



QUAKER LIFE APPROVALS PANEL

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1) SUMMARY OF PURPOSE

On behalf of Britain Yearly Meeting, to be responsible for decisions about the suitability for work with children, young people and vulnerable adults for people whose applications for a Disclosure (national checks for criminal records) have resulted in a referral by the Churches' Agency for Safeguarding to Britain Yearly Meeting for decision. (Commonly referred to as a "blemished disclosure" or an "Unclear disclosure").

2) MEMBERSHIP

- a) The Panel comprises up to 9 members appointed triennially by Quaker Life Central Committee, names having been submitted by its Nominations Committee, with members all serving for the same triennium. Each member is appointed for an initial term of three years, but could be invited to serve for a second term. Exceptionally a Friend could be invited to serve for successive triennia up to a maximum of three, according to the needs of the Panel for continuity and to retain specialist skills. Members would be expected to undergo or to have undergone the Disclosure process and be deemed suitable to work with children, young people or vulnerable adults.
- b) Membership of the group shall be drawn from Friends with the appropriate skills and experience. The Panel shall maintain short biographies on all its members to aid induction and the sharing of skills and experience.
- c) A member of staff, designated through the General Secretary, will normally attend meetings to act as secretary to the Panel. The secretary, who normally will be the BYM Safeguarding Officer, will be responsible for advising and servicing of the panel. Meetings without the secretary should only occur with the General Secretary's agreement. The clerk and general secretary of Quaker Life Central Committee can attend meetings *ex-officio*.
- d) The Panel may invite the attendance of other Friends, attenders, or specialists on an *ad hoc* basis, to help on particular issues (but not approvals) on its behalf, but may not co-opt on a permanent basis.

3) FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

- a) The Panel shall meet periodically for a day or a weekend, for induction, training, and planning of the work.
- b) Thereafter, the Panel shall meet or make use of telephone conferencing to consider requests for approval, as needed.

- c) The Clerk and Secretary or designated substitutes, working together, may decide when a meeting is required, or decide that a request for approval can be granted without further consideration.

4) DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- a) To draw up, and periodically review, criteria for decisions about the suitability for work with children and young people and vulnerable adults under Quaker auspices, of Quaker members, attenders or other applicants where their application for a Disclosure has resulted in information about the applicant being passed to the Churches' Agency for Safeguarding and subsequently to Quaker Life.
- b) From this Panel a small group of at least three members will be convened to consider such applications to consider the applicant's suitability to work with Children, Young people or Vulnerable adults, and place any restrictions on their work that the panel considers appropriate. If the Clerk is not on the small group, then it will select a Friend to act as clerk.
- c) To make decisions on such cases, normally within two weeks of receiving a referral from the Churches' Agency for Safeguarding.
- d) To inform the Churches' Agency for Safeguarding, and through them to inform the applicant and Quaker verifier, of such a decision, and of the possibility of appeal.
- e) To consider how pastoral care for any people whose application has been considered by the panel might be provided.
- f) Where appropriate, to work confidentially with trustees of Area Meetings to ensure that they are aware of any of the information known to the panel that will be pertinent to the good governance of the Area Meeting (and similarly with trustees of other Quaker bodies that use the Churches Agency for Safeguarding to process their criminal record bureau checks).
- g) To work in partnership with other Churches, particularly through the Churches' Agency for Safeguarding, and other relevant bodies.

5) AUTHORITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- a) The Panel is accountable to Quaker Life Central Committee.
- b) The Panel will report triennially to Central Committee, and by other appropriate means to Friends generally, balancing openness about principles and procedures with confidentiality about personal information.

The Panel to work to these terms of reference, as approved by minute 2009/47 of Quaker Life Central Committee on 19-21 June 2009 and revised by minute 2011/140 (f).