

SCREENING POLICY

Prince George Ringette Association

1. Purpose

Screening of volunteers is an important part of providing a safe sporting environment and has become a common practice among sport organizations that provide programs and services. The Prince George Ringette Association is responsible at law to do everything reasonable to provide a safe and secure environment for participants in its programs, activities and events. This policy is one of several policy tools that PGRA uses to fulfill its commitment to provide a safe environment and to protect its members and participants from harm.

The purpose of screening is to identify individuals within PGRA or its members who may pose a risk to its members and participants.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all volunteers who work with athletes and / or who occupy positions of trust and authority within PGRA. All volunteers must submit a volunteer form, available on the PGRA website.

Such persons include:

- All individuals in coaching, assistant coaching, trainer, team manager or other team staff positions;
- All on-ice “helpers” and dressing room “supervisors” regardless of the age of the children being helped / supervised or the relative importance of the helper / supervisor;
- All Division Coordinators;
- Any persons appointed to accompany a PGRA team to an event or competition;
- and
- All Board Members.

Event volunteers not supervising or alone with children are exempt from the requirement (i.e. 50/50 sales, scorekeepers, etc.).

3. Definitions

The following terms have these meanings in this policy:

- a) Police Information Check: A check of records as maintained by the local police

- force and the Canadian Police Information Center. A necessary component of the check is a voluntary disclosure form.
- b) Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC). A check for criminal activity relating to vulnerable sectors of the community including youth and completed by the RCMP using finger print identification where necessary. VSC's can be applied for through any local police force other than the RCMP or any combination.
 - c) Screening Committee: A committee of the Vice-President and one other individual appointed by the executive who will process and track Police Information Checks and Vulnerable Sector Checks.
 - d) Relevant Offences: For the purposes of this policy, a 'relevant offence' is any of the following offences for which pardons have not been granted:
 - Any provincial or federal offence involving the possession, distribution, or sale of any child-related pornography;
 - Any provincial or federal offence of a sexual nature;
 - Any provincial or federal offence of a violent nature, including but not limited to, all forms of assault;
 - Any provincial or federal offence involving harassment or persecution of a group of people or individual;
 - Any provincial or federal offence involving a minor or minors; and
 - Any provincial or federal offence that would cause a reasonable person to doubt the suitability of the volunteer in the capacity requested.

4. Principles

PGRA will manage the screening process for its volunteers. The Screening Committee will make the decision on eligibility of those who have been screened on behalf of PGRA.

All individuals volunteering with the association in the capacities listed above will be screened using Police Information Checks. There will be no exceptions.

Individuals whose Police Information Check (or voluntary disclosure form) returns confirmation of any Relevant Offence will not be allowed to participate in any volunteer position covered under the Scope of this policy. There will be no exceptions except as outlined below under "EXCEPTIONS".

Police Information Checks shall be provided by law enforcement or other government agency. PGRA will be responsible for any cost of police checks.

Police Information Checks are valid for a maximum period of two years.

5. Confidentiality

Contents of records checks and screening disclosures shall be kept strictly confidential among persons on the Screening Committee, including from the Board of Directors (excepting the President). Any notices that persons are not eligible for a position as a result of records checks or screening disclosures shall not divulge the relevant

violation/offence(s).

6. Process

The Screening Committee will carry out its duties in accordance with the terms of this policy.

The Screening Committee will coordinate the distribution, receiving and reviewing of Police Information Checks for all volunteers and, based on the results, will determine the eligibility of individuals to fill positions within PGRA programs under this policy. In carrying out its duties the Screening Committee may consult with independent experts including the RCMP, lawyers, risk management consultants, volunteer screening specialists or any other person of knowledge.

If a volunteer subsequently receives a conviction for a relevant offence they will report this circumstance immediately to the Screening Committee. Further, the Screening Committee may request that a volunteer submit a Police Information Check to the Screening Committee for review and consideration at any time (not just at the conclusion of a two year period), provided that such request is made in writing and provides a valid reason(s) for the request. If a person has been screened and approved by PGRA, PGRA will confirm such approval and not require a second screening while the first screening is valid without some valid form of just cause.

Nothing in this policy will prevent an individual from re-applying for a volunteer position with PGRA at some point in the future, and submitting a new Police Information Check (following pardon, positive conclusion of court case, or other legal procedure, for instance).

7. Timeline

Volunteers must be screened and confirmed eligible by November 1st of each year. Volunteers who have not been successfully screened by November 1st will be automatically removed from their positions.

The Screening Committee will then notify the now ineligible volunteer, the PGRA President, the Coaching Director and other relevant Directors of each occurrence of automatic ineligibility by November 5th of each year. This notification will clearly state that no Police Information Check has been submitted hence the volunteer is ineligible.

Volunteers who commit mid-way through the season to help with dressing room supervision, tournament supervision, on-ice clinics and events, and other activities requiring the supervision of children will have 14 days from the date of their commitment to submit a Police Information Check.

8. Exceptions

An individual who has a conviction for a 'relevant offence' as defined in this policy may not be a volunteer with PGRA.

However, the Screening Committee may decide that despite a conviction for a relevant offence a person can occupy a volunteer position without adversely affecting the safety of PGRA, an athlete or member of PGRA through the imposition of such terms and conditions as are deemed appropriate. For instance, a conviction for marijuana possession from 20 years ago may not be considered relevant by the Screening Committee for the position the volunteer in question wishes to hold.

Such exception will require written approval of the PGRA President and the Northern League Board. In this manner persons convicted of relevant offences may only be allowed to continue with the organization following three levels of endorsement (the Screening Committee, the PGRA President, and the Northern League Board). However, the volunteer must be made aware of this process before information is shared beyond the Screening Committee, and the conviction would remain confidential beyond this small group of people to protect the individual.

This process for “exceptions” does not change the requirement for all volunteers to submit a Police Information Check (including Voluntary Disclosure Form). In fact, any exception will necessarily require a current Police Information Check.

9. Records

The Screening Committee will retain no copies of Police Information Checks longer than the period they are valid and will securely destroy same thereafter. However, the Screening Committee may retain written records of communication with individuals where Information Checks indicate a relevant offence, as well as copies of its decisions and written reasons for decisions. All records will be maintained in a confidential manner and will not be disclosed to others except as required by law, or for use in legal, quasi-legal or disciplinary proceedings.

10. Compliance and Consequences

If a person in a volunteer position provides falsified or misleading information, that person will immediately be removed from their designated position(s) and may be subject to further discipline in accordance with the PGRA [Discipline and Complaints Policy](#).

The decisions of the Screening Committee are final and binding and will be effective upon notice being sent to the individual by e-mail to his/her last known email address on record with PGRA.