



St. John Ambulance Council for Ontario

POLICY: Employee/Instructor/Volunteer Screening

EFFECTIVE DATE: Summer, 2003

PERTAINS TO: All Employees, Instructors and Volunteers

St. John Council for Ontario <Council>, like other organizations, has moral, ethical, and legal responsibilities to the people who use our programs and services; the people who provide those programs and services; and to the community at large. Through employee, instructor and volunteer screening we try to identify people who might represent a risk to those we serve, our own members and members of the community.

Our employees, instructors and volunteers are often placed in positions of significant trust with vulnerable people. The wide spectrum of employee/instructor/volunteer positions varies not only in nature but also in level of risk. Through screening, Council strives to provide safe, well-managed services to the community and to its employees, instructors and volunteers.

The following are typical positions of trust or authority:

- Situations in which someone has a significant degree of authority or decision-making power over another.
- Situations where someone has a significant degree of unsupervised access to another person, their property, or to the organization's property.
- Situations where the success of the program, service or activity depends on the development of a close, personal relationship between the individuals, as in supervision and mentoring.
- Situations in which the service being provided renders the client vulnerable, as in personal care services e.g. first aid and health care.

Council uses a variety of screening methods such as well-designed positions and position descriptions, careful recruitment, application forms, interviews, reference checks, specialized testing, police record checks, attestation, orientation sessions, training, probationary periods, close supervision, regular evaluation and monitoring, and the pairing of experienced members with new employees, instructors and volunteers.

POLICY

Effective Summer, 2003 all employees, instructors, and volunteers will be required to complete a screening process as a condition of their employment or association with Council.

The nature of the work in which an employee/instructor/volunteer will be engaged will determine which screening measures (e.g. reference checks, police record checks, attestation, etc.) will be required. Individuals who refuse to comply with Council's screening process will not be accepted as an employee/instructor/volunteer. The following criteria will be used to assess which screening measures will be used with each position:

- *Vulnerability of persons served*
- *Access to property*
- *Degree of isolation*
- *Degree of physical contact*
- *Degree of physical demands*
- *Degree of inherent risk*
- *Skills and knowledge required*
- *Degree of supervision*
- *Degree of trust*

Annex A outlines the specific screening measures for each employee/instructor/volunteer position. Evaluations will be conducted once every two years by the appropriate department. Completed evaluations will be retained in a confidential file at Council (Provincial Office).

This policy affects all Council employees, instructors and volunteers 18 years of age and older and all employees and volunteers age 16 (sixteen) and 17 (seventeen) years of age, signing their own membership application form and not residing with a parent or guardian.

This policy also affects all individuals age 18 (eighteen) years of age and older who are not members of Council, but who assist Council in positions of trust or authority.

POLICE RECORD CHECKS - Procedure

New employees, instructors and volunteers requiring a police records check will complete a Release of Information Authorization form from their local police service, and at the applicant's cost (if any), obtain from the police service, a summary of any information discovered as part of that check, or official documentation stating that no information was discovered. Current employees will not be required to obtain a police check, but will be required to provide attestation.

If the applicant receives official documentation from the police service stating that no information was discovered, this documentation should be forwarded complete and in its original form (no alterations, photocopies or faxes) in a sealed envelope marked "Confidential" to the appropriate department at the St. John Council for Ontario (Provincial Office). If the applicant receives a summary from the police service containing information,

the applicant should provide the summary complete and in its original form (no alterations, photocopies or faxes) in a sealed envelope marked "Confidential" to the appropriate department.

The applicant will forward the sealed envelope with the completed "Application Form" if applicable to the St. John Council for Ontario (Provincial Office) Human Resources Department for processing. Council (Provincial Office) will review the summary and determine the candidate's suitability for the position. Such a review will occur promptly, thoroughly, fairly and in confidence.

Council will notify the employee/volunteer when a check that requires further review is received. Once a determination as to the applicant's status has been made, their supervisor /manager will be notified.

Police record checks that indicate "No Record" will be retained in a confidential file at Council (Provincial Office).

The practices of certain police services may present difficulties obtaining information related to record checks. In these circumstances, it is the responsibility of the employee/volunteer to obtain a written original copy of the response he or she receives from the police. This response should be forwarded with applicable documentation to the St. John Council for Ontario (Provincial Office) to the applicable department.

The Council may request a Police Record Re-check at any time.

GENERAL

Council ensures the confidentiality of all screening information. In compliance with the Ontario Human Rights Code, only those individuals who need to know the results of screening information will have access to such information.

General information regarding employee/volunteer screening and police record checks can be obtained from Council's Human Resources Department Tel. 1-800-268-7581.