

Myth buster

Employing people with criminal records

When recruiting for adult social care roles, some employers worry about the suitability of employing people with criminal records.

This ‘**myth buster**’ document aims to help employers better understand how people with convictions can be recruited safely and fairly.

Myth: I can't employ someone with a criminal record to work in care

Truth: Having a criminal record doesn't mean that a person is unsuitable for a role in social care. In fact, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) state that applicants with criminal records should be treated fairly and not discriminated against because of their conviction.^[1] Business in The Community (BITC) found that 75% of employers admit to discriminating against applicants with a criminal conviction.^[2]

Myth: if a person has committed an offence, it's likely they will do it again

Truth: Employment is the single most important factor in preventing reoffending. Given the opportunity, many people with convictions go on to live happy and fulfilling lives contributing to their communities.^[3]



Myth: an enhanced DBS check must be conducted for everyone recruited into a role in care

Truth: The level of check depends on the specific role in question. It's illegal for employers to conduct blanket 'enhanced level' checks on all employees as certain roles may not be eligible for that level check.

Myth: someone with a criminal record won't be a good employee

Truth: Many organisations that actively employ ex-offenders report positive experiences. Ex-offenders have high retention rates and make reliable and hard-working employees.^[4]

Myth: a person with a criminal record has probably spent time in prison

Truth: 11 million people in the UK have a criminal record and not all people with convictions have been to prison. In fact, fines are the most common sentence given by all courts (over 70%) with only a small proportion (less than 8%) of people sent to prison.^[5]

Download the '[Safe and fair recruitment guide](#)' for more information on how to safely and fairly recruit people with criminal records.



[1] Skills for Care, [Safe and Fair recruitment guide](#), 2018

[2] BITC, [Ban the box](#), 2018

[3] Recruit! [Unlock](#), 2018 (<http://recruit.unlock.org.uk/myths/>)

[4] Business in the Community, [Ex-offenders: ban the Box and employment](#), 2018

[5] Who are 'ex-offenders'? [Myth-busting sheet](#), Business in the Community, 2016

