

# PLAYING IT SAFE

## SYFA NEWSLETTER



## Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme: Check to Protect

### INTRODUCTION

On **28 February 2011** the Scottish Government is introducing a new membership scheme that will replace and improve upon the current disclosure arrangements for people who work with vulnerable groups. The Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme (PVG Scheme) will:

- Help to ensure that those who have regular contact with children and protected adults through paid and unpaid work do not have a known history of harmful behaviour
- Be quick and easy to use, reducing the need for PVG Scheme members to complete a detailed application form every time a disclosure check is required
- Strike a balance between proportionate protection and robust regulation

This newsletter aims to provide broad information about the PVG Scheme. More detailed information about the PVG Scheme, including frequently asked questions, is available on the Scottish Government website. Website addresses and contact information are on page 2 of this newsletter.

### BACKGROUND

The PVG Scheme is Scotland's response to the principal recommendation of the Bichard Inquiry Report which was undertaken following the tragic murders in Soham in 2002. This recommendation called for a registration system for all those who work with children and vulnerable adults in the UK that would confirm that there is no known reason why an individual should not work with these client groups.

The Scottish Government is committed to helping local communities flourish and become stronger, safer places to live. It has built upon what has been learned from current disclosure and disqualification services in Scotland to develop an efficient membership scheme that will strengthen protection for vulnerable groups and reduce bureaucracy.

### WHO WILL THE PVG SCHEME AFFECT?

The PVG Scheme will affect all registered SYFA national, regional, league and club officials. It is expected that between 700,000 and 800,000 people in Scotland will become PVG Scheme members.

### HOW WILL THE PVG SCHEME WORK?

The PVG Scheme will be managed and delivered by Disclosure Scotland which, as an executive agency of Scottish Government will take on additional responsibilities. This will include taking decisions, on behalf of Scottish Ministers, about who should be barred from working with vulnerable groups.

As well as strengthening safeguards for children, the PVG Scheme will improve protection for adults because for the first time in Scotland, there will be a list of those who are barred from working with protected adults (there is already a list of those who are barred from working with children).



**A protected adult is a person, aged 16 or over, who receives one or more type of health, care or welfare service either regularly or for a short period of time.**

People who work, on a regular basis, with vulnerable groups will join the PVG Scheme and, from then on, their membership records will be automatically updated if any new vetting information arises. Vetting information is conviction information retrieved from criminal justice systems and non-conviction information held by the police that are considered relevant.

Continuing to collect vetting information, after a person becomes a PVG Scheme member, will help to ensure that new information indicating that they might pose a risk to vulnerable groups can be acted upon promptly. In the vast majority of cases, there will be no new vetting information that is relevant to work with vulnerable groups.

In addition, groups and organisations will be able to make a referral to Disclosure Scotland if they investigate and conclude that an individual has behaved in a harmful way towards vulnerable groups. Robust procedures and clear guidance will be available to ensure that groups and organisations make appropriate and fair referrals.

In instances when vetting or referral information indicates that a person may pose a risk to vulnerable groups, Disclosure Scotland will consider all the information available before deciding whether a person should be placed under consideration for listing on one or both of the barred lists. If a person is under consideration for listing, Disclosure Scotland will be able to obtain further information from other sources, such as employers or regulatory organisations.

Decisions about barring will involve a thorough and fair process. The person will have access to all the information being considered and they will be able to submit written representation to the PVG Scheme. These representations will be an integral part of the decision-making process. While under consideration for listing, the person can continue to work with vulnerable groups but all organisations and groups known to have an interest in them will be notified that their PVG Scheme membership status has changed.

If after careful assessment a person is considered a risk and therefore unsuitable to work with children or protected adults, or both, Disclosure Scotland will list them on one or both of the barred lists. This means that the person will not be able to become a PVG Scheme member in relation to one or both areas of work.

**It will be an offence for a barred person - and for an organisation to permit that person - to undertake such work.**

An appeals procedure will be in place for anyone wishing to challenge a barring decision.

A person who is barred from working with children, protected adults, or both in Scotland will also be barred throughout the rest of the UK and vice-versa as the PVG Scheme will dovetail with the systems being developed for England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The PVG Scheme introduces different types of disclosures which aim to suit different needs and make the disclosure process as cheap, quick and efficient as possible. There is more information about the different disclosure types and fee levels on the Scottish Government website.

One of the benefits of becoming a PVG Scheme member is that it will significantly reduce the need for people to complete a detailed application form every time their employment or volunteering circumstances change.

Another benefit is that organisations and groups, as part of their safe recruitment processes, will be able to do a quick and simple check to verify that a person is a PVG Scheme member and therefore not barred from working with children or protected adults or both.

**Checks for SYFA volunteers will continue to be free.**

The PVG Scheme will also strengthen protection for vulnerable groups in instances where people are employed on a personal basis. Personal employers - such as a parent who employs a sports coach for their child or a person employing a personal carer - will be able to check that a person is a PVG Scheme member.

**WHEN WILL THE PVG SCHEME GO LIVE?**

**The PVG Scheme will go live on 28 February 2011**

After go live it is expected to take four years to phase in the PVG Scheme.

Scheme will only be available to those who are joining the vulnerable groups' workforce for the first time, moving posts or whose circumstances have changed. Applications to join the scheme will continue to be made and responded to on paper.

In the year after go live, the new secure, electronic PVG Scheme system will become available which means that organisations, groups and individuals will be able to interact with the scheme online.

Shortly after the electronic system goes live it is expected that existing members of the vulnerable groups' workforce will begin to join the PVG Scheme. This is expected to take three years and will be planned and phased in partnership with groups and organisations to minimise any administrative burden.

**WHAT HELP WILL BE AVAILABLE?**

Further information, guidance and training materials will be available from Hazel Killen or Aisling Hinton at SYFA as and when appropriate. SYFA have attended a series of information and training events on our member's behalf.

**WHAT CAN MEMBER LEAGUES, CLUBS, OFFICIALS AND ADDITIONAL SIGNATORIES DO TO PREPARE?**

**LEAGUES**

Keep your leagues list of member clubs up to date by using the SYFA registrations website at [www.syfaregistrations.co.uk](http://www.syfaregistrations.co.uk) and ensuring ALL Clubs are registered

Keep your leagues list of officials up to date by using the SYFA registrations website at [www.syfaregistrations.co.uk](http://www.syfaregistrations.co.uk) and ensuring ALL league officials are registered.

**CLUBS**

Keep your club's list of registered officials up to date by using the SYFA registrations website at [www.syfaregistrations.co.uk](http://www.syfaregistrations.co.uk) and ensuring ALL club officials are registered

**OFFICIALS**

Keep your personal details up to date by using the SYFA registrations website at [www.syfaregistrations.co.uk](http://www.syfaregistrations.co.uk) and ensuring ALL details of officials are correct

**ADDITIONAL SIGNATORIES**

Keep your personal details up to date by informing Hazel or Aisling of any changes, if you no longer wish to act as an Additional Signatory please also inform Hazel or Aisling.

**SYFA NATIONAL PLAYER PROTECTION OFFICER**

Ensure that the list of signatories and their contact details held by the SYFA is up to date (including their email address where possible). This is because under the PVG Scheme, applications will still require to be counter-signed by the CRBS on behalf of its enrolled organisations.

**USEFUL WEBSITES**

**PVG SCHEME WEB LANDING PAGE**

[www.infoscotland.com/pvgscheme](http://www.infoscotland.com/pvgscheme)

This web page has been created to help direct people to the most appropriate and relevant website depending on their needs.

**OTHER WEBSITES**

\* Scottish Government, PVG Scheme  
[www.scotland.gov.uk/pvglegislation](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/pvglegislation)

\* Disclosure Scotland  
[www.disclosurescotland.co.uk](http://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk)

\* Central Registered Body in Scotland  
[www.crbs.org.uk](http://www.crbs.org.uk)

**PLAYING IT SAFE COURSES**

**Player Protection Officer Training**

To further information on this please email [playingitsafe@scottish-football.com](mailto:playingitsafe@scottish-football.com) or call Aisling Hinton on 0141 620 4590.

To download an application form please click the following link:

[Playing It Safe - Application form](#)



Euro-Sportring invites you to join teams from Italy, France, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Germany, Ireland and across the UK at the Blackpool Cup this Easter.

Click on the following link for more information:

[Blackpool Cup](#)

