



# Triathlon Ireland Vetting Policy

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## Introduction

The purpose of this document is to ensure best safeguarding practice and procedures exist to protect vulnerable members as well as facilitate and enhance the operations of Triathlon Ireland (hereafter referred to as TI) and its clubs. The procedures following are produced to ensure all TI staff, relevant volunteers and stakeholders have a clear understanding of the policy and how it applies to their role. This document will be reviewed on a regular basis.

These procedures were submitted to and approved by the Safeguarding Committee by the National Safeguarding/Children's Officer. All previous vetting procedures are superseded by this version with effect from August 2025

Any issues arising from the transition between previous procedures and these shall be determined by the CEO, in consultation, where such issues are material, with the President.

This document may be amended from time to time by the National Children's Officer or the Safeguarding Committee. The definitive text of this document in force is the version contained on the TI internal server under Safeguarding Policies. Any printed text or electronic copy held elsewhere is only a snapshot of the text at the time it is printed, copied or downloaded.

Garda Vetting and Access NI checks are available for Triathlon Ireland (TI) members through Triathlon Ireland. Triathlon Ireland is registered with the National Vetting Bureau and with Access NI through the Northern Ireland Sports Forum.

Triathlon Ireland engages in vetting as part of our safeguarding standards to protect juniors and vulnerable adults in our sport.

The vetting process does not provide clearance for people, but provides information that may be relevant for an organisation in deciding the suitability of an individual to carry out a certain role working with or having access to children and young people. Vetting is one of the measures to protect Triathlon Ireland and affiliated clubs against possible perpetrators of child abuse by being a barrier to an individual who is unsuitable to work with children.

## Who Should Undergo Vetting

Organisations have a duty of care to the children they provide a service for. Part of fulfilling this duty means preventing unsuitable individuals from working with children.

In the Republic of Ireland (ROI) this is termed 'relevant work'.

In Northern Ireland (NI) this is termed 'regulated activity'. Access NI and Garda Vetting can only be conducted for those who are in regulated activity/relevant work.

In the Republic of Ireland, Garda vetting is legally required for all leaders/coaches/technical officials/photographers/helpers (paid & voluntary) with regular and continuous access to young people and vulnerable adults. Vetting must be complete prior to taking up the role.

In Northern Ireland it is against the law for a barred person to work or volunteer with children in 'regulated activity'. Where an organisation is accepting a volunteer or employee in regulated activity, whether for paid work or as a volunteer, they should request an enhanced disclosure

with barred list check from Access NI, this will show if the individual is barred from working with children. If the disclosure certificate indicates that the individual is on the barred list then it is against the law for the organisation to employ that person in regulated activity.

For those who do not qualify for an enhanced check a basic check can be completed

The full vetting process, including a confirmation email from TI, must be completed prior to taking up the role.

### **Access NI - Regulated Activity Under 18's**

Anyone employed to be a coach or instructor of children's sports whose duties include teaching, training or instructing children, or providing advice or guidance to children relating to their physical, emotional or educational well-being, is eligible for an enhanced check with a children's barred list check. This is because they are performing regulated activity with children if the frequency or intensity conditions are met.

Simple points to consider are is the activity:

- once a week or more
- at any time on four days or more in any period of 30 days, or
- at any time between 2am and 6am with the opportunity for face-to-face contact with children.

Important to note - while it is not possible to obtain an Enhanced AccessNI check where an individual undertakes regulated activity but does not meet the frequency or intensity conditions, a barred person is still barred from an activity that would be regulated activity but for the fact that it is not done regularly. This is their responsibility to not undertake these roles.

### **Access NI - Regulated Activity Vulnerable Adults**

In Northern Ireland coaching is not considered regulated activity with vulnerable adults.

While there may be vulnerable adults or adults at risk in clubs and attending events coaches and volunteers are unlikely to be in regulated activities with them as coaching does not fall into the category of regulated activity.

However there are two external contractors who may be classed as providing regulated activity at events.:

- First aider/medical team
- Transport team - if you are busing people or transporting them to the event or start line.

### **Garda Vetting - Relevant Services - Under 18's**

Any work or activity which is carried out by a person, a necessary and regular part of which consists mainly of the person having access to, or contact with, children in—

(a) educational, research, training, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities to children,

(b) care or supervision of children

### **Garda Vetting - Relevant Services - Vulnerable adults**

Any work or activity which is carried out by a person, a necessary and regular part of which consists mainly of the person having access to, or contact with, vulnerable persons in—

Any work or activity which consists of the provision of educational, training, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities (whether or not for commercial or any other consideration) to vulnerable persons unless the provision of educational, training, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities is merely incidental to the provision of educational, training, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities to persons who are not vulnerable persons.

### **Under 18 vetting**

Young people aged 16 or 17 can be vetted but a parental consent form must be provided, and the parents email used. Consent forms can be found on the [TI website](#).

### **Vetting checks from other organisations**

Vetting is not portable between organisations. Triathlon Ireland cannot accept a vetting disclosure from any other organisation or sports federation. Each organisation has different thresholds and will vet for specific roles within their sport.

### **Roles in Triathlon Ireland and type of vetting required:**

Note this list is not exhaustive and anyone in these roles must be in relevant/regulated activity in order for the vetting application to be accepted.

Leaders/Coaches/volunteers working with under 18's or vulnerable adults	Garda vetting and/or Access NI Enhanced Check
Club Children's Officers & Club Designated Liaison Person	Garda vetting Access NI Enhanced Check
Event Safeguarding Lead	Garda vetting or Access NI Enhanced Check (If club children's Officer. Access NI Basic Check (If taking on the role as a once off)
Technical Officials working at junior events	Garda vetting and/or Access NI Basic Check
Event Photographers	Garda vetting or Access NI Basic Check
TI Staff in roles working with under 18's & Vulnerable adults	Garda vetting and/or Access NI Enhanced Check

If you are not sure if your role requires vetting please contact [safeguarding@triathlonireland.com](mailto:safeguarding@triathlonireland.com) for clarification.

### **Re-vetting**

Triathlon Ireland requires re vetting every 3 years, as long as the individual is in relevant/regulated activity, and reserves the right to suspend a member from their role until their vetting is complete.

### **Residency Abroad**

Anyone who will be traveling to Ireland to engage in relevant work with juniors or vulnerable adults must complete vetting in advance of beginning their role.

Applicants who are resident in Ireland less than 6 months are required to provide a vetting check from their previous country of residence (longer than 6 months). In addition, applicants must complete a vetting check (Garda Vetting/ Access NI) prior to commencing their position with Triathlon Ireland and a further check 12 months later. Following this the applicant will re-vet every three years. Information received from another country will be subject to the same risk assessment for suitability as set out in this policy.

### **Processing Times**

The time taken to complete the full vetting process is dependent on the prompt return of accurately completed forms. This must be allowed for when recruiting staff and volunteers. Please encourage volunteers to take the time to correctly complete all forms and documentation required. Contact the respective liaison and registered persons for estimates on processing time.

### **Garda Vetting: Implementation of mandatory EU & UK checks for relevant work or activities with Children**

To improve and enhance the protection of children, vetting for any relevant work or activities with children includes additional checks with the other 26 EU member states and the UK. In summary, vetting subjects must declare if they have lived in any other EU member state or the UK.

These EU & UK checks are only conducted for persons whose role in your organisation involves relevant work or activities with children. These EU and UK checks will extend the processing time for these applications. You should factor these timelines into your recruitment process.

For applications requiring checks with an EU Country, allow for up to an additional 10 working days. For applications requiring checks with the UK, allow for up to an additional 20 working days.

### **Disclosures**

All applications (Garda Vetting & Access NI) result in a disclosure being issued which are dealt with in complete confidence. A disclosure is a document which details the results of the Garda or Access NI search. It may contain information regarding convictions, specified information or it may be NIL i.e. there is no information on the individual who has applied.

Garda Vetting:

- If a Nil disclosure is received the Triathlon Ireland Liaison Person (LP) makes a decision regarding the applicant's suitability for the role and if suitability is determined the applicant is informed by the LP via email that they may begin their role subject to

approval of the club once they have completed the further safeguarding requirements including signing a code of conduct, providing references and completing a Safeguard 1 course.

- If there are convictions or specified information disclosed this will be available for the LP to view on the disclosure.
- If there is relevant intelligence (specified information) to be disclosed the NVB will first contact the applicant directly and give them an opportunity to appeal the disclosure of the intelligence to TI. This will cause a delay in the process however the LP will not be aware this is taking place.

#### Access NI

- If it is a Nil disclosure the TI LP is informed by the Authorised signatory in the NI Sports Forum. The LP can then make a decision regarding the applicant's suitability for the role and if suitability is determined the applicant is informed by the LP via email that they may begin their role, subject to the approval of the club once they have completed the further safeguarding requirements including signing a code of conduct, providing references and completing a Safeguarding Children and Young People in Sport course.
- If there are convictions contained in the disclosure TI is alerted by the Authorised signatory in the NI Sports Forum who are not able to view the disclosure but are alerted that there is information on the disclosure. TI will request that the applicant send the disclosure via email to LP for assessment within 7 days. If this is not received in 7 days the club Children's Officer will be asked to follow up with the applicant.
- If the applicant does not wish to forward access to the certificate as they are disputing the information contained within it then the applicant would appeal directly to AccessNI as they issued the disclosure and only AccessNI can amend or correct the information. TI will not authorise the person to work/volunteer within TI activities until the safe recruitment process has been completed and will advise the club Children's Officer that until the disclosure has been returned they individual cannot start their role. No information will be disclosed.

### **Safeguarding Committee/Case Management Group Decisions**

If there are convictions or specified information contained in the disclosure, then a process will begin to assess whether the applicant is a suitable candidate for working with junior athletes/vulnerable adults and the applicant may not begin their role. In certain cases TI will convene a safeguarding committee.

A safeguarding committee, of no less than three people, will be convened according to need. The composition of the committee will be chosen by the National Safeguarding Officer with the approval of the CEO and may consist of the following:

- National Safeguarding Officer
- TI Liaison Person
- Youth Development Officer
- Other qualified staff member as appropriate
- External individuals with relevant experience and knowledge of safeguarding standards and legislation where applicable.

The safeguarding committee will set terms of reference depending on the type of case or cases being considered e.g. vetting disclosures or a risk assessment. All information will be

anonymised, and details will only be shared that are needed to reach a fair and reasonable outcome and in the best interest of the children the individual will be working with.

- This process is completely confidential and discussed only by the TI Safeguarding committee who have relevant training and experience and operate under a terms of reference.
- The applicant may be asked for further information regarding convictions and permission to obtain further information from the NVB, PSNI, other statutory bodies or voluntary agencies.
- The safeguarding committee will then use the information available to them to make a decision regarding the role of the applicant.
- If a decision is required that is not clearly dealt with in this vetting policy or is outside of the remit and terms of reference of the Safeguarding committee external advice is sought. In this case any identifying information on the disclosure will be removed. External advice may be sought from other regulatory bodies, e.g. Ethics Unit in Sport Ireland or Child Protection in Sport Unit of the NSPCC.
- Minutes of all decisions and/or recommendations made by the Panel will be kept securely by Triathlon Ireland.

## **Processing the Disclosed Information**

Any assessment of suitability depends on the relevance of any conviction/disclosed information to the position or role applied for, the self-disclosure of such information, the seriousness of the offence/disclosed information, the timing of the offence and any possible pattern of offences. The integrity of the applicant with regard to self-disclosure or lack of disclosure on the initial application form is considered important. The information disclosed is used for only the specific purpose for which it was obtained as part of a recruitment or appointment process within Triathlon Ireland. On receiving information that may potentially result in exclusion from taking up the regulated position any original documentation is checked to ensure it is correct and that the disclosed information refers to the applicant.

If the applicant has self-disclosed the information and this agrees with the disclosure from the vetting body a decision will be made depending on the type and nature of the offences or report disclosed. If the applicant has not self-disclosed and information is received from the vetting body this will be checked with the applicant.

### **Obtaining information from an applicant**

If the Liaison Person/National Safeguarding Officer needs to verify or obtain further details about a disclosure received, the applicant is asked to provide information that will assist in reaching a decision. If the applicant has failed to disclose offences given on the disclosure, the Liaison Person/National Safeguarding Officer will need to explore reasons for this and to confirm the disclosure.

In some cases, the disclosed information is not relevant to the position applied for, however consideration is given to why the information was not disclosed.

The following questions may be asked if additional information is required:

Context around the offence and additional detail - for example how old were they at the time, what exactly happened?

Has the applicant ever been to court?



What is the reason(s) for not disclosing the information received on the disclosure?

Is there further information relevant to the disclosed information?

The following will also be considered:

- the person's circumstances at the time of the offence
- any changes in the person's situation since the offence occurred
- the relevance of the offence in reference to the position within Triathlon Ireland for which the person has applied.

Triathlon Ireland will also consider the number and nature of offences, and the time lapse since the offence(s) has occurred.

Please note: if you receive communication regarding a disclosure of an offence, please remember that the organisation is looking for more information in order to ascertain your suitability and that a criminal history will not automatically disqualify you from engaging with children/ vulnerable adults within our organisation.

### **Disclosed information**

Disclosure of certain types of convictions/prosecutions/reports or specified information will automatically disqualify the applicant from a position working with children. These include but are not limited to:

- Any offence of a sexual nature.
- Any offence against a child including indecent images of children.
- Any offence of murder or manslaughter.
- An offence of kidnapping.
- An offence of rape, attempted rape

Other offences will automatically require a risk assessment to be conducted. This will allow an applicant an opportunity to submit mitigating factors and consideration to be given to the recruitment of ex-offenders. Examples of more serious offences of concern include:

- An offence that causes serious harm or grievous bodily harm.
- A series of continuous offending that might cause concern for the well-being of children.
- Where a charge or report is brought to the Director of Public Prosecutions (for Ireland and Northern Ireland) concerning abuse of a child.

The decision on the suitability of an applicant is a matter for Triathlon Ireland. The NVB and ANI are not involved in such decisions, however they may supply additional information.

Convictions which may not be considered relevant for specific roles, for example traffic offences for a coach who will not be driving as part of their role, will not require the safeguarding committee to convene and a decision may be made by the National Safeguarding Officer.

### **Informing the Applicant**

Communication will be sent to the applicant via email with information regarding the outcome. If the Safeguarding Committee has decided to refuse Garda Vetting/Access NI and thereby exclude the applicant from taking a relevant role/regulated activity with juniors in TI or exclude them from the sport of Triathlon then the applicant will be asked to confirm that they understand and that they accept that the Club Children's Officer will be informed of the decision.

### **Informing the Club**

If an applicant who is a club member has been risk assessed on the information returned and refused permission to proceed with the recruitment process then the club Children's Officer only, will be informed of the decision. The information provided will depend on the jurisdiction and reason for the refusal. Only necessary information will be shared.

### **Disputes**

Both the NVB and Access NI have mechanisms for disputes regarding disclosures. The applicant cannot begin a role while a dispute is pending. See links below:

[NVB disputes](#)

[Access NI disputes](#)

#### **TI Disputes**

Any disputes regarding the decision made by TI about the suitability of an applicant for a role can be raised by written submission to TI within 2 weeks of the decision. The appeal will be dealt with by a panel who were not involved in the original decision. The panel will be given the information from the original case only along with the appeal and anonymity of the applicant will be maintained.

### **Fees**

There is no monetary charge for Garda vetting or for voluntary coaches applying for an enhanced Access NI check. There is a charge of £42 for paid coaches to complete an Access NI enhanced check. This charge is paid by TI. Technical Officials and Photographers based in Northern Ireland must cover the fee of £16 for a Basic Access NI check which can then be claimed back in expenses.

### **Record keeping and storage**

Original Garda Vetting NVB1 forms must be stored for 6 months. Following this the original form will be destroyed and the forms will be stored in digital form. Forms are stored in a locked cupboard and subsequently in a secure online drive. Online forms and disclosure certs as well as the proof of identity and proof of address are stored for the duration of the validity of vetting or as long as the individual remains in role whichever is longer. If TI is informed that the person is no longer in their role, the form and disclosure cert will be deleted 12 months later.

Access NI application forms are not stored in original form or digital format. The name of the applicant, club, validator name and date of disclosure return are stored on a secure database. This information is destroyed at the end of the validity period of the application - 3 years.

If an Access NI disclosure certificate is shared with TI it is stored only for the duration of the deliberation by the Safeguarding committee.

All data is kept in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation, 2018 and the ANI code of practice. All relevant information is kept in a secure location. The two TI LP's are the only key holders for the secure cabinet and the database is secure and can be accessed only by the two TI LP's.

Where an applicant has been deemed ineligible for the role applied for or where an applicant has withdrawn their request for vetting there will be no vetting record.

## Sharing information

TI will only release disclosure information concerning the suitability of an individual to a person who needs to know in order to protect young people and where there is a specific purpose in doing so. If an applicant withdraws either their application for a position or from their position, information concerning their suitability for working with children will not be released without first consulting the applicant.

The TI National Children's Officer maintains a database. Club Children's Officers may request a list of those in their clubs who are Garda Vetted/completed Access NI and when their Vetting or Access NI expires only. There is no information regarding items returned on a disclosure stored on this database.

## Key Legislation

Legislation and information relating to Republic of Ireland The National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 to 2016 together with the Criminal Justice (Spent Convictions and Certain Disclosures) Act 2016 Part 3 provides the legal framework for persons working in relevant work or activity to undergo a vetting check prior to working with young people.

Legislation and Information relating to Northern Ireland  
Part V of the Police Act 1997 delivers the legislation that makes it compulsory to check individuals working in a regulated activity with children and/or vulnerable persons with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (Now part of the Disclosure and Barring Service).

[Please click here for links and further information about relevant legislation.](#)

## Appendices

Appendix 1:

Forms:

- [Garda Vetting Form](#)
- [Parental Consent Form](#)
- [Access NI Form](#)
- [Vetting instructions](#)

Appendix 2:

Relevant Legislation

- [Civil Service Commissioners Act 1956](#)
- [Child Care Act 1991](#)
- [Children First Act 2015](#)
- [Data Protection Act 1988/2003](#)
- [Children's Act 2001](#)
- [General Data Protection Regulation, 2018.](#)

- [National Vetting Bureau \(Children and Vulnerable Persons\) Act 2012 to 2016](#)
- [Criminal Justice \(Spent Convictions and Certain Disclosures\) Act 2016 Part 3](#)
- [Criminal Law \(Sexual Offences\) Act 2006](#)
- [The Criminal Justice \(Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons\) Act, 2012.](#)
- [The Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998](#)

#### Relevant legislation

- [Access NI Code of Practice.](#)
- [Part V of the Police Act 1997.](#) Part V of the Police Act 1997 delivers the legislation that makes it compulsory to check individuals working in a regulated activity with children and/or vulnerable persons with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (now part of the Disclosure and Barring Service).
- [Rehabilitation of Offenders \(Exceptions\)\(Northern Ireland\) Order 1979 \(as amended 2014\)](#)
- [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups \(NI\) Order 2007](#)
- [Protection of Freedoms Act 2012](#)

#### Appendix 3:

#### How to apply for vetting

#### **Garda Vetting:**

1. Applicant completes the [NVB1 form](#).
2. Appointed validator completes page two of the form. All boxes must be ticked 'yes'. The Identification (ID) check must ensure that address and ID documents match the form, are acceptable and the form is complete. This must be completed in person.
3. ID and address Document and NVB1 form are photographed and emailed directly to [safeguarding@triathlonireland.com](mailto:safeguarding@triathlonireland.com) as soon as they are signed off. Only documents listed on the document schedule are acceptable.
4. Original form is posted to the TI office marked confidential and for the attention of TI Liaison Person. Sport Ireland Unit 3 HQ2, Sports Ireland Campus, Snugborough Road, Dublin, D15 W8YD.
5. Once received an application is set up on the National Vetting Bureau online portal.
6. Applicants will receive an email from the National Vetting Bureau inviting them to complete the online vetting process.
7. TI Liaison Person reviews and submits the online application to the National Vetting Bureau.
8. A disclosure is made available to TI through the online system which may have information regarding convictions and/or Garda intelligence (specified information) or may be a NIL disclosure.
9. TI Liaison Person contacts the applicant regarding their disclosure.

#### **Garda Vetting for applicants residing outside the island of Ireland at the time of the application.**

1. Hold an initial video meeting with the applicant, where the applicant will show their proof of identity and address documents.

2. Scan and email a completed [NVB1 form](#), along with selected proof of identity and address documents from the accepted list (See identity document schedule, documents must be from their country of residency).
  - a. These scanned copies can be used to commence the vetting process.
  - b. The address provided by the applicant must be their current residential address from the country they reside in and not their address where they will reside in Ireland.
3. Prior to commencement of relevant work/activity or on the first day of commencement, the applicant must present in person:
  - a. The original NVB1 form
  - b. All original identification documents that were previously scanned and submitted to commence the vetting process and the original NVB1 form.

At this point the validation section on the NVB1 form must be completed by a representative of the organisation

#### **Access NI Enhanced Check:**

1. Applicant completes the [Access NI ID Validation form](#). This form has a PIN specific to TI and the NI Sports Forum.
2. Applicant completes the [self declaration form](#).
3. Applicant completes [online application including ID check](#) which includes [setting up an NI Direct account](#).
4. Form emailed to [safeguarding@triathlonireland.com](mailto:safeguarding@triathlonireland.com).
5. TI Designated Liaison Person checks and signs the ID confirmation form.
6. Access NI ID Validation ID confirmation form is sent to the Authorised Signatory in the NI Sport Forum (NISF).
7. NISF Authorised signatory submits the applicants' online application.
8. NISF Authorised signatory contacts TI when the disclosure process is completed and confirms whether on the electronic return it is NIL result or contains relevant information/convictions.

#### **Access NI Basic Check:**

1. [Set up an NI Direct account](#).
2. Apply for a basic check through the [NI direct website](#) including ID check.
3. Applicant completes the [self declaration form](#).
4. Make a payment of £16 for the check.
5. Send disclosure certificate to [safeguarding@triathlonireland.com](mailto:safeguarding@triathlonireland.com)
6. Technical Officials and Event Safeguarding leads can upload the expense to Expensein

**\*Validators** are people who have been appointed by Triathlon Ireland and have completed training in how to complete the identification check and form sign off. The following people are verifiers.

Club Children's Officers

Club Designated Liaison Persons

Where a club does not have a club Children's Officer or Designated Liaison Person you can go to one of the following, in order of preference

Triathlon Ireland Staff

Triathlon Ireland Coach Developer

Triathlon Ireland Technical Officials

Club Chairperson

Club Secretary

If you are unsure if there is someone in your club or region who can verify your form please contact [safeguarding@triathlonireland.com](mailto:safeguarding@triathlonireland.com) to request information.

#### Appendix 4: Accepted Documents

##### Accepted Documents for Garda Vetting:

Category	Document Type
	<b><u>Photo Identification</u></b>
	Passport from country of citizenship
	Irish/EU/UK Driving Licence or Learner Permit
	Irish Certificate of Naturalisation
	National Identity Card (EU/EEA/Swiss Citizens)
	<b><u>Proof of Address</u></b>
<b>Credit Institutions</b>	Bank Statement from a recognised bank (not private money lenders or Revolut)
	Building Society Statement
	Credit Union Statement
	Credit Union Passbook
<b>Utility Providers</b>	Utility Bill (the only utility bills accepted are: gas, electricity, television, broadband, waste & TV licence)
<b>Government Bodies</b>	Correspondence from government departments
<b>Local Authorities</b>	Letter from Local Council confirming tenancy

##### Accepted Documents for Access NI