



Policy on the Handling, Storage and Disposal of Disclosure Information via AccessNI

FILE MANAGEMENT

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Drafted By	Volunteer Services
Revision History (Version /Date)	<i>Summary of Changes</i>
V2 – 2019	
V3 – 2022	References to soft copy documentation has been included. Document formatted to new policy template. Approved by the Board 10 th December 2022.
V3.1 – 2025	Scheduled Review – Section 4.2 and 4.5 have been updated
V4.0 – November 2025	Approved by the Board

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1) Introduction

All applicant volunteers or existing volunteers refreshing their vetting after 3 years will be required to submit an application to the relevant authorities via Special Olympics Ireland (SOI), to disclose criminal history information or none. Residents of Northern Ireland are subject to an Enhanced Check through AccessNI. This policy provides details of how SOI will handle, store and dispose of disclosure information via AccessNI.

2) Scope

The policy applies to any applicant volunteer or existing volunteer refreshing their vetting who are resident in Northern Ireland.

3) Policy Statement

It is the policy of SOI to use AccessNI to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust and to comply fully with AccessNI's Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage retention and disposal of Disclosure Applications and Disclosure information.

SOI will comply with its obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 and other relevant legislative requirements with regards to the safe handling, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosure Information.

4) Process

4.1 Consent

SOI do not receive a copy certificate from AccessNI, therefore, written consent will be obtained from the applicant when requesting and retaining a (copy of a) Disclosure certificate.

4.2 Storage and Access

AccessNI have switched to digital-only disclosure certificates since 1st September 2025. Should an applicant decide to share their digital certificate with SOI or if they have been asked by SOI to share their certificate, the link through which SOI can view the certificate will only remain active for 5 calendar days and can only be viewed once. The certificate will only be viewed by the Lead Signatory in SOI.

A picture, screenshot or printout of a disclosure certificate will not be accepted by SOI. Should SOI need to print a disclosure certificate, the applicant's consent to print and retain must first be obtained.

4.3 Handling

In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, Disclosure information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. SOI maintain a record of all those to whom Disclosures or Disclosure information has been revealed. SOI recognise it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

4.4 Usage

Disclosure information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

4.5 Retention

As digital-only disclosure certificates cannot be viewed beyond 5 days of sharing or opening once (whichever happens first), certificates are not retained. In the very rare occasion that a disclosure certificate needs to be printed by SOI following consent of the applicant, the certificate will be retained

in a locked cabinet within an office used by the Lead Signatory. Once a recruitment decision has been taken, SOI do not keep disclosure information for any longer than is necessary. SOI comply with AccessNI's Code of Practice requirement to ensure that it is not retained longer than is required for the specific purpose of taking a decision on the applicant's suitability. Any disclosure certificates which may have had to be printed by SOI will be shredded securely once a decision has been made of the applicant's suitability.

SOI may keep a record of the date of issue of a Disclosure, the name of the subject, the type of Disclosure requested, the position for which the Disclosure was requested, the AccessNI unique reference number of the Disclosure Certificate and the details of the recruitment decision.

4.6 Disposal

Once the retention period has elapsed, SOI will ensure that any disclosure information is immediately destroyed by secure shredding. While awaiting destruction, disclosure information will not be kept in any unsecured receptacle (e.g. waste-bin or confidential sack). SOI will not keep any photocopy or other image of the Disclosure or any copy or representation of the contents of a Disclosure or any other relevant non-conviction information supplied by police.