

The law is changing

From **12 October 2009**, new measures will be introduced to help prevent unsuitable people from undertaking paid or volunteer work with children or vulnerable adults. This is called the **Vetting and Barring Scheme (VBS)**.

To help implement the Scheme a new public body called the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) has been created. The ISA make decisions over who should be barred from working with vulnerable people. These decisions are legally binding so a barred person must not undertake certain roles under any circumstances. Failing to comply could result in both the employer and the employee or volunteer being prosecuted and even going to prison.

From **July 2010** all new employees, those moving jobs and volunteers who want to work with children or vulnerable adults can register with the ISA. From **November 2010**, all new employees and volunteers **must** register before they start work. From then it will be illegal to employ people who are not ISA-registered.

Working with the CRB

ISA-registration will not replace the need for Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure but represents an extra level of protection. This new Scheme helps to ensure that employers can be more confident than ever before that they are hiring a suitable person by making it a legal requirement for everyone who is working with children or the vulnerable to be ISA-registered. A CRB Disclosure will reveal if the person has convictions that would make an employer consider them unsuitable to do the specific job, such as convictions for theft, fraud or dishonesty. When used together, the ISA-registration and CRB checking process will provide employers with one of the most comprehensive assessment and review services available to date.

How employees and employers are affected

From **November 2010**, all new employees and volunteers who want to work with children and vulnerable adults in a wide variety of settings **must be** ISA-registered before they can be legally employed. Obtaining ISA-registration is the employee's responsibility. It is not a difficult or time-consuming process and there is a one-off cost of £64 (£28 ISA/£36 CRB administration costs). ISA-registration for unpaid volunteers is free. There are two areas of ISA-registration, one covering working with children and one covering working with vulnerable adults. Once successfully ISA-registered, for either or both groups, an individual is ISA-registered for life in most cases and does not need to reapply. For employers wanting to hire that person they will need to first check their registration status. This can be done online for free. Only then, when a candidate's ISA-registration has been confirmed, can they be taken on. At first, the Scheme will affect new employees and volunteers only. Over time, the registration process will be phased in to include current employees and volunteers.

Does this affect me or my organisation?

To find out who is affected by these changes and what, if anything, needs to be done, please visit www.isa-gov.org.uk

As an organisation or individual who undertakes work in a paid or unpaid capacity with children or vulnerable adults, these changes to the law will affect you. If your organisation has an HR or a finance department, then those staff should be made aware of the Scheme and the legal requirements around ISA-registration. Smaller organisations, without these departments, must familiarise themselves with the new rules to ensure that they too comply with the changes. We appreciate that you may not have done anything like this before so we are here to help you every step of the way.

Together we can help prevent the unsuitable from working with the vulnerable.

For more information about the Vetting and Barring Scheme, the Independent Safeguarding Authority, the registration process, who is affected and how, please visit www.isa-gov.org.uk or call **0300 123 1111***.

*Calls to 03 numbers should cost no more than geographic 01 or 02 calls, and may be part of inclusive minutes subject to your call provider and your call package.