



## HS07-G04 GUIDELINES FOR PROTECTING VULNERABLE GROUPS (PVG) SCHEME

These guidelines are relevant to Scottish Squash Limited (SSL) and affiliated members/clubs of SSL who recruit paid staff or volunteers to work with children.

### VERSION CONTROL

Version No.	Date Reviewed	Reviewed By	Next Review Date
5.0	11/10/2021	Risk & Compliance Sub Committee	October 2024
6.0	03/01/2025	Risk, HR & Compliance Sub Committee	January 2028



## 1. Background

It is essential that all clubs correctly assess the suitability of those individuals who wish to carry out a paid or volunteering position that involves them carrying out regulated work with children – a child is anyone who is under the age of 18.

Regulated work with children is where an individual has an agreed normal duty to care for, train, supervise or be in sole charge of children. Individuals who have a responsibility to manage or supervise those who are carrying out regulated work with children are also doing regulated work.

Regulated work positions within Scottish Squash Limited (SSL) and affiliated clubs:

- Coach
- Junior Team Manager
- Child Protection/Welfare Officer
- Referee
- Parent Helper
- Team Chaperone
- Manager

As part of the SSL safe recruitment guidance and suitability assessment, individuals undertaking a regulated work role with children are required to complete a Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) disclosure record application form.

SSL is enrolled with Disclosure Scotland (DS) for the purpose of accessing PVG disclosure records.

## 2. The role of SSL

- To access PVG disclosure records on behalf of affiliated clubs
- To submit PVG disclosure record applications to DS
- To manage and store PVG disclosure records in line with the Code of Practice
- To make informed recruitment decisions in relation to disclosure records relevant to those applying to do regulated work with children
- To communicate to clubs the outcome of PVG disclosure records and decisions made
- To ensure any individual who is barred from regulated work with children is not appointed to a regulated work with children position within an affiliated SSL club
- To receive barring information from Disclosure Scotland relevant to an individual carrying out regulated work with children within an affiliated SSL club
- To ensure any individual who becomes barred from doing regulated work with children is removed from their position immediately
- To provide clubs with guidance and support if required to manage an individual who is 'being considered for listing' under the PVG Act
- To manage and store disclosure records as per the Code of Practice.



### 3. The role of the club

The role of the club is to ensure that individuals who are offered a regulated work with children position complete a suitability assessment; application form, interview, references, and disclosure record application.

The club Child Welfare & Protection Officer (CWPO) should complete an online Club PVG Processing Contract and ID Checker Contract before SSL can process any PVGs.

PVG scheme request/update application forms should be requested from [SSL](#).

Once completed by club CWPOs and identity documents checked, please forward to SSL's Lead Child Wellbeing & Protection Officer to arrange the next stage.

The role of the club CWPO is to:

- Correctly identify regulated work with children positions within the club using the positions listed by SSL
- Assess the application form and verify references
- Ensure those being asked to do regulated work with children complete the correct PVG disclosure record application form
- Correctly check individuals ID for the purpose of the disclosure record application
- Complete the relevant sections of the PVG request and update form
- Forward the PVG application form to SSL for processing
- Receive correspondence from SSL detailing the individuals' suitability/unsuitability to carry out the regulated work with children position for which they have applied
- Store relevant information confidentially or through SSL SharePoint

### 4. The process

The online PVG application process - 8 steps, start to finish:

- Step 1: The club recruits applicant (coaches/volunteer who can be: paid or voluntary)
- Step 2: The club CWPO completes online PVG request and update form Step 3: SSL Lead Child Wellbeing & Protection Officer checks the form, which is then sent to DS
- Step 4: Disclosure Scotland will send a link to the applicant to complete their online application
- Step 5: Applicant completes personal information via email link. Applicant information submitted directly to Disclosure Scotland. Applicant will have 14 days to complete this application
- Step 6: Disclosure checks undertaken by Disclosure Scotland
- Step 7: Certificate issued to SSL Lead Child Wellbeing & Protection Officer and the applicant
- Step 8: SSL's Lead Child Wellbeing & Protection Officer checks the PVG certificate for endorsements and advises the club about the suitability of the applicant to take up their role

Costs:

Applications submitted for PVG disclosure records for volunteering positions are free of charge.



Guidance on completing the PVG request and update form:

Applicant's name:

It is important that CWPOs check that they have the full name, including any middle names of the applicant – otherwise the application will be rejected and this causes delays.

DOB:

Should be entered in the following format: DD/MM/YYYY

Applicant's email address:

No generic email addresses will be accepted, the email address must be personal to the individual, they can use a work or personal email for the application.

Double check the email address has been entered correctly, if the email address has been entered incorrectly the applicant will not receive the link to complete their PVG application.

Home address:

Ensure this is the current home address of the applicant – it should match the address provided as part of the ID check.

Type of application – select the relevant code:

SRJ - Joining the PVG Scheme

SRU - Scheme Record Update

Position Applied for, please select a role from the SSL list:

- Coach
- Junior Team Manager
- Child Protection/Welfare Officer
- Referee
- Parent Helper
- Team Chaperone
- Manager

ID verification

Identification should be verified using virtual meetings or equivalent (or face to face when allowed). This is our recommended method to check ID as it removes the need to share copies of sensitive documents and therefore minimises the risk of a data breach.

Check 3 items of ID, the minimum ID you must check is:

- one document with a photograph and one document with the applicant's current home address (this document must be issued within the last 3 months)
- Omitting a middle name is a common error and causes a delay in the process. Provisional driving licence should be treated the same as a full driving licence.



## **5. Process for handling PVG certificates with endorsements**

From time to time, PVG certificates come back with conviction information. This information is assessed by the SSL Lead Child Wellbeing & Protection Officer and one of the following outcomes will be reached:

- The conviction information is not relevant to the role applied for – no further action required
- The conviction is relevant to the role applied for and is a low level offence/low level risk factor – the SSL Lead Child Wellbeing & Protection Officer will contact the club CWPO to discuss the information and the other information the club has gathered on the individual as part of the safe recruitment process (e.g. references) and support the club to make an informed recruitment/appointment decision
- The conviction is relevant to the role applied for and is a serious concern/potential risk factor – the SSL Lead Child Wellbeing & Protection Officer will raise and refer the matter to the Child Protection Case Management Steering Group. The club CWPO will also be notified of the referral and must pause the recruitment/appointment process pending the outcome of the referral to the Child Protection Case Management Steering Group.
- If a PVG certificate is returned and the information contained is unclear, the SSL Lead Child Wellbeing & Protection Officer will always err on the side of caution and discuss the matter with the Child Protection Case Management Steering Group, consulting other relevant expert sources of advice (e.g. Children First)

## **6. Fair processing notice – child wellbeing and protection**

The following information applies to SSL professionals, volunteer coaches and other volunteers conducting Regulated Work in Scotland, and whom are members of (or applying for membership of) the PVG scheme. The Data Protection Act 2018 requires that you are informed about how your personal information will be used. For the purposes of child protection, safeguarding and wellbeing matters in Scotland, if SSL or your club or association receives information of concern; the club/association may share information about you with the sport's governing bodies in Scotland and the appointed Lead Child Wellbeing & Protection Officer and where necessary, Wellbeing & Protection Officers for other member clubs/associations. This may be related to, but not exclusively restricted to, where it has been alerted to circumstances that might affect your status as a member of the PVG scheme for regulated work with children or your suitability to carry out the regulated work role for which you have applied/been appointed or already doing. In the event such sharing is deemed necessary, it will normally only be carried out between the registered Wellbeing & Protection Officers in the club, association, governing body, and those appointed representatives within a relevant partner organisation.



## **7. Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007: Referrals**

The Act creates the framework to ensure that people who are known to be unsuitable on the basis of past behaviour do not gain access to children or protected adults through paid or voluntary work and that those who do become unsuitable are detected early and removed from these workforces.

DS maintains the lists of people barred from working with children or with vulnerable adults in Scotland. SSL and member clubs have a legal responsibility to make a referral in the below outlined circumstances; it is a criminal offence not to make such a referral. For guidance on the grounds and process for making a referral, contact the SSL Lead Child Wellbeing & Protection Officer.

In circumstances to make a referral, SSL/member clubs (depending on who employs the person) will refer to DS the case of any member of staff/volunteer who (whether or not in the course of their role within the organisation) has:

- harmed a child/protected adult or placed a child/protected adult at risk of harm
- engaged in inappropriate conduct involving pornography
- engaged in inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature involving a child/protected adult
- given inappropriate medical treatment to a child/protected adult

AND as a result:

- SSL/the club has dismissed the member of staff or volunteer
- The member of staff or volunteer would have been dismissed as a result of the incident had they not resigned, retired or been made redundant
- SSL/the club has transferred the member of staff/volunteer to a position in the club which is not regulated work with children/protected adults
- The member of staff or volunteer would have been dismissed or considered for dismissal where employment or volunteer role was not due to end at the expiry of a fixed term contract or had the contract not expired. SSL/the club will also refer the case of a staff member/volunteer where information becomes available after the member of staff/volunteer has been through any of the process/circumstances noted above.

## **8. Consideration for listing and barring notice – action to be taken**

If DS notifies SSL/the club that a member of staff/volunteer is considered for listing, that individual will be suspended as a precaution until the outcome of the case is determined.

Remember that a precautionary suspension is not a form of disciplinary action and does not involve pre-judgment. In all cases of suspension, the welfare of children/protected adults will be the paramount concern.

If DS informs SSL/the club that an individual is/has become listed and is therefore barred for carrying out regulated work, the member of staff/volunteer will be removed from any and all regulated work with children immediately and in line with the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007. The case will also be passed to the SSL Child Protection Case Management Group for review and sport level restrictions or management may be applied.