

Volunteer Guidance

What are the DBS charges for volunteers?

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) usually charge a fee for a DBS check. Currently the fee for an enhanced DBS check including a check of the children's barred list is £38.

If an applicant meets the definition of a volunteer as outlined below, their DBS application will not incur a £38 fee from the DBS. They will, however, incur the administration fee charged by Matrix Security Watchdog. An eligible volunteer entitled to a discounted DBS check includes anyone who spends time helping people and:

- Isn't being paid (apart from travel and other approved out of pocket expenses)
- Isn't only looking after a close relative

Please note an administration fee will be charged on all DBS applications regardless of whether the applicant is a volunteer or not. For a full breakdown of the costs please click [here](#).

Who is eligible to apply as a volunteer?

To be considered a volunteer and eligible for a free DBS check an applicant must be volunteering to undertake work and not receive payment or reward for their role. An applicant who receives, or expects to receive, any of the following as part of the role they are applying for would not be considered a volunteer and must pay the full fee for their DBS check:

- Remuneration such as a wage, salary or other monetary payment (excluding out of pocket expenses)
- A benefit of some kind, including discounted childcare costs for their own child who attends the childcare provision
- Credit towards a qualification or working at the setting as part of a placement Details of the DBS' stance on this are available [here](#)

If you are applying with Ofsted for any one of the following roles, you will not be eligible to be considered as a volunteer:

- Childminder
- Living at childminding premises
- Sole Proprietor
- Registered Manager
- Home-childcarer (Nanny)
- Home-childcarer (Nanny) Living on Premises
- Assistant working at childminding premises
- Lives and works with childminder
- Childminder without domestic premises

Marking your application incorrectly as a volunteer will result in your DBS application being withdrawn. This will mean any fee already paid is forfeited and you will be asked to re-apply, this will include paying another administration fee and will result in delays to your application.

It is a criminal offence to knowingly make a false statement when applying for a DBS check. Matrix Security Watchdog and Ofsted closely scrutinises each DBS application before it is processed by the DBS. If an applicant falsely applies as a volunteer as part of their DBS check the full application fee will be recovered including any further administration costs. This may delay and/or adversely affect an application with Ofsted.

For the purposes of their DBS check an applicant would not be considered a volunteer if they have more than one role within an organisation and are paid for either of those roles. For example, a paid nursery worker may also volunteer to be part of the committee that has overarching legal responsibility for the setting. In such instances they are not entitled to a discounted DBS check.

I am a household member and am not paid for this role. Am I considered a volunteer?

No. As a household member at childminding or childcare on domestic premises you will not be working for the benefit of others and therefore do not meet the definition of a volunteer. Ofsted are legally required to check all individuals living on childcare premises.

I am a household member who is also working as an unpaid assistant. Am I considered a volunteer?

No. In Ofsted's view your role as a household member at childminding or childcare on domestic premises takes precedence. As this role will not involve working for the benefit of others you do not meet the definition of a volunteer. Ofsted are legally required to check all individuals living on childcare premises.

I am a childminding assistant and am not paid for this role. Am I considered a volunteer?

No. Although some assistants may not be directly paid for the work they do within a childminding setting, they will be contributing to the childminding service being offered. In turn this will mean the childminder can offer an enhanced service by caring for more children and/or offering more flexible care. As there is a monetary or reputational benefit to the childminder in these circumstances an assistant is not entitled to a discounted DBS check.