



Garda Vetting Policy

Background

The National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016 provide a statutory basis for the vetting of persons carrying out relevant work with children or vulnerable persons. The Act also creates offences and penalties for persons who fail to comply with its provisions.

The Act stipulates that a relevant organisation shall not permit any person to undertake relevant work or activities on behalf of the organisation, unless the organisation receives a vetting disclosure from the National Vetting Bureau in respect of that person.

Vetting is conducted on behalf of registered organisations such as Athletics Ireland only and is not conducted for individual persons on a personal basis. If you are seeking employment or intending to volunteer with Athletics Ireland by providing relevant work to children or vulnerable persons, you will be asked by your club to complete the vetting process before commencing such work.

Vetting Forms

[Click here for the eVetting Form](#)

[Click here for the eVetting Consent Form for u18's](#)

Athletics Ireland eVetting Process

1. The vetting subject completes an Athletics Ireland eVetting Invitation & ID Validation form. They then present their original ID's with photocopies to their Club Children's Officer for validation. The vetting subject then posts their eVetting Invitation form along with photocopies of the ID used to the Liaison Person at Athletics Ireland, 19 Northwood Court, Northwood Business Campus, Santry, Dublin 9.
2. Athletics Ireland then sends the vetting subject an e-mail inviting him/her to complete the online eVetting Application Form.
3. The vetting subject completes a eVetting Application Form online and submits it to Athletics Ireland.
4. The Athletics Ireland Liaison Person reviews the Vetting Application Form and submits it to the National Vetting Bureau for processing.
5. The National Vetting Bureau processes the application and forwards a vetting disclosure to the Athletics Ireland Liaison Person.
6. Athletics Ireland reviews the vetting disclosure and as soon as is practicable provides a response to the vetting subject.

Club Children's Officer - Validation of applicants Identity

The Club Children's Officer must check the identity of the applicant against an original valid form of identification as specified on the eVetting & ID Validation form. The Children's Officer must tick the appropriate box for the form of ID that was used to verify the identity of the applicant. The 100 point rule for ID validation must be observed - for example a driver's license (credit card type)

carries 80 points and therefore must be accompanied by an additional form of ID totalling 100 points. Children under 18 may not have appropriate ID; therefore the 100 point rule is allocated differently. The Children's Officer completes the ID validation form and signs it confirming that they have verified the identity of the applicant.

Vetting for under 18's

Sports leaders under 18 may also be required to complete the vetting process. To apply for vetting there must be a completed parental consent. This form is available from your Club Children's Officer. Vetting cannot be conducted for a person under the age of 16.

Disputes

In instances where a vetting subject disputes any detail contained on a Garda Vetting Disclosure, issued to the Liaison Person in respect of him/her, the following procedure will apply:

- The Vetting Subject should outline the exact basis of his/her dispute and submit it in writing to the Liaison Person.
- The Liaison Person will submit the applicant's submission in writing, with the original vetting form to the Garda Vetting Unit for review.
- If, following further checks, the applicant still disputes details of the disclosure, arrangements will be made for further validation procedures.
- At the conclusion of the dispute resolution process, decisions on the suitability of the applicant will be the responsibility of the Review Committee.

Risk Assessment Guidelines

A conviction, prosecution or case pending will not necessarily bar an applicant for consideration for engagement. The following criteria will be considered;

- The nature and number of any convictions
- The frequency of any convictions
- The post for which the person is seeking engagement
- The self disclosure of the conviction/case pending by the applicant
- The time lapse since the conviction

The Review Committee

Athletics Ireland will employ a Natural Justice framework in dealing with any disclosures of convictions. In accordance with the guidelines issued by the National Vetting Bureau, the CEO of Athletics Ireland will establish a Decision Making Committee. This Committee is comprised of up to six members, one representative of each of the five regions and a Chairperson. A minimum of three must be present for any meeting. All applicants have a right to natural justice and can choose to waive their anonymity and meet the decision making committee to present their case should they choose to do so.

Consideration of holding a Review Meeting

The National Vetting Bureau provide the organisation with details of all prosecutions, successful or not, pending or completed, and/or convictions. Consideration for holding a review meeting will occur when an application is returned from the NVB with information which gives cause for concern attached. The Liaison Person will verify any information received from the NVB with the applicant.

Any assessment of suitability of an applicant depends on the relevance of any conviction/disclosed information to the position or role applied for, the self-disclosure of such information, the seriousness of the offence/disclosed information, the timing of the offence and any possible pattern of offences. The information disclosed is used for only the specific purpose for which it was obtained as part of a volunteering or recruitment process within Athletics Ireland. On receiving

information that may potentially result in exclusion from taking up the regulated position any original documentation is checked to ensure it is correct and that the disclosed information refers to the applicant. If the applicant has self-disclosed the information and this agrees with the disclosure from the vetting body a decision will be made depending on the type and nature of the offences disclosed. If the applicant has not self-disclosed and information is received from the vetting body this will be checked with the applicant. The applicant will be asked to provide background information on all offences in writing as part of the risk assessment process.

Disclosure of certain types of convictions/prosecutions or specified information will automatically disqualify applicants from a position working with children and young people.

Examples of offences that will automatically disqualify an applicant are:

- Any offence of a sexual nature
- Any offence against a child or of child abuse or child abuse images
- An offence that causes grievous bodily harm
- Any offence of murder or manslaughter
- An offence of kidnapping
- A series of continuous offending that might cause concern for the well-being of children
- Any charge brought by the Director of Public Prosecutions (for Ireland and Northern Ireland) concerning abuse of a child or vulnerable person

This is a guide and not a complete list of barring offences. All decisions on the suitability of an applicant are a matter for the Decision Making Committee of Athletics Ireland or its affiliates. The NVB and ANI are not involved in such decisions.

All risk assessment decisions are made on an individual basis. Consideration is given to the nature of the disclosed information received from the respective vetting bodies and the initial self-disclosure, if any, by the individual. Decisions will only be made on disclosed information that is verified and confirmed, preferably in writing. If a decision is required that is not clearly dealt with in this vetting policy external advice is sought. In this case any identifying information on the disclosure will be removed. External advice may be sought from other regulatory bodies, e.g. Participation Unit from Sport Ireland or Child Protection in Sport Unit from NSPCC. Where the applicant is suitable for the position currently held or applied for, this is communicated to the individual by issuing a letter accepting suitability to volunteer/work within Athletics Ireland. Where the information disclosed by the vetting organisation and/or self-disclosed by the applicant deems the individual to be unsuitable for the regulated position they are informed of such preferably in person, however this is not always possible. In the case where an individual cannot be informed in person they will be requested to contact the LP/signatory as a matter of urgency. All applicants are allowed the opportunity to withdraw from seeking any role or position. The principles of natural justice concern procedural fairness and ensure a fair decision is reached by objective & unbiased decision makers at all times.

Information Storage & Data Protection

All information in the vetting process will be held in a manner consistent with the Athletics Ireland confidentiality policy. Athletics Ireland complies fully with good practice regarding the secure storage, handling and use of the Vetting Bureau disclosures and personal vetting information as per Data Protection Policy and legal obligations under Data Protection Legislation.

What is the purpose of Garda Vetting?

The purpose of Garda Vetting is to provide details regarding all prosecutions, successful or not, pending or completed and/or convictions in respect of an individual applicant to an organisation which is registered for Garda Vetting.

Who is subject to Garda Vetting?

All members of Athletics Ireland, both voluntary and paid staff, who regularly work with children and vulnerable adults in athletics must complete a vetting application. An individual will not work / volunteer with children or vulnerable persons in Athletics Ireland until their vetting application has been completed and the outcome conveyed to the Liaison Person. It will be an offence to start a person in relevant work before a vetting application has been completed.

What are the benefits of Garda Vetting?

- Protection of children and vulnerable adults
- Protection of the Association and Club
- Protection of coaches and volunteers
- Management of risk
- Garda Vetting is one of the key elements of the safe recruitment process

Who provides Garda Vetting?

Vetting is carried out by the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána. Vetting can only be accessed through Athletics Ireland, the NVB does not deal with individual applicants. Vetting cannot be accessed through local Garda Stations. The National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána conducts vetting of applicants engaged in relevant work to ascertain whether these applicants have a criminal record or prosecutions pending. Garda Vetting is the process by which the National Vetting Bureau gives a statement on whether a person has had any convictions - pending or completed - recorded against their name (subject to the Spent Convictions Act of 2016 which allows for certain convictions to become “spent”). In certain circumstances specified information may be disclosed. Athletics Ireland provides vetting services to the Irish Schools Athletic Association and Parkrun Ireland.

Athletics Ireland is committed to the protection and welfare of children and vulnerable persons. As part of this commitment Athletics Ireland complies with relevant legislation and recommended best practice in recruitment and selection procedures for both employees and volunteers, and will conduct Garda Vetting, where appropriate, as part of this process. The purpose of this page is to provide information and guidance on Garda Vetting procedures within Athletics Ireland. This policy applies to Athletics Ireland employees and volunteers who carry out “relevant work” with children and /or vulnerable persons on a regular basis as defined in the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 – 2016. Responsibility for ensuring this policy is effectively implemented rests with the Liaison Person within Athletics Ireland.

How often should vetting be updated?

Vetting with Athletics Ireland must be refreshed every **four years** by submitting a new eVetting application form to the Liaison Person.