



CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECKS

What is a Criminal Records Check?

A Criminal Records Check (CRC) is a process for gathering information about an individual's criminal history. In the UK (England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland), Criminal Records Checks are completed by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). If you live outside of the UK, please contact us for more information on the relevant body.

Why do we need the checks?

Travellers Worldwide works with over 300 projects throughout the world. In many of the projects in which we work, volunteers are often placed into positions of trust; whether it's volunteering as a teacher, sports coach, carer, nurse, researcher, and so forth. Travellers Worldwide recognises that we all share a responsibility towards the individuals, communities and projects in which we work and that Criminal Records Checks play an important role (as part of a wider screening process) in helping to safeguard the more vulnerable members of our society.

Will I be required to complete a Criminal Records Check for my programme?

You will be required to complete a Criminal Records Check if your programme brings you into contact with children and/or vulnerable adults.

Can I refuse?

Yes, you can refuse. However, there are some programmes for which a Criminal Records Check is a mandatory requirement. If you refuse to apply for a Criminal Records Check in this instance, Travellers reserves the right to cancel your programme. In such instances, our terms and conditions will apply. Please see our Terms and Conditions for full details.

I've already completed a Criminal Records Check – Can I use this for my Travellers Programme?

If you've already completed a Criminal Records Check, whether for your work or otherwise, you may be able to put this forward for use on your programme with Travellers. For the Criminal Records Check to be considered it must;

- have been completed within 12 months of your Programme Start Date,
- be an original. Copies will not be accepted.

When making this decision Travellers will take into account: The length of time that has elapsed since the Criminal Records Check was issued, the level of Criminal Records Check, the issuing body/agency, the nature of the position for which the Criminal Records Check was issued, and the nature of the position for which you are now applying. Travellers reserves the right whether to accept or decline the Criminal Records Check or not.

How do I apply for a Criminal Records Check?

The process of applying for a Criminal Records Check varies from country-to-country (and sometimes from state-to-state). We've provided a country-by-country guide for the UK, America, Australia and New Zealand. For all other countries we ask that you make contact with your local police to obtain the check directly from them.

For the majority of countries, the process of requesting a police check is both simple and straightforward, however, there is the odd country for which this can prove to be highly problematic. Should you encounter any difficulties in making this request, we ask that you inform us as soon as possible, we will then be happy to discuss the options available with a view to reaching a suitable compromise.

Checks By Country

UK

On booking your programme with Travellers, we will automatically submit a request to Experian Background Checking on your behalf. Experian Background Checking will then post out to you a CRB Criminal Records Check Application Form, a guidance booklet titled 'An Applicant's Guide to Completing the CRB Application Form', along with a covering letter titled 'CRB Criminal Records Check Application Form' which gives instructions on how to apply.

In the UK, the CRB issue the Criminal Records Check to volunteers free of charge, but there is an administration charge payable to Experian Background Checking (the Umbrella Body) to cover the cost of overseeing the processing. The charge payable to Experian Background Checking is £15.00 plus VAT. No charge is made by Travellers. You can expect the process to take up to 8 weeks to complete from the time you post off your form.

America

There are a variety of options available to you but your first port of call should be to contact your local police department. Explain that you are taking part in a voluntary programme that will see you working with children and/or vulnerable adults and that you are required to provide evidence of a Criminal Background/Records Check (the exact names and terms used may differ between states). Please note that U.S. law enforcement authorities may not be all that familiar with your request as it's not a commonly requested procedure in the United States – so take time to explain exactly what it is you need.

Your local police department will hopefully be able to assist with your request, but if not, they may instead refer you to the State police. If you are referred to the State Police simply complete the same process as before. In some states, the duty of managing such records is undertaken by what's known as a 'State Identification Bureau'. Two examples are included below:

- **New York State – Division of Criminal Justice Services**
<http://criminaljustice.state.ny.us/ojis/recordreview.htm>
- **Michigan State Police – Internet Criminal History Access Tool (ICHAT)**
<http://apps.michigan.gov/ICHAT/Home.aspx>

Whether you go to your Local Police, the State Police, the State Identification Bureau or direct to the FBI - You should make sure that the check you apply for searches at both the local and the state level (this is a minimum requirement).

Please note that on some occasions you may be required to appear in person in order to confirm your identity. You may also be required to provide your fingerprints to aid the search process. The cost of the checks can vary. The time to process the check can also vary.

More information on Criminal Records Checks is available at:

- **U.S. Department of State - Bureau of Consular Affairs – Criminal Record Checks**
http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/emergencies/emergencies_1201.html
- **The FBI - Identification Record Request/Criminal Background Check**
http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/background-checks/background_checks

Australia

You will be asked to provide evidence of having completed a 'Name Only' National Police Check. This check can be completed through the Australian Federal Police or through the relevant Territory/State Police Force. The checks cost around \$45 AUD. The check takes approximately 2 weeks to complete, but please note that it may take longer where cross-territory/state checks are required. More information on 'Name Only' National Police Checks is available at:

- **Australian Federal Police**
<http://www.afp.gov.au/what-we-do/police-checks/national-police-checks.aspx>
- **Queensland Police**
<http://www.police.qld.gov.au/services/purchase/polcert.htm>

New Zealand

You will be asked to provide evidence of having completed a 'Clean Slate' Check. This check can be completed through the Ministry of Justice, New Zealand. The check is provided free of charge. Checks can take up to 3 weeks to complete. More information on 'Clean Slate' Police Checks is available at:

- **Ministry of Justice, New Zealand – Obtaining a Copy of your Criminal Record**
<http://www.justice.govt.nz/services/get-a-copy-of-your-criminal-record>
- **Ministry of Justice, New Zealand – Application Forms**
<http://www.justice.govt.nz/services/get-a-copy-of-your-criminal-record/application-forms/>

FAQ'S

What happens if my application gets delayed?

Travellers reserve the right to delay or postpone your programme until the check has been completed. Travellers are not responsible for any costs incurred as a result. Travellers reserve the right to cancel your placement for any failure to complete the check satisfactorily. In such instances, our terms and conditions will apply. Please see our Terms and Conditions for full details.

For how long will the Criminal Records Check be valid?

Criminal Records Checks do not carry a pre-determined period of validity for the simple reason that a conviction/caution/reprimand/warning could be recorded against the subject of the Criminal Records Check at any time after the Criminal Records Check has been issued. However, for the purpose of your participation in a Travellers Programme, we regard a Criminal Records Check as being valid where the date of the Criminal Records Check falls within 12 months of the Programme Start Date.

Who will have access to the information given in my Criminal Records Check?

If you live in the UK and if you are completing your check through Experian Background Checking – once your check has been processed the result of the check will be sent directly to Travellers by Experian Background Checking. The information will be held securely and will only be made available on a strict need-to-know basis. The information will only be held as long as is absolute necessary, after which time it will be securely disposed of.

If you live outside of the UK (and you are therefore completing the check independently of Travellers) or, if you will be providing Travellers with a previously completed Criminal Records Check - when providing your completed check please mark it addressed: 'FAO Operations Director'.

How do I know that I will be treated fairly?

Travellers adheres to the CRB's Code of Practice for Criminal Records Checks. The Code of Practice ensures that the process is conducted openly and fairly and that any information revealed about an individual is assessed in accordance with the guidelines.

How do I know that the information on my Criminal Records Check will remain confidential?

Travellers adheres to the CRB's Code of Practice for Criminal Records Checks. The Code of Practice ensures that all information is handled and stored appropriately (securely) and that the information must only be kept for as long as is absolutely necessary, after which time it must be securely disposed of.

CRB Code of Practice

The Criminal Records Bureau's Code of Practice is made available to read on a request basis. We will be happy to provide you with a copy, simply email your request to us at: info@travellersworldwide.com

Secure Handling of Criminal Records Check Information

Travellers policy on the Secure Handling of Criminal Records Check Information is made available to read on a request basis. We will be happy to provide you with a copy, simply email your request to us at: info@travellersworldwide.com

Recruiting Ex-Offenders

Travellers policy on Recruiting Ex-Offenders is made available to read on a request basis. We will be happy to provide you with a copy, simply email your request to us at: info@travellersworldwide.com

Further Information

If you would like more information about Criminal Records Checks please don't hesitate to contact us at: info@travellersworldwide.com. If you have already booked, simply speak to your project coordinator who will be more than happy to help.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE – GET INVOLVED!

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