



DBS checks & being arrested on protests

The disclosure and barring service (DBS) is primarily used by employers to check whether potential employees have criminal convictions. Some jobs can request that you have a DBS check, mainly those working with children and vulnerable adults.

We are often asked whether arrests, charges and convictions related to protest activities will show up on a DBS check and whether this will affect people's employment prospects.

In short: Expect convictions and cautions to show up on your DBS check. Arrests or charges may show up on Enhanced DBS checks, at the police's discretion. Your potential employer may ask you to explain what shows up, but having convictions etc doesn't automatically mean you can't get the job and won't necessarily count against you.

- DBS checks are only allowed for some roles, largely those working with children, in healthcare or personal care, or in some professions. Some jobs are eligible for Standard DBS, and some are eligible for Enhanced DBS, including most jobs working directly with children. You can check whether a job is eligible for a DBS check at this [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) site.
- What will show up on a Standard/Enhanced DBS: spent and unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings that are held on the Police National Computer.
- Additional for an Enhanced DBS: anything that the Chief Officer of a police force thinks is relevant. This can include arrests. We find it unlikely that anything related to protest activity would show up here, but it could include arrests that don't result in conviction. If you have to go through an enhanced DBS check and information related to protest activity is included, the [Network for Police Monitoring](#) would be interested to know as this could be a method of intimidating people out of protest.
- There is something called "filtering" where some convictions don't show up after 11 years have passed (5 ½ years for convictions imposed when you were aged under 18), but only if you have been convicted of a single offence and got a non-custodial sentence, and the offence is not included on the list of offences that will never be filtered.

Will an arrest that doesn't lead to a charge show up on a DBS check?

It may show up on an Enhanced DBS check, at the discretion of the Chief Officer of the relevant police force.

If I am arrested, tried and acquitted, will this show up on a DBS check?

It may show up on an Enhanced DBS check, at the discretion of the Chief Officer of the relevant police force.