



Home Office

**Jess Phillips MP**  
**Minister for Safeguarding and**  
**Violence Against Women and Girls**

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Rt Hon Dame Karen Bradley DBE MP  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

26 August 2025

Dear Dame Karen,

The Disclosure and Barring Service's (DBS) power to charge fees for applications certificates and its Update Service is set in the Police Act 1997. The DBS fees are prescribed by regulations made by the Secretary of State.

As part of the DBS fee review in 2024, Home Office legal advisers identified issues with the Statutory Instruments for fees charged in the Crown Dependencies for the DBS' Update Service and Basic certificates, namely that the DBS did not have the powers to charge a fee for the Update Service in the Crown Dependencies or for Basic certificates in the Isle of Man and Guernsey.

Fees for the Update Service were introduced in 2013, and for Basic certificates in 2018. For the Update service, a total of 16,056 fees have been paid across the Crown Dependencies since 2013. For Basic certificates, a total of 15,913 fees have been paid across the Isle of Man and Guernsey since 2018.

DBS stopped charging for those new Update Service subscriptions and new Basic Applications for which no statutory provision to charge was in place, on the 1 August 2024, aligning DBS to the legislative requirement at the time. DBS resumed charges once the required Statutory Instruments were in place (from 2 December 2024). DBS has since considered a number of options as to how best to make retrospective refunds to customers impacted by this change, taking account of legal requirements.

As part of this work, we made a commitment to update Parliament once DBS had decided how to proceed. Regrettably, this has taken longer than anticipated, but I can confirm that the DBS will provide a refund of fees to eligible customers through a web-based application. This will be available on the DBS website and will remain open for six years. This approach is considered the most proportionate and demonstrates DBS's commitment to providing customers with access to a refund of fees in the most efficient manner.

I will arrange for a copy of this letter to be deposited in the Libraries of both Houses.

Yours sincerely,

**Jess Phillips MP**  
**Minister for Safeguarding and Violence Against Women and Girls**