

## **Frequently Asked Questions (Completing Criminal Record Checks)**

### **1. What is a DBS / Access NI check?**

A DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) or Access NI check is a record of an individual's convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings and can also include intelligence held by the police that relates to that individual and their suitability for a position working with children and/or vulnerable adults.

There are 4 types of DBS checks that can be completed:

- Basic DBS check is for any purpose, including employment or volunteering. The certificate will contain details of convictions and conditional cautions that are considered to be unspent under the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (ROA) 1974.
- Standard DBS check - A Standard DBS check is suitable for certain roles, the certificate will contain details of both spent and unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings that are held on the Police National Computer, which are not subject to filtering.
- Enhanced DBS check - An Enhanced DBS check is suitable for people working or volunteering with children or adults in certain circumstances such as those in receipt of healthcare or personal care. An Enhanced DBS check is also suitable for a small number of other roles.
- Enhanced with Barred List(s) DBS check - An Enhanced with Barred Lists DBS check is also suitable for people working or volunteering with children or adults in certain circumstances such as those in receipt of healthcare or personal care. An Enhanced with Barred Lists certificate will contain the same information as an Enhanced DBS certificate but will also include a check of one or both Barred Lists.

There are 3 types of Access NI checks including:

- Basic check – A basic Access NI check only includes unspent convictions.
- Standard check - A standard Access NI check discloses an individual's criminal record, giving spent and unspent convictions, informed warnings and other non-court disposals from the Police National Computer

Some old and minor convictions and non-court disposals on a criminal record may not be disclosed. Fixed penalty tickets and parking fines aren't included in a standard check

- Enhanced check – an enhanced Access NI check gives the full criminal record, including spent and unspent convictions from the Police National Computer. Cautions and informed warnings. Information from the Disclosure and Barring Service and any other relevant information as relevant to the role.

## **2. When is a DBS/Access NI check required?**

Epilepsy Action is responsible for assessing when a job or volunteering role requires a criminal record check. The three levels of check we may want to complete are:

- basic (individuals can request their own basic checks direct from the DBS/AccessNI)
- standard (via an umbrella body)
- enhanced (via an umbrella body)

Epilepsy Action has the right to ask all job applicants or volunteers to apply for a basic check during the recruitment process, however Standard and Enhanced checks will only be completed if they meet the relevant criteria.

Applicants must be 16 years of age or older to get a standard or enhanced check and they must apply through a DBS / Access NI registered body via Epilepsy Action.

## **3. What is the difference between a DBS and Access NI?**

DBS stands for Disclosure and Barring Service (formerly referred to as a CRB check). A DBS check is carried out for roles eligible for standard or enhanced check regardless of where in the UK the person lives. It is also carried out for roles requiring a basic check for people working or volunteering in England or Wales.

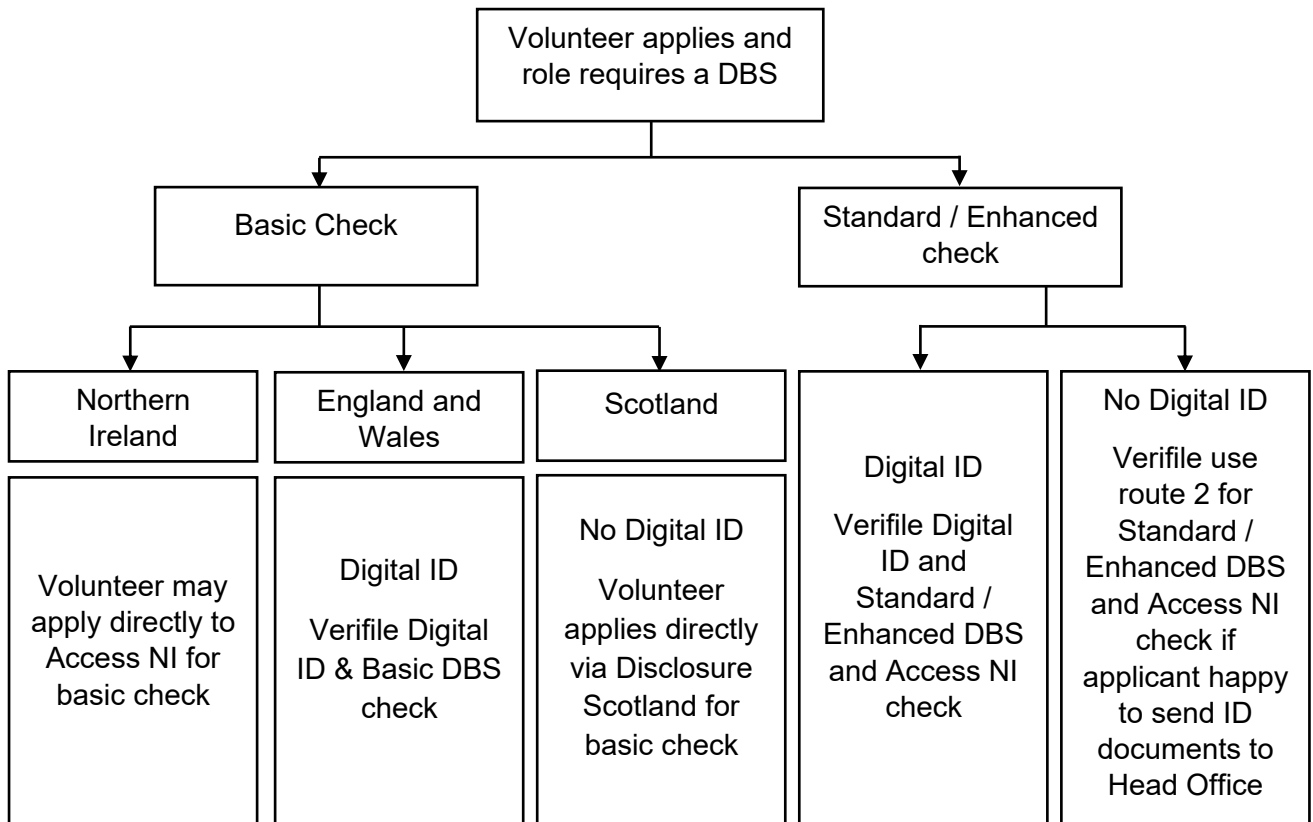
An Access NI check is completed for roles requiring basic checks for people working or volunteering in Northern Ireland.

## **4. How do you decide what check my role requires?**

Epilepsy Action uses the agreed criteria set by each unique provider e.g. DBS / Access NI. As well as discussions with our umbrella Responsible Organisation.

For a DBS check we consult the guidance at [DBS eligibility guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/db eligibility-guidance)

For an Access NI check we consult the guidance at [Types of AccessNI checks | nidirect](#)



## 5. How much does a criminal record check cost?

The cost of a criminal record check will be covered for both volunteers and employees by Epilepsy Action.

If we ask you to apply for a basic check yourself then you will be able to claim the fee back from us.

The cost varies depending on the type of check required (e.g Basic, Standard, Enhanced) and different providers charge different rates. It is our goal to ensure that we use a provider that is cost efficient, this is reviewed on a regular basis.

We currently use the following umbrella companies:

- Active Background Checks (DBS for hybrid roles)
- Verifile (DBS – basic, standard and enhanced checks and Access NI checks)
- DBS – for volunteer basic checks if they don't have digital ID and are based in England and Wales

- AccessNI – can be used as an alternative for volunteer basic checks if they are based in Northern Ireland
- Disclosure Scotland – for volunteer basic checks if they are based in Scotland

## **6. Can I transfer a DBS I have for a previous role?**

Previous DBS checks may be permitted if they are:

- dated within the last 6 months
- the same level of check as required for the EA role (e.g Adults / Children and Basic, Standard, Enhanced)
- The details on the certificate match other ID documents you provide

Please talk to the Director of People and Culture and/or Safeguarding Lead to confirm.

## **7. I have the DBS update service – can you accept this?**

Yes.

In order to check this, we will require an email from you giving us permission to make this check. We also require your certificate number and date of birth to undertake the online check.

## **8. How long does a DBS / Access NI check take?**

Once we have received your I.D we will process your application. If there are no errors on your application or problems with the I.D you have supplied your application will be sent to the DBS through the Online Disclosure application system.

80% of Online Disclosures' applications are complete within 5 days and 97% complete within 10 days. Once the check is complete a certificate will be posted to you or electronically sent, which may take a few days.

## **9. What if I have previous or current unspent convictions?**

Epilepsy Action is committed to the equality and inclusion of people, and previous convictions will not automatically prevent you from volunteering or working for us.

We recognise that it may be difficult to talk about, but we encourage people to be open and honest so that we can work together to complete a risk assessment. We can assure you that all discussions will remain confidential.

We recommend that all applicants read the [Policy Statement on the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders](#).

**10. How will you store my information?**

We will never store a copy of your DBS / Access NI certificate or a record of your conviction.

We will confidentially store the details on our restricted systems of the:

- date we requested the certificate
- date the disclosure check was completed
- certificate number
- level of check
- role you applied for
- outcome result from a risk assessment if convictions are identified

**11. What do you do with my ID?**

Your documents will be viewed by the responsible person at Epilepsy Action to verify your application.

For employees we may need to keep copies to verify other elements related to your employment such as your right to work. These will be stored in line with the Employee Privacy Statement.

**12. How long will my DBS / Access NI check last?**

Epilepsy Actions policy is that DBS / Access NI checks will be completed every 3 years for eligible roles.

**13. I am a transgender applicant – how will you process my application?**

The DBS has a designated helpline and contact centre for transgender applicants who have any questions about the process. You can contact them directly at:

[Transgender applications - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/transgender-applications)

**14. I have applied but haven't received my certificate yet.**

DBS

Use the [DBS tracking service](#) to see what stage your application is at. If your application has been in Stage 4 for more than 60 days, please get in touch with us and we will call the DBS on [0300 0200 190](tel:03000200190) and submit an escalation request.

If your certificate has been issued and you haven't received your certificate within 14 days, you can E-mail the reprint team [DBSReprints@dbi.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:DBSReprints@dbi.gsi.gov.uk)

## ACCESS NI

You can track your Access NI application online via your account by visiting [Log in to an nidirect account | nidirect](#)

### **15. What evidence can I use for my application?**

Essentially, we need to check the address of an applicant as well as the identity of the applicant. Depending on your available documents / evidence will depend on what / how many forms of evidence we need to see. All evidence must be originals and not copies.

For guidance on accepted evidence for a DBS application you can visit:

[DBS ID checking guidelines - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/dbi-id-checking-guidelines)

For Access on Access NI guidance visit:

[Providing proof of your identity for a basic check | nidirect](#)