



Hammersmith Christian Fellowship

Contract with Ex Offenders - Policy

March 2021

Policy Statement relating to Inclusion of Ex-Offenders within the church setting

1. Members of the church and regular attendees will have teaching on love, forgiveness, and the church's practice of acceptance. Recognising that whom ever God sends into the church should be loved just as Jesus would love them.
2. Wherever possible, the ex-offender is encouraged to be completely open about their past with the leadership team to which they is joining. Also, the person in question will be encouraged to share their story with the church as soon as they feel able.
3. A member of the Leadership Team / or designated other, will agree to attend and contribute to all relevant meetings with Prison Officers, the Parole Board etc. relating to the offender.
4. The Leadership Team and the Ex offender will complete and adhere to the agreed contract: outlining all considerations and expectations of the church and the individual concerned. (see attached)
5. Hammersmith Christian Fellowship commits to give/invest considerable time to the individual joining the church, for an unlimited period: this may be 1:1 support and can be at any time of the day or night whilst the person in question adjusts to their new life.
6. Only those within the Leadership Team of Hammersmith Christian Fellowship will know information regarding the conviction (unless the individual is willing to make their own disclosure):
 - the seriousness of the offence
 - the relevance of the conviction to any service the individual may be involved in within the church environment
 - the length of time since the offence or other matter occurred
 - whether the individual has a pattern of offending behaviour or other matters
 - whether the individual's circumstances have changed since the offending behaviour or other relevant matter
 - The circumstances surrounding the offence and the explanations offered of the offender.
7. As an organisation assessing applicants' suitability for positions which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order using criminal record checks processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), Hammersmith Christian Fellowship complies fully with the code of practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly
8. Hammersmith Christian Fellowship undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed
9. Hammersmith Christian Fellowship can only ask an individual to provide details of convictions and cautions that Hammersmith Christian Fellowship are legally entitled to know about. Where a DBS certificate at either standard or enhanced level can legally be requested (where the position is one that is included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended, and where appropriate Police Act Regulations as amended)
10. Hammersmith Christian Fellowship recognize the they can only ask an individual about convictions and cautions that are not protected

11. Hammersmith Christian Fellowship is committed to the fair treatment of its workers and volunteers or users of its services.

12. Hammersmith Christian Fellowship has a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders, which is made available to all DBS applicants at the start of the recruitment process

13. Hammersmith Christian Fellowship actively promotes equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential, and welcomes applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records

14. Hammersmith Christian Fellowship select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications, experience and willingness to serve God within the church.

15. An application for a criminal record check is only submitted to DBS after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a criminal record check is identified as necessary, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that an application for a DBS certificate will be submitted in the event of the individual being offered the position

16. Hammersmith Christian Fellowship ensures that all those in Hammersmith Christian Fellowship who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences

17. Hammersmith Christian Fellowship also ensures that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

18. At interview, or in a separate discussion, Hammersmith Christian Fellowship ensures that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment¹

19. Hammersmith Christian Fellowship makes every subject of a criminal record check submitted to DBS aware of the existence of the church's Safeguarding Policy and makes a copy available on request

20. Hammersmith Christian Fellowship undertakes to discuss any matter revealed on a DBS certificate with the individual seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT TO BE AWARE OF THE PRE-SEPTEMBER 2012 DEFINITION OF REGULATED ACTIVITY. THIS OLD DEFINITION ALLOWS FOR AN ENHANCED LEVEL DBS CHECK, WITHOUT A CHECK OF THE DBS BARRED LISTS.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON EACH TYPE OF ACTIVITY, PLEASE REFER TO THE SAFEGUARDING POLICY. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS/QUERIES ABOUT THE WHO SHOULD HAVE A DBS CHECK, PLEASE SPEAK TO THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING OFFICER OR SPEAK TO ONE OF THE DDC TEAM (UMBRELLA BODY USED BY HCF FOR DISCLOSURES) ON 0845 644 3298.

¹ Ex-offenders contract document attached to this policy.

In God's Mercy

Written Contract and Statement of Understanding

(To be adapted as necessary and signed by all people convicted of a sexual offence who desire to be part of an OBU fellowship) - Can also be adapted for other offences as appropriate.

The OBU has a duty to protect the children and young people who come into its church buildings and who want to be a part of a church family and it has a responsibility to help me stay offence-free and protect me from undue temptations. As a result, I agree to sign, accept and comply with this Written Contract and Statement of Understanding.

name

address

telephone number

mobile number

Others living at the above address:

CONDITIONS OF ATTENDING *Hammersmith Christian Fellowship*.... Name the church fellowship

» I agree to stay in the company of adults at all times and as a result agree never to be alone with children or young people.

» I will only attend the meetings that have been agreed by the church leadership and representatives of the pastoral care council. These meetings are:

» When attending meetings, I will sit with adults and I agree not to sit in the vicinity of children or young people.

» I will only participate in other church activities that are exclusive to adults or as agreed as acceptable by the church leadership and representatives of the pastoral care council. The activities are:

» I agree I will not accept any invitation to or attend any house group, Bible study or other meetings related to a church fellowship or business where there are children present. I must gain the consent of the leadership team before attending any such group.

» I agree not to use a mobile phone whilst on church premises and I accept that I will not be able to use any computer equipment or recording devices on church premises.

» I accept that there are certain people who will need to be given information about my conviction. This will be done on a strict 'need to know' basis and with an understanding of discretion and confidentiality (see below).

» Whilst there is a commitment to confidentiality, I understand there may be occasions when it will be necessary for Christian Prison Resources /The Old Baptist Union (may want to put the local church here) to contact or speak to staff at DHQ/THQ and/or the statutory authorities/Probation agencies about me.

» I accept that there will be ongoing contact with my probation officer and/or a designated Police officer from the local Public Protection Unit.

My probation officer is

Period of supervision commences

and ends

Probation office address

tel. no

My Supervising Police officer is

Period of supervision commences

and ends

Police station address

tel. no

SUPPORTING ME

I realise (name of church fellowship) also wants to support me to stay offence/abuse-free, to care for me and to encourage my spiritual growth.

With this in mind I agree to co-operate with the support network and procedures, which will care for me and help me:
avoid any future offending
recognise risky thoughts or behaviours
deal with any public reaction or outbursts
talk openly about related issues

Please supply/agree a list of people within (name of church) and/or PRS and OBU, who know about my Statement of Understanding and are prepared to support me in my resolve to live an offence/abuse-free life:

names

I agree to contact one of these people if I am slipping back into offending-related thoughts or behaviour

I have in place a current Relapse Prevention Plan Yes [] No []

I accept my pastoral care will be provided by the following people:

OTHER MATTERS

I understand that a file containing relevant information will be kept about my case. This will be stored in a secure place and will be accessible only to the named church leaders, two local officers (including the YPSM) and DHQ/THQ staff.

I understand that this document will remain for an indefinite period and will be reviewed and updated regularly by local leadership, every [] months or as otherwise necessary should risk escalate.

I understand that if I move to another church fellowship of the same/different denomination, this file may be forwarded. This

will be discussed with me at the time but the ultimate decision rests with (person in Authority)

I consent to my name, and certain other relevant information, being entered on The Old Baptist Union Safeguarding Database. This database is maintained by The Old Baptist Union to assist with the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults; as such, it may be shared in accordance with law and regulation, and with relevant third parties (such as the police or our contract partners).

I accept that I am welcome to be part of(name of church) provided I comply with the conditions of this Contract at all times. I recognise that if the information provided is inaccurate or any of these conditions are broken , will have no alternative but to:

- » exclude me from attending the church
- » report this breach of trust to my probation officer, Police service representative and The Old Baptist Union
- » consider advising the congregation.

I have read, understood, and accept the conditions of this document.

Signed

witnessed by

designation

Pastor/Elder date

REVIEW as
Per timing set
Above (page 3)

Date: Update of detail (if any)

Date: Update of detail (if any)

Date: Update of detail (if any)

Record of dates:

Sent to	Forwarded to
