

## **Gemma**

Failure to disclose her criminal record had resulted in Gemma losing her most recent job. Understandably she was very upset about this and her confidence had taken a knock.

Her employer had discovered that Gemma, who normally worked in health and social care, had not disclosed her criminal record when a CRB check had been applied for.

Questioning by the Sova case officer revealed that the offence in question was a police caution for a relatively minor offence that she had committed when she was a teenager.

On paper, Gemma had a criminal conviction for a financial offence and it was easy to see how some employers might be concerned about this. However, the reality was that she had been very naive in doing a favour for a very close friend and this had backfired.

Gemma had taken the decision not to disclose her offence as she felt she would be pre judged but the case officer explained that in the care sector there was bound to be a CRB check and her offence would be discovered.

By being open at the outset she would be better able to control how the information was revealed. Also, if she disclosed her conviction at the application stage, she would be interviewed only by those employers who were willing to consider someone with a record like hers.

Together with Sova, Gemma wrote a disclosure letter to be included in all job applications. The letter put her offence into context explaining how she had been pressurised into helping a friend as a teenager but had had no further contact with the police and was now a reliable and conscientious person.

Gemma was soon invited to interview and, after disclosing her conviction in her job application, she went to the interview with more confidence knowing her prospective employers were willing to give someone with her criminal record a chance. Her offence was addressed by the panel but she had talked through the issues with Sova and was able to speak with more assurance on the matter.

Gemma has now secured a job in the care sector.

*The client's name has been changed to maintain confidentiality.*