating your check.

When applying for an Enhanced DBS check, all applicants should be asked to complete and return a Confidential Declaration form. This asks a series of questions relating to any history of cautions, convictions, offending or behaviour incompatible with working with vulnerable children or adults. It offers the applicant the opportunity to self-disclose and make the appointing body aware in advance of any disclosure that may come back from the DBS check. Applicants for a Basic DBS check can only be asked to disclose 'unspent' convictions, which may be through a question on the role application form or asked at interview.

Once you have entered your details through the online form then you need to contact the DBS Verifier again to arrange for your ID documents to be verified. The required documents are detailed in the [Applicants Guide for Enhanced DBS Disclosures](#) or the [Applicants Guide for Basic DBS Disclosures](#); the DBS Verifier should have given you the relevant guide when you started your application. You need to be able to show the original documents; copies are not acceptable.

Having checked your identity, the DBS Verifier submits your identity document details online and your check is then sent to be approved by the relevant person in the Diocese (an Archdeacon's PA or the Diocesan DBS Coordinator). When the check is approved it has to be further

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Board of Finance, so this difference in entry in the 'Employer' field has no bearing on the legality or completeness of your check, and does not constitute any form of employment contract or obligations between the applicant and the body named on the certificate.

authorised by a counter-signatory at ThirtyOne:Eight, who then transfer the check details securely to the Disclosure and Barring Service using the DBS E-Bulk system.

### What Happens After Your Check Has Been Submitted

When the Disclosure and Barring Service receive your check it will go through a number of stages of checks, verifying your identity and checking for records relating to you on national and local police computer systems, and where relevant, checking also against the Barred Lists. The DBS checking process can take up to 3 months as standard, depending on a number of factors such as how many force areas you have lived in, how many people have similar names to you that you need to be distinguished from, and how many records exist relating to you on different computer systems. Typically, over 80% of checks are completed within 1 week at the present time, but delays with specific police forces can result in waits of up to 6 months. (If you know you need a check you should apply at the earliest opportunity, or if you are coming up for renewal, please try to apply 6 months in advance to avoid any delays or suspension of your appointment pending receipt of the DBS clearance.)

Once the checks are all completed, the applicant is sent the only copy of the printed certificate. Upon receipt of your certificate you **MUST** show the original certificate to your Parish Safeguarding Representative. They will record the certificate number and issue date, and check that it is clear of any disclosure information. If ANY information is disclosed on the certificate (no matter whether it seems relevant or not) then the Diocesan Safeguarding Team need to be informed so that a process can be undertaken to assess the safety of the individual's appointment.

### Who pays for a DBS check?

Basic DBS checks require payment of a £23 fee levied by the DBS, regardless of whether it is a voluntary or paid role. Enhanced DBS checks

for volunteers (those not receiving any reward, be it payment or a qualification from the role) are free, attracting no fee from the DBS. Enhanced DBS checks relating to parish clergy or paid workers require payment of a £40 fee levied by the DBS. Parishes/appointing bodies are responsible for paying the £23 or £40 application fee (or they may require the individual to pay the fee them self, depending on the financial position of the appointing body). Payment by BACS is preferred and account details for electronic funds transfers can be obtained from the Diocesan DBS Coordinator upon request. If paying by cheque, these should be made payable to 'EDBF Ltd' (Exeter Diocesan Board of Finance). Cheques or confirmation of electronic transfer will be sent to the appropriate diocesan contact by the DBS Verifier, who will not proceed to authorise the application without having first received the relevant payment. The online administration fee payable to ThirtyOne:Eight for all paid and volunteer applications is borne by the Diocese.

### [Renewals and the DBS Update Service](#)

DBS checks need to be renewed every 5 years currently. To avoid suspension from a role while awaiting a DBS disclosure that has been delayed, we recommend starting the DBS renewal process 6 months before it is due. Your Parish Safeguarding Representative should be maintaining a Parish Information Log that will track your renewal.

The DBS offer an Update service that allows some checks to be used for other organisations where permitted. Due to a number of shortcomings in the DBS Update service with regard to reliability and auditability the Diocese of Exeter do not accept Update service checks. Even if you have a DBS check with another organisation, you will need a fresh check with the Diocese for your role with the Church. Having had a check through the Diocese of Exeter you are welcome to subscribe to the Update service to use with other organisations if they accept it, but you should be aware that this incurs an annual subscription fee if you have a non-volunteer check.



## Diocesan Contacts

### **DBS Coordinator** (Cathedral Checks and general DBS queries)

Hilary Burrow

#### **Email Hilary**

The Old Deanery, The Cloisters, Cathedral Close, Exeter, EX1 1HS Tel:  
01392 294975

### **Readers Administrator**

Hannah Cross

#### **Email Hannah**

The Old Deanery, The Cloisters, Cathedral Close, Exeter, EX1 1HS Tel:  
01392 294911

## Archdeaconry-specific Contacts

Archdeaconry of Exeter (Clergy and Reader checks only):

Peter Colebrook

#### **Email Peter**

Archdeacon of Exeter's Office, Emmanuel House, Station Road, Ide,  
Exeter EX2 9RS Tel: 01392 425577

Archdeaconry of Barnstaple (All checks) and Archdeaconry of Exeter  
(Volunteer and Non-Clergy checks only):

Jacque Ward

#### **Email Jacque**

Archdeacon of Barnstaple's Office, Stage Cross, Sanders Lane, Bishop's  
Tawton, Barnstaple EX32 0BE Tel: 01271 375475

Archdeaconry of Plymouth

Debbie Delaney

#### **Email Debbie**

Archdeacon of Plymouth's Office, St Mark's Church, 1 Sanctuary Close,  
Plymouth PL2 1EN Tel: 01752 858382

Archdeaconry of Totnes

Chris Brathwaite

**Email Chris**

Archdeacon of Totnes' Office, Blue Hills, Bradley Road, Bovey Tracey,  
Newton Abbot TQ13 9EU Tel: 01626 832064