

Ringette PEI Policy on Staff and Volunteer Screening

Preamble

1. Screening of staff and volunteers is an important part of providing a safe environment and has become a common practice among organizations in the non-profit sector that provide programs and services to youth in the community.
2. Ringette PEI (RPEI) is responsible, at law, to do everything reasonable to provide a safe and secure environment for participants in its programs. RPEI takes very seriously, and is committed to, fulfilling the duty of care it owes to its members.
3. This policy is one of several policy tools that RPEI uses to fulfill this legal responsibility to provide a safe environment and to protect its members from harm.
4. RPEI is aiming to maintain and improve the standard of care that is provided to the athletes and its members. The standard of care refers to the degree or level of service, attention, care, and protection that one person owes another according to the law, usually the law of negligence.
5. By encompassing the RPEI screening process, we are able to apply a risk management strategy. This will allow for a conformable and safe environment for the athletes.
6. Educating participants, coaches, managers, leaders, and volunteers about abuse and harassment is very important. There is a responsibility by an organization to appropriately screen any person who will have access to vulnerable people. This responsibility is both moral and legal: it is not only the right thing to do but is legislated under the “Duty of Care” concept.

What Is Screening?

1. Volunteer Canada has determined that screening is an ongoing 10 step process designed to identify any person (volunteer or staff) who may harm children or vulnerable adults. (www.volunteer.ca), see Appendix A.
2. Due to the positions of trust that are inherent in the provision of active, high quality sport activities, volunteers and employees shall be required to undergo a screening process which will be comprised of a variety of measures such as those listed.

DEFINITIONS

1. **Volunteer:** A person who serves in a community primarily because they choose to do so. A volunteer is an individual who chooses to undertake a service or activity; someone who is not coerced or compelled to do this activity, does this activity in service to an individual or an organization, or to assist the community-at-large and who does not receive a salary or wage for this service or activity. This encompasses both formal and informal volunteering.
 - a. **Formal Volunteer:** An individual that works with a non-profit organization on a commitment basis, i.e. coaches and assistant coaches.
 - b. **Informal Volunteer:** An individual or group of individuals that participate with a non-profit organization, i.e. parents.
2. **Risk Management:** is the process of measuring, or assessing, risk and developing strategies to manage it.
3. **Duty of Care:** the concept of the duty of care identifies the relationship that exists between two persons (i.e. two individuals, an individual and an organization) and establishes the obligation that one owes the other, in particular the obligation to exercise reasonable care with respect to the interest of the other, including protection from harm. The duty of care arises from the common law, as well as municipal, provincial, federal and international statutes.
4. **Criminal Record Check (CRC):** the process of securing information from the police about individuals, as well as to describe the form or report in which information is provided. It may include a check of national, local and/or regional police records. At the end of the process, a report is issued. The report may simply identify whether or not someone has a criminal record, or it may provide details of actual offences. Just as the process varies among police agencies, so too do the report forms.
5. **Vulnerable Record Check (VRC):** the Records Check for Service with the Vulnerable Sector is a search of national and local police databases. The possible existence of all police contacts for the previous five years, criminal convictions and outstanding charges will be considered for release. This search is intended for individuals seeking employment and/or a volunteer position with children or vulnerable person(s).
6. **Position of Trust:** this identifies a setting in which someone is placed in a position of authority of another person in an ongoing relationship. A position of trust implies that someone has some degree of power over another, that the relationship is unequal. The question of whether a position of trust exists depends on the relationship and on the degree of authority, reliance and dependence on it, and not on the question of payment or salary.

7. **Standard of Care:** this refers to the degree or level of service, attention, care and protection that one person owes another according to the law, usually the law of negligence. The required standard varies according to the circumstances of each situation, and determining the appropriate standard is often not a simple matter.
8. **Vulnerable Person:** this term denotes individuals who have difficulty protecting themselves and are therefore at greater risk of harm. People may be vulnerable because of age, disability/handicap, or circumstances. Vulnerability may be temporary or a permanent condition.

FIELD OF APPLICATION

1. This policy applies to all coaches, volunteers, participants, managers, and leaders who, by definition, are members of Ringette PEI. This policy will be administered by Ringette PEI for RPEI teams and events and by Member Clubs (full and non-full) for their teams and events.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. Not all positions affiliated with RPEI or its Member Clubs will be required to undergo the screening, as not all positions pose a risk of harm to RPEI or its members. RPEI is committed to a standard process of screening designated positions to ensure a safe environment.
2. Persons who will be subject to screening are only those persons occupying “Positions of Trust” that involve unsupervised contact with minors from among the following positions:
 - a. All individuals in paid staff positions
 - b. All persons affiliated with provincial and club teams, whether paid or volunteer;
 - c. Any staff person, board member or volunteer officially appointed to accompany a RPEI or Member Club team to an event or competition whether as a coach, manager, chaperone, driver or official in another role.
3. Positions of Trust, as defined by this policy are, as a minimum, coaches, bench staff, team managers or any other individual with **unsupervised** access to or authority over minors at any time. Member clubs must meet this standard as a minimum. Other positions may be deemed Positions of Trust by Ringette PEI for RPEI teams and event and by Member Clubs (full and non-full) for their teams and events (see Appendix D).
4. It is the RPEI policy that:
 - a. All Positions of Trust will have a clear set of guidelines about appropriate behavior and conduct.
 - b. The annual recruitment process for all Positions of Trust **must** require the following to be completed prior to the commencement of the team activities for each season or period:
 - i. Requiring all candidates to complete an application form for the position (see Appendix B) that includes an acknowledgement of the applicable guidelines about appropriate behaviour and conduct noted above ; and

- ii. For coaches that have not in the previous three years coached a RPEI or Member Club team, checking a minimum of one reference which will be specific to working with children or youth (See Appendix C).
And prior to November 15 each year:
 - iii. Ensuring there is a valid Criminal Record Check (CRC) and Vulnerable Record Check (VRC) in place or proof of application for a CRC and VRC. A CRC and VRC is considered valid if it has been received not more than three years prior to the applicable team season or period. Once a CRC and VRC check has been processed by the appropriate authority it should be submitted without delay to RPEI or the Member Club;
- And, where, determined appropriate by RPEI or its Full Member Clubs, involve
- iv. Interviewing the candidate for the position;
5. RPEI will not knowingly fill a Position of Trust or allow a Position of Trust to remain filled with a person who has a conviction for a 'relevant offence' as defined in this policy.
 6. If an individual's CRC or VRC reveals a relevant offence, the individual is ineligible for the position.
 7. If the individual is found to be ineligible, the individual may request a hearing by the RPEI Discipline Committee. The decisions of the Discipline Committee are final and binding.
 8. Should an individual in a Position of Trust be charged with a relevant offence as defined in this policy, that individual will be suspended from the position by RPEI, pending the resolution of the charge.
 9. Should an individual in a Position of Trust receive a conviction for a relevant offence, he or she will face immediate expulsion from RPEI. An individual so expelled may be reinstated to membership upon written application to the RPEI Board of Directors, whose decision on the request for reinstatement will be final and binding.
 10. Should an individual receive a conviction for a relevant offense, be expelled from RPEI, and have his or her reinstatement to membership denied by the RPEI Board of Directors in accordance with paragraph (9), the individual may reapply in writing to the RPEI Board of Directors for reinstatement to membership after a period of five years from the decision of the RPEI Board of Directors to deny the application for reinstatement.
 11. RPEI has the final right of acceptance or refusal of any membership.

Relevant Offences

1. For the purposes of this policy, a 'relevant offence' is any of the following offences:
 - a. Any crime of violence including but not limited to, all forms of assault; or
 - b. Any criminal offence involving a minor or minors.
 - c. Any criminal offence involving the possession, distribution, or sale of any child-related pornography;
 - d. Any sexual offence involving a minor or minors;

- e. An order(s) made in the interest of safety under the criminal code which would restrict the applicant's access to, weapons, firearms, explosives or other probations.
- f. Any contact, access or behavior restriction(s) with any person
- g. Any order(s) made under the child protection legislation which is intended to restrict the applicant/members access to children.

Persons may be exempt from having to provide a criminal record check **if your current employment requires CRC and VRC screenings and these are current within the period defined by this policy. You will need to provide your employer information and your supervisor's contact information to allow confirmation of existing CRC and VRC screening.**

Screening Function

1. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of the Coaching Director and Executive Director for RPEI teams and events and the identified responsible person for Member Clubs (full and non-full member) for all other teams and events. RPEI will maintain a central list of all individuals who have successfully completed the Screening Process, including monitoring the three year period of validity for CRC and VRCs. Member Clubs must provide to the Executive Director of RPEI confirmation that the information defined in the Policy Statement 4(b) above has been received for each individual occupying a Position of Trust within two weeks after the applicable deadlines noted in that policy statement.
2. The RPEI Coaching Director, Executive Director and responsible person(s) at Member Clubs should consult, as necessary, with persons with experience in the law enforcement field (police, corrections, immigration, security or customs) or other independent experts in the justice field.

Records

1. Written records obtained in the course of implementing this Policy must be maintained in a confidential manner conforming to the *PEI Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and will not be disclosed to others except as required by law, or for use in a legal or disciplinary proceeding.
2. If a person has been screened and approved by a member club, RPEI will confirm such approval and not require a second screening for Positions of Trust with RPEI teams and events.

Responsibilities of Member Clubs

1. RPEI Member Clubs (full and non-full member) are responsible for complying with this Policy at a minimum and may implement more stringent requirements.

Review and Approval

1. This policy was approved by RPEI on September 19, 2011. This policy is not a static document: it will be reviewed by RPEI on an annual basis.

Appendix A

Screening: Volunteer Canada's Safe Steps screening program

The Safe Steps are much like a menu - you need only select those steps that apply specifically to positions within your organization. The key to a successful screening program is to use the steps in a way that best suits a specific position within your organization. The 10 Safe Steps are:

1. **Determine the risk** - Organizations can control the risk in their programs. Examining the potential for danger in programs and services may lead to preventing or eliminating the risk altogether.
2. **Write a clear position description** - Careful position descriptions send the message that an organization is serious about screening. Responsibilities and expectations can be clearly set out, right down to the position's dos and don'ts. A clear position description indicates the screening requirements. When a volunteer changes positions, the screening procedures may change as well.
3. **Establish a formal recruitment process** - Whether an agency posts notices for volunteer positions or sends home flyers, they must indicate that screening is part of the application process.
4. **Use an application form** - The application form provides needed contact information. If the volunteer position requires other screening measures (medical exam, driver's record, police records check), the application form will ask for permission to do so.
5. **Conduct interviews** - The interview provides not only an opportunity to talk to the potential volunteer about their background, skills, interests, and availability, but also to explore any doubts about the suitability of the candidate. In other words, the interview will help determine the "right fit".
6. **Follow up on references** - By identifying the level of trust required in the position and asking specific questions, the applicant's suitability may be easier to determine. People often do not expect that their references will be checked. Do not assume that applicants only supply the names of people who will speak well of them.
7. **Request a Police Records Check** - A Police Records Check (PRC) is just one step in a 10-step screening process. PRCs signal — in a very public way — that the organization is concerned about the safety of its participants.
8. **Conduct orientation and training sessions** - Screening does not end once the volunteer is in place. Orientation and training sessions offer an opportunity to observe volunteers in a different setting. These sessions also allow organizations to inform volunteers about policies and procedures. Probation periods give both the organization and the volunteer time to learn more about each other.
9. **Supervise and evaluate** - The identified level of risk associated with a volunteer position will determine the necessary degree of supervision and evaluation. If the risk is great, it follows that the volunteer will be under close supervision. Frequent feedback in the first year is particularly important. Evaluations must be based on position descriptions.
10. **Follow up with program participants** - Regular contact with participants and family members can act as an effective deterrent to someone who might otherwise do harm. Volunteers should be made aware of any follow-up activities that may occur. These could include spot checks for volunteers in high-risk positions.

Appendix B

Sample

Coaching & Manager Application – 2010/2011 Season

Name: _____

Division: ☐ U-8 ☐ U-10 ☐ U-12 ☐ U-14

☐ U-16/19 ☐ Open

Position Requested: ☐ Coach ☐ Asst Coach ☐ Manager

Certifications:

Certification	✓	Date Received
CSI (if applicable)		
Intro to Comp (trained)		
Intro to Comp (certified)		
Level I		
Level II		
Level III		
Other (specify)		

Experience: (indicate number of years and positions held, include ringette and other sports, house league and provincial team experience; attach resume if desired)

Position	Dates
1	
2	
3	

Character References: (attach letters if preferred)

Name	Phone Number
1	
2	

Criminal and Vulnerable Record Checks: (must be attached)

Date:

By signing below I acknowledge that I have read and understood the Charlottetown Ringette Association ***Coaches Code of Conduct***, the related ***Policy on Preventing Bullying, Harassment & Abuse*** and the ***Coaches Code of Ethics*** available on the Charlottetown Ringette Association website.

Signature

Date

Appendix C

Sample Reference Check Interview.

Interviewed by:	Date:
Name of reference:	Phone Number:
(Describe position applied for and why reference is being sought)	
Hello, my name is (your name) and I am calling on behalf of RPEI. (Name of applicant) has applied to be a volunteer with us as a coach. Your name has been provided as a reference. Do you have a few minutes to answer some questions now?	
1. How long have you known (name of applicant)?	
2. What is your relationship to (name of applicant)?	
3. It is important that our volunteers are reliable. Tell me about your experiences with (name of applicant) in regard to reliability.	
4. What are (name of applicant's) strengths and weaknesses in regard to working with (indicate specific participant group: age, gender, playing level etc.)	
5. How would you feel about having (name of applicant) work on a one-to-one basis with your (child)?	
6. It is important to us that (name of organization)'s volunteers are comfortable with being (supervised or are able to work independently with little or no supervision). What is your experience with (name of applicant's) ability to accept (being supervised or working independently)?	
7. This volunteer position requires handling many tasks at once and can be stressful at times. How does (name of applicant) deal with stressful situations?	
8. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about (name of applicant)?	
9. Is there any reason you know of why (name of applicant) would not be able to perform the duties necessary for this volunteer position?	

Appendix D

Sample Risk Assessment Checklist for Volunteer Positions

Position description:

In this position, the volunteer:

✓ PRC & VRC
required

Will always be supervised by at least two qualified and unrelated staff members or volunteers		no
May be involved with Minors/Vulnerable Persons but ALWAYS with parents/guardians present		no
May be involved with Minors/Vulnerable Persons without parents/guardians but only in large gatherings		no
May be involved with Minors/Vulnerable Persons without parents/guardians being present (not applicable when parents/guardians CHOOSE not to be present, ex. not staying to watch practice, etc.)		yes
May be involved with Minors/Vulnerable Persons in small groups or potentially vulnerable situations		yes
May be involved in overnight duty with Minors/Vulnerable Persons		yes
May be travelling alone with Minors/Vulnerable Persons (not applicable when travel is arranged by parents/guardians)		yes
May be alone with Minors/Vulnerable Persons in dressing rooms		yes
May be responsible for administering first-aid		yes

(Note: qualified staff members are those that have completed coaching certification and have completed the screening process)

Assessment completed by:

Assessment completed on: