

DBS CHECKS – IMPORTANT CHANGES

Changes to Regulated Activity with Children from 1 September 2026



You may have heard about some recent changes relating to DBS checks and Regulated Activity with Children.

Please don't panic! We've put together the information below to explain what has changed and what it may mean for your church and those working with children.

What has changed? From 1 September 2026, there has been a change to the definition of **Regulated Activity with Children**. The **supervision exemption has been removed**. Previously, people who worked with children but were **always supervised** were not considered to be undertaking Regulated Activity.

From 1 September 2026 workers and volunteers who teach, train, instruct, care for or supervise children **frequently** i.e. **weekly**, or **more than three times in any 30-day period**, or **once overnight**, between 2am and 6am, will be considered to be undertaking Regulated Activity with Children, whether or not they are supervised. The rules for those undertaking Regulated Activity because they provide personal care remain unchanged. Those working with children **infrequently** will remain in non-regulated activity, unless they are also carrying out personal care.

This change only impacts Regulated Activity with Children. No change is being made to the definition of Regulated Activity with Adults.

How will this affect my church? Many people who work with children are currently **unsupervised** and therefore already meet the definition of Regulated Activity – these remain unchanged. However, from 1 September 2026, people who work with children **frequently** (see above) and under supervision will also be classed as undertaking Regulated Activity with Children.

This means that they will require an **Enhanced DBS check with a check of the Children's Barred List**.

Will I need to submit a new DBS application? All new DBS applications submitted from 1 September 2026 will follow the new rules.

For individuals whose roles have moved into Regulated Activity as a result of these changes, the risks associated with the role should be assessed and the appropriate level of DBS check applied for.

Open the Book volunteers who undertake the role **frequently enough** should have a new DBS check if their existing check does not include barred-list information.

Regulated Activity is work that a barred person **cannot legally undertake**.

An individual who is barred from working with children commits an offence if they undertake Regulated Activity, and an organisation that knowingly allows a barred individual to undertake such work is also breaking the law.

Further information You can read more about these changes on the **GOV.UK website**:

[Change to the definition of regulated activity with children from 1 September 2026](#)

If you are unsure whether these changes affect a particular role within your church, **please contact the [Panel](#) for advice**.

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Handbook

We are currently updating **Section 2: Safer Recruitment and Selection Procedures** of the Handbook to reflect these changes. Section 2 is available on the [Panel website](#)

Please make sure you are using the updated version when considering DBS checks and safer recruitment procedures.

The Interdenominational Safeguarding Panel - If you are unsure – please ask. We are here to help.