

Youth Instructor Screening Policy

1. Policy

Due to the positions of trust that are inherent in the provision of active, high quality sport activities, volunteers and paid contractors ("Youth Instructors") involved with children and young adults shall be required to undergo a screening process based on the duties assigned by the Club. The screening process will be comprised of a variety of measures and includes a Police Vulnerable Sector Check ("PVSC") for such Youth Instructors.

2. Scope

Screening is an ongoing process designed to identify any person, whether paid or unpaid who may harm children, youth or other vulnerable persons. Screening involves isolating the risks related to specific positions, and then establishing appropriate methods to reduce the risk. Screening takes place before someone starts as a Youth Instructor and continues throughout their involvement.

3. Definitions Related to Screening Youth Instructors

While this policy focuses on Youth Instructor screening, the same principles apply to volunteers, other contractors, interns, students on placement and trainers involved with vulnerable persons.

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, users, etc.

“Duty of Care” is a legal principal 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.

Vulnerable person is 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.

Position of trust

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

Where Youth Instructors 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

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, physical contact, close relationships, positions of trust, and lack of organizational policies.

While the Club through its selection process cannot unduly discriminate against people, Perth Tay Tennis Club has the right and the obligation to refuse potential Youth Instructors based on the risks and requirements of each position.

About Screening

Having a screening policy and a selection process implies a commitment to effective Youth Instructor management. Good human resource management takes time and resources, both scarce commodities in the voluntary sector. While many fitness, recreation, sport and community organizations may accept their responsibility to protect the participants in their programs they can feel overwhelmed by the need to screen. Screening is a flexible process: clearly the onus on an organization that puts individuals in positions working with children but who are never left alone is different than for an organization that places individuals in significant positions of trust with participants in an unsupervised setting. While there is an investment of time and energy upfront to develop appropriate screening, the benefits are worth it. These include safer programs and less liability risk for Board volunteers.

While we all want to do what we can to reduce harm to participants, an important caveat must be stated here: There is always risk!

4. Police Vulnerable Sector Check

For certain positions within the Club for both volunteer and contract personnel, a PVSC will be required as an important but not exclusive element of the screening process. In general, individuals with past Criminal Code convictions for certain offences will not be accepted for a direct service position with participants. These offences include, but are not limited to:

- o Any type of sexual assault
- o Invitation to sexual touching
- o Sexual interference, bestiality, or sexual exploitation
- o Procuring sexual activity
- o Indictable criminal offences for youth abuse
- o Any Court Order forbidding the individual to have contact with children under the age of 14
- o Any convictions related to child pornography

- o Assault
- o Any Weapons offence
- o Conviction under any controlled drugs and substance act
- o Criminal Driving offences

Applicants may also be rejected as a result of other information gained during the police record 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 applicant to carry out his/her duties in an effective, safe manner.

The applicant has the right to know why he or she is being refused, and may appeal to the Board of Directors of the Club in writing for a review of their application.

The PVSC will be valid for three (3) years. Applicants who have a currently valid PVSC may supply that record to the Club.

Every Youth Instructor, once accepted, is obliged to immediately inform the Club if he or she is charged, tried, convicted or involved in any way in a police investigated matter related to any of the above-noted offences under the Criminal code or under other provincial or federal statutes.

The Process for PVSC

Step 1. The individual will request a PVSC. The cost of the PVSC is to be borne by the applicant, at the Club's discretion.

Step 2. When the report is ready, the applicant will decide if they want to submit it or withdraw.

Step 3. If the individual decides to proceed, they would hand in their Police Report to the Perth Tay Tennis Club representative.

Step 4. The Board of Directors compares the results of the Police Records Check to the Club's criteria and provides a written report to the applicant stating whether the person meets the criteria for the position.

Step 5. All volunteers have the right to appeal the decision of the Club. The Board of Directors shall consider the appeal in a closed hearing.

5. Confidentiality of Information

The Association collects personal information from Police Records Checks and from other sources and is obligated to keep that information confidential, and to use it only for the purposes for which the individual agrees it can be collected. Information can only be disclosed to individuals who are assigned by the organization to make decisions about hiring or refusing potential Youth Instructors. There shall be no dissemination or disclosure of the information to any other agency, body or organization without the specific approval of the applicant. Once the information is used to compare to the organization's criteria for hiring or rejecting a potential candidate for a specific position, the information shall be sealed by the Club secretary and retained for 10 years.

Perth Tay Tennis Club
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