



# Volunteer Screening Policy

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## **Purpose**

North West Little League accepts its responsibility to children, young adults, parents and volunteers involved in its programs and is committed to ensuring the safety of all its participants. This policy outlines the procedures for screening and evaluating volunteers within the league.

## **Definitions**

### 1) Volunteers

A volunteer is an individual:

- Who chooses to undertake a service or activity, someone who is not coerced or compelled to do this activity;
- Who does this activity in service to an individual or an organization, or to assist the community-at-large;
- Who does not receive a salary or wage for this service or activity;

While this policy focuses on volunteer screening, the same principles apply to paid employees, students and trainers.

### 2) Participants

Many different words are used to name people who participate in programs or receive services from recreation and sport organizations. The word participant is used throughout the policy as the generic term and represents players, athletes, parents, users, etc.

### 3) Duty of Care

Duty of Care is a legal principle that identifies the obligations of individuals and organizations to take reasonable measures to care for and protect their participants. It is important to understand that Canadian courts will uphold organizations' responsibilities to screen carefully. This is part of their "Duty of Care".

### 4) Vulnerable Person

One who has difficulty protecting himself or herself from harm temporarily or permanently and is at risk because of age, disability or handicap. Children and youth are considered vulnerable. The standard of care is higher when running programs for vulnerable participants.



## 5) Position of Trust

- a) Situations in which someone has a significant degree of:
  - i) Authority or decision-making power over another;
  - ii) Unsupervised access to another person and to his/her property.
- b) Situations where the success of the service depends on the development of a close, personal relationship between the individual as in mentoring or friendly visiting programs.

Where volunteers are in a position of trust, there is more opportunity for abuse and more expectation that the organization will do what it can to reduce the risk of this happening.

## **Policy**

Not all participants associated with North West Little League will be required to undergo screening with a Police Information Check (PIC) with Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC) and/or a volunteer application, as not all positions pose a risk of harm to North West Little League. This policy applies to all North West Little League elected Directors, Coaches, Managers, Umpires and any other volunteer or employee of North West Little League whom at any time could be expected in the performance of their duties to:

- Be entrusted with financial duties;
- Be responsible for book keeping or bank account(s) or any other monetary duties;
- Be with any vulnerable person.

- 1) North West Little League follows the Official Regulations established by Little League Canada and Little League International as outlined in the most current Rule Book. As such, participants named in this policy must complete and submit a *Little League Official Volunteer Application* to the North West Little League Screening Officer.
- 2) North West Little League requires a Police Information Check (PIC) including Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC) for all adult participants who interact with a vulnerable person, or who are placed in a position of trust (coach, assistant coach, umpire, applicable board members). A Police Information Check with Vulnerable Sector Check must be applied for, or completed prior to, the start of each season. North West Little League does not allow any person to participate in any manner whose criminal record check reveals a conviction, guilty plea, no contest plea, or admission to any crime involving or against a minor or minors. NWLL will accept the PIC with VSC for a period of three years and will accept PIC with VSC done on behalf of other agencies.
- 3) Failure to participate in the screening process as outlined in this policy will result in the individual being ineligible for any roles in a position of trust.
- 4) If a person in a position of trust subsequently receives a conviction for, or is found guilty of, a relevant offense, he or she must report this circumstance immediately to North West Little League.



- 5) If a person provided falsified or misleading information, that person will immediately be removed from his or her position.

## **Screening Officer**

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of North West Little League's Screening Officer. The Screening Officer role would be filled by a participant designated appropriate by the organization. The Screening Officer will carry out the duties in accordance with the terms of this Policy, independent of the Board of Directors.

The Screening Officer is responsible for receiving all the Police Information Checks (with VSC) and Volunteer Applications and, if appropriate, based on such reviews, making decisions on the appropriateness of participants filling roles in a position of trust. In carrying out his or her duties, the Screening Officer may consult with independent experts including lawyers, police officers, risk management consultants, volunteer screening specialists, or any other person.

## **Screening Tools**

In its screening process, North West Little League may use any combination of screening tools it determines necessary to screen participants. At a minimum, participants will submit a Police Information Check with Vulnerable Sector Check and Volunteer Application. Additional screening tools may include but are not limited to: interviews and reference checks.

## **Police Information Check with Vulnerable Sector Check**

In general, individuals with past Criminal Code convictions for certain offences will not be accepted for a position of trust with vulnerable participants. These offences include, but are not limited to, the following with exclusion timeframes listed:

- 1) Lifetime:
  - a) Any type of sexual assault;
  - b) Invitation to sexual touching;
  - c) Sexual interference, bestiality, or sexual exploitation;
  - d) Procuring sexual activity;
  - e) Indictable criminal offences for youth abuse;
  - f) Any Court Order forbidding the individual to have contact with children under the age of 14;
  - g) Any convictions related to child pornography.



2) Five (5) Years:

- a) Assault;
- b) Any Weapons offence;
- c) Conviction under any controlled drugs and substance act;
- d) Criminal Driving offences.

3) Until resolved through the judicial system

- a) Outstanding convictions or charges pending for any violent offence;
- b) Outstanding convictions or charges pending for criminal driving offences, including but not limited to impaired driving;
- c) Outstanding convictions or charges pending for sexual offences.

Participants may also be rejected as a result of other information gained during the police information check process or through the screening process as a whole, or as a consequence of other factors which are directly relevant to the requirements of the position, and to the ability of the participant to carry out his/her duties in an effective, safe manner. The participant has a right to know why he or she is being refused and may appeal to a committee of review in writing for a review of their application.

## **Risk Factors**

Screening is a way of reducing the risk of harm involved in doing certain things within the sports environment. The screening that is done for each position is based on the specific risks related to that position. Factors that increase risk include: young age of participants, minimal family presence, transporting participants, low or no on-site supervision, isolation, overnights, physical contact, close relationships, positions of trust, and lack of organizational policies.

While North West Little League cannot unduly discriminate against people, it has the right and the obligation to refuse potential volunteers based on the risks and requirements of each position.

## **Records**

Police Information Checks, Volunteer Applications, and any other written records of communication will be maintained by the Board of Directors in a confidential manner for the duration of the participants involvement, and for at least two years after the participant is no longer with the league. After this period of time, the records must be disposed of in a confidential manner.