

1.6 Carry Out a Criminal Records Check if Possible or if Obligatory Under National Law

How to?

In some countries checking a candidate's criminal record before employing them to work with vulnerable people is obligatory. OGB defines all beneficiaries of its humanitarian programmes as vulnerable. It is also necessary to take a decision as to the degree of access to vulnerable people (and therefore the degree of risk the organisation is carrying) that the post-holder will have. If you deem the risk to be high then, if possible, a criminal records check should probably be carried out.

If criminal records checks are obligatory there will be agencies who, for a fee, will ensure the correct paperwork is filled out and that the check gets done quickly. This is the Oxfam-recommended way to carry out a check.

If criminal records checks are possible in the country in which you are recruiting and you have any concerns about the employment history of a candidate then we *recommend* that you carry out a check. Again it is most likely that agencies will exist to help/expedite the process, Oxfam recommends that you use an agency.

If options for checking someone's history in this way are not available it is perfectly legitimate to tell the candidate that you would like to do further checking and ask them if it is OK to contact any of the previous employees (individuals or organisations) on their application form. If the candidate says fine, go ahead, if the candidate says 'no' it is *probably* safest not to employ them.