



An outline of Garda Vetting as administered by the GAA

The Gaelic Athletic Association (Cumann Lúthchleas Gael) is pleased to confirm the implementation of Garda Vetting in the Association as we promote best practice in the recruitment and selection of persons to work with children in the GAA.

Garda Vetting

Garda Vetting is but one part of the overall recommended GAA recruitment and selection procedures for those who work on our behalf in areas of responsibility with children, young people and vulnerable adults, or who may at a later stage seek to work in such areas of responsibility. Garda vetting, which is the pre-checking of an applicant's background for criminal convictions or prosecutions is recommended by the Irish Sports Council, by Sports NI in Northern Ireland and as part of Children First - the National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children. Vetting and Police checks have been utilised by many Governmental agencies and by sports and community based organisations for a number of years

The GAA and Vetting

It is no longer possible or permissible for an individual to have a vetting application processed for themselves. Vetting applications will only be accepted from organisations that have been recognised by the Garda Central Vetting Unit (GCVU) to fulfill such functions. The GAA is recognised by the GCVU to carry out vetting on behalf of our members and a number of Authorised Signatories have been selected by the GAA to facilitate this role.

The GAA has agreed to the implementation of vetting for **all** persons who on behalf of the Association work in any capacity with children and young people in the delivery of our games or activities. In effect this means that any person working on behalf of the Association or on behalf of any of our clubs with people under the age of 18 years of age will be required to be vetted.

How can you avail of vetting in the GAA?

- Step 1:** A vetting applicant, i.e. an under age coach, mentor, manager etc. will receive a GAA Vetting Application Form from the Club's Children's Officer or from a nominated person in their club. This form must be completed in full by the applicant and collected locally (in the club) or forwarded directly to a nominated person who will collate these forms at County level. Forms should be collected in a sealed envelope and not opened by club personnel.
- Step 2:** Forms are forwarded to the County Board nominated Vetting Co Ordinator who will only check forms for accuracy and will return incorrectly completed forms to applicants. The County Board Vetting Co ordinator will also record the name and address of each applicant



on a 'batch form' and send this electronically to the National Children's Officer in Croke Park. A guide to completing the vetting form is attached to each form. (In some instances the role of County Vetting Co Ordinator may be fulfilled by a Provincial Co Ordinator).

Step 3: All forms are then sent by secure post to the National Children's Officer, GAA, Croke Park, Dublin 3. All forms must be sent to the National Children's Officer (NCO) in Croke Park for processing and not to An Garda Síochána.

The NCO will then process all correctly completed forms with the GCVU. Processed forms will on their return contain a statement that there are no convictions recorded against the individual in the Republic of Ireland or elsewhere, or a statement of all convictions and/or prosecutions, successful or not, pending or completed, in the State or elsewhere as the case may be.

Step 4: Following the processing of the vetting form it is the GAA National Children's Officer who will inform each applicant individually by letter if their application is or is not being recommended for acceptance.

In most instances it is convictions and/or prosecutions of a most serious nature and particularly against children/minors that MAY deem a person unsuitable to work with children in the GAA.

Please note that a stated conviction or unsuccessful prosecution MAY have NO bearing whatsoever on the acceptance of an individual in the Association and it is recommend that all cases be treated individually and confidentially and that they be assessed as per the requirements of the post/role and the work that it entails.

Step 5: If the recommendation is positive the applicant will receive a 'GAA Vetting Acceptance Letter' letter confirming this and requesting them to furnish their club with the letter of acceptance.

Step 6: If the recommendation is negative and if the applicant is not being recommended for acceptance a letter informing them of this decision will be sent to them by the GAA National Children's Officer. The applicant will be afforded an opportunity to appeal this decision within 14 days and the process of appeal will be outlined to the applicant. A specially appointed Appeals Group will hear this appeal and will issue their findings directly to the applicant.



Step 7: If the Appeals Committee recommends acceptance of the vetting application Step 5 comes into operation.

Step 8: If the Appeals Committee upholds the recommendation of rejection the applicant and their club will be duly informed. Over a period of time all persons who on behalf of the GAA work in any capacity with children/young people and vulnerable adults will have furnished their club with a Garda Vetting letter of acceptance. The absence of such a letter will deem a person ineligible to work in such a capacity.

The GAA central data base will retain the vetting application details. Clubs will be issued with a list of persons who receive the Garda Vetting 'letter of acceptance' from the National Children's Officer.

Gearóid Ó Maoilmhichíl
National Children's Officer GAA