



DBS checks and Safeguarding Training for Accredited and Recognised Ministers

Introduction

Ministers and pastors who are accredited or recognised by BUGB must be up to date with best practice in safeguarding. They must also be able to demonstrate that they have appropriate clearance for work that brings them into regular contact with children, young people and / or adults at risk.

This guidance explains our expectations and requirements for DBS¹ checks and safeguarding training for accredited ministers, recognised local ministers (RLM), and nationally recognised pastors (NRP).

Please ensure you carefully read both sections, on **DBS checks** and on **safeguarding training**.

DBS checks

What you must do

If you are an accredited minister, an RLM or an NRP, you must have an 'enhanced DBS check with barred lists'.

You must apply for this DBS check through DDC² via your association or your Baptist college and not through a church. Please speak to your association or college who will tell you how to apply and arrange to verify your documents.

You must renew your DBS check every five years, or whenever you move to a new ministerial post, whichever is sooner.

It is your responsibility to make sure your DBS check is up to date.

Are there any exceptions?

If you are accredited with both BUGB and BUW and are working in Wales, you should read this guidance: [Safeguarding Requirements for Ministers accredited with both BUGB & BUW](#)

If you are a chaplain in the Armed Forces, your checks are arranged through your Service at the interval specified by the Service.

If you are no longer engaged in 'regulated activity', you can ask for a Not in Regulated Activity Declaration (NIRAD) form from the Ministries Team which you must complete and

¹ Disclosure and Barring Service

² Due Diligence Checking (Ltd)

return to them. Broadly speaking this will only apply if you are on a leave of absence or you are seconded to a role where there is no contact with children or adults at risk. If you sign a NIRAD form, you do not have to maintain your DBS check. But if you return to a role that includes regulated activity, you must obtain a DBS check before you start.

If you have a DBS check arranged via one of the Baptist colleges, you do not need an additional check through your association, but you must provide evidence of this to your association so they may record it.

If you work for BMS in the UK, they can arrange your DBS check, but you must provide evidence of this to your association so they may record it.

What about retired ministers?

If you are a retired accredited minister and are no longer involved in ministerial duties, you may sign a NIRAD form (see the point above) and you will no longer need a DBS check. The Ministries Team will ask you whether you wish to sign a NIRAD form when you tell them you have retired.

However, if you are retired but are still involved in ministerial duties in your own or another church, you need a DBS check. This must be arranged by your association as usual. This would apply if, for example, you are appointed as a church moderator or interim minister; involved in volunteer chaplaincy; or serving as a funeral celebrant on a regular basis. A DBS check is not necessary if you are only undertaking occasional preaching engagements.

It may be that you retire and sign a NIRAD form, but then get involved in local church life in ways that mean your church expects you to have a DBS check. For example, you help with the children's work. If the role does not include wider ministerial oversight, then the church should arrange a DBS check for you as they would for any volunteer. They should use the Retired Accredited Minister (volunteer) role category.

Who pays?

'Enhanced DBS checks with barred lists' for accredited and recognised ministers must be paid for if they are paid staff. The charge as at December 2024 is £49.50. (DBS checks are only free for volunteer staff). We expect our churches to pay or reimburse ministers for their DBS check. If you are not in a church, it is your responsibility to pay or, where relevant, ask the organisation you work for to do so.

Is it possible to use the DBS update system?

No. Because ministers may use their home for business and pastoral meetings, your DBS check will include a check on your home address to make sure there is no-one living there who would pose a known danger to children or an adult at risk. This is the case even if you do not use your home as a manse. Because of this, you cannot use the DBS update service to renew your DBS check. Instead, a fresh check has to be made each time you renew.

What if a minister already holds a DBS certificate from another organisation?

You must still apply for a further DBS check through your association or college. It is common for people to have more than one DBS check if they work or volunteer with more than one organisation involved in regulated activity.

Who does the DBS check if a minister works in an LEP?

If you are an accredited or recognised minister working in a Local Ecumenical Partnership, you must still apply for a DBS check through your association as BUGB is your accrediting body.

What happens once a DBS check is made?

If your DBS check reveals no information of concern, the DBS will send you a DBS enhanced certificate. DDC will notify the verifier at your association that the check is complete. You do not need to do anything further except note when you should renew your DBS check in five years' time.

If your DBS check reveals information of concern, the DBS will send you a 'blemished disclosure', outlining details of your cautions, convictions or police intelligence. The DBS will notify DDC that there is a concern and DDC will get in touch with you and ask to see your disclosure. DDC will send the information they gather to the BUGB National Safeguarding Team who will review and assess it.

More information can be found at www.baptist.org.uk/dbschecks

What happens if a minister does not have a DBS check?

It is a requirement that accredited and recognised ministers have a DBS check. If you refuse to get a check or fail to arrange one within five years of your last check, your name will be taken to the national MRC and your accreditation is likely to be removed.

Safeguarding training

What you must do

If you are an accredited minister, an RLM or an NRP, you must have completed the BUGB safeguarding training at levels 2 and 3.

You must complete this training through your association or your Baptist college, with a maximum gap of six months between the two levels.

You must refresh your training to levels 2 and 3 every four years. If your ministry is in Wales this will need to be refreshed every three years as of 1 January 2026.

It is your responsibility to make sure your safeguarding training is up to date.

Are there any exceptions?

If you are accredited with both BUGB and BUW and are working in Wales, you should read the guidance here: [Safeguarding Requirements for Ministers accredited with both BUGB and BUW and working in Wales](#)

If you are a chaplain in the Armed Forces, your safeguarding training should be arranged through an association (or through the equivalent provision made by Baptist Union of Scotland.) If this is not possible because of your posting, please contact the Ministries Team on ministries@baptist.org.uk and they will advise you.

If you are a chaplain in healthcare, prison or education, you may alternatively receive safeguarding training arranged by your appointing organisation. You must ask the Ministries Team for a Chaplaincy Safeguarding Declaration form so that we can record this. The form asks you to show evidence of your alternative training. You should complete it and return it to the Ministries Team. However, please note that if you also serve as, for example, a church pastor, moderator, interim minister, or NAM mentor alongside your chaplaincy role, then you must additionally undertake BUGB safeguarding training through your association.

If you are a chaplain in any other setting, please check with the Ministries Team if you think the training you receive in the workplace is sufficient, and they will discuss this with you.

If you are taking a leave of absence (LOA) that has been agreed by the national Ministerial Recognition Committee, you should ask the Ministries Team to send you a 'Not in Regulated Activity Declaration' (NIRAD) form. This form asks you to confirm you are not in a role that brings you into contact with children and/or adults at risk. You must complete the form and return it to the Ministries Team and you will then not have to undertake BUGB safeguarding training for the duration of your LOA. When you return to a role that includes regulated activity, you will need to undertake BUGB safeguarding training levels 2 and 3 as soon as possible.

If you are seconded to an organisation outside of Baptists Together and think you have reason not to complete the BUGB safeguarding training, please contact the Ministries Team and they will guide you.

If your sole ministry role is within a Baptist college, you may undertake the BUGB levels 2 and 3 safeguarding training provided by your college, but you must provide evidence of this to your association so they may record it.

If your sole ministry role is a seconded position in another denomination, you may undertake that denomination's training, but you must provide evidence of this to your association so they may record it.

What about retired ministers?

If you are a retired accredited minister and are no longer involved in ministerial duties, you may sign a NIRAD form (see above) and you will no longer need safeguarding training. The Ministries Team will ask you whether you wish to sign a NIRAD form when you tell them you have retired.

However, if you are retired but are still involved in ministerial duties in your own or another church, you need to undertake the safeguarding training. This must be arranged by your association as usual. This would apply if, for example, you are appointed as a church moderator or interim minister; involved in volunteer chaplaincy; or serving as a funeral celebrant on a regular basis. Safeguarding training is not necessary if you are only undertaking occasional preaching engagements.

It may be that you retire and sign a NIRAD form, but then get involved in local church life in ways that mean your church expects you to have safeguarding training. For example, you help with the children's work. If the role does not include wider ministerial oversight, then the church should arrange safeguarding training for you as they would for any volunteer.

Who provides safeguarding training in an LEP?

If you are an accredited or recognised minister working in a Local Ecumenical Partnership, you should undertake the safeguarding training requirements of the denomination whose safeguarding policy and processes the church is following. If this means you complete the training required by another denomination, you should both tell and show evidence of your training to your association. If you additionally serve in some significant BUGB role such as church moderator or interim minister, you should additionally complete BUGB levels 2 and 3 safeguarding training. If you leave the LEP and return to a Baptist church, you must complete BUGB levels 2 and 3 safeguarding training as soon as possible.

What happens if a minister does not complete safeguarding training?

It is a requirement that accredited and recognised ministers have safeguarding training. If you refuse to be trained or fail to arrange refresher training within four years of your last

training, your name will be taken to the national MRC and your accreditation is likely to be removed.



Ministries Team November 2024

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