	SECTION FOUR: OPERATING POLICIES	
	POLICY 4001 – VOLUNTEER SCREENING	
	Effective date: March 12, 2016	Revision date: March 12, 2016

SECTION FOUR: OPERATING POLICIES

Policy 4001 – Volunteer Screening

Definitions

- The following terms have meanings in this policy:

“*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. This is part of their “Duty of Care”.

“*Liability*” refers to the duties, obligations or responsibilities imposed on a person by common law or by statute. As it is commonly used, we speak of a person or organization being held legally liable for something i.e., through a legal action or inaction in a particular set of circumstances and is required to pay damages to someone harmed as a result.

- *Occupier’s Liability*: requires that the person (an individual, an organization) in possession of premises owes a duty of care to those who come on the premises and must take responsible care to protect them from harm that might come through their programs, on their premises or at the hands of a third party on the premises.
- *Direct Liability*: deals specifically with the issue of fault
- *Vicarious Liability*: is the liability an organization takes on for the actions of those who function of its behalf.

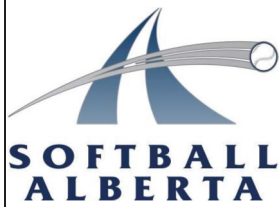
“*Participants*” - is used as the generic term that represents players, athletes, users, etc.

“*Police Records Check*” is the process of securing information from the police about individuals. It may include a check of national or local and regional police records. At the end of the process, a report is issued which simply identifies whether or not someone has a criminal record. Refer to “*Understanding Police Records Checks*” (*Appendix V*).

“*Position of trust*” identifies 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
- 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.

The question of whether a position of trust exists depends on the relationship and on the degree of authority, reliance and dependence in it, and not on the question of payment or salary. People may also assume positions of trust with respect to finances, rather than individuals.



SECTION FOUR: OPERATING POLICIES

POLICY 4001 – VOLUNTEER SCREENING

Effective date: March 12, 2016

Revision date: March 12, 2016

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

“*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. The required standard varies according to the circumstances of each situation, and determining the appropriate standard is often not a simple matter.

“*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;
- Does not receive a salary or wage for this service or activity.

While this policy focuses on volunteer screening, the same principles apply to elected or appointed Board members, paid employees, coaches, and trainers.

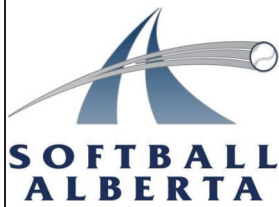
“*Vulnerable person*” is an individual who has difficulty protecting themselves from harm temporarily or permanently and is therefore at greater risk because of age, disability or handicap, or circumstances. Children and youth are considered vulnerable. The standard of care is higher when running programs for vulnerable participants.

Purpose

2. Softball Alberta is committed to ensuring the safety of all participants in Softball Alberta programs and services, and will undertake appropriate volunteer and staff screening measures in order to support the provision of sound, safe and healthy softball experience in our community.

Policy

3. Volunteers will be required to undergo a screening process based on the duties assigned by Softball Alberta due to the positions of trust that are inherent in the provision of active, high quality sport activities.
4. Softball Alberta has a responsibility to appropriately screen any person who will have access to vulnerable people. This responsibility is both moral and legal; it is mandated because of the Duty of Care concept.
5. All Softball Alberta volunteers and staff will be required to adhere to a “buddy system” policy when not in public. This system mandates that Softball Alberta volunteers and staff never find themselves alone with a youth program participant. There must be an additional staff or volunteer, or at least two (2) youth present along with the Softball Alberta staff or volunteer at any given time. If, for some reason, this policy is not adhered to, it is the Softball Alberta staff member or volunteer’s responsibility to notify the Softball Alberta executive of the date, period of time, and reason for being alone with a youth.



SECTION FOUR: OPERATING POLICIES

POLICY 4001 – VOLUNTEER SCREENING

Effective date: March 12, 2016

Revision date: March 12, 2016

Risk Factors

6. 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.
7. Each position will have a clear and meaningful job description. Softball Alberta's personnel committee will be able to determine the relevant type and intensity of screening required and plan accordingly for the screening process.

Low Risk:	Medium Risk:	High Risk:
1. Application	1. Application	1. Application
2. Police Records Check	2. Police Records Check	2. Police Records Check
3. Monitoring	3. Supervision	3. Interview Process
		4. References
		5. Supervision
		6. Parent/Participant Evaluation

8. While Softball Alberta cannot unduly discriminate against people, Softball Alberta has the right and the obligation to refuse potential volunteers based on the risks and requirements of each position.
9. Screening is a flexible process. While there is an investment of time and energy upfront to develop appropriate screening, the benefits are worth it. These include safer programs, less liability risk for Board volunteers, and more satisfied volunteers.

Police Records Checks

10. For certain positions within Softball Alberta, both volunteer and paid personnel, a Police Records Check (PRC) will be required as an important but not exclusive element of the screening process.
11. In general, individuals with past Criminal Code convictions for certain offences will not be accepted for a direct service position.

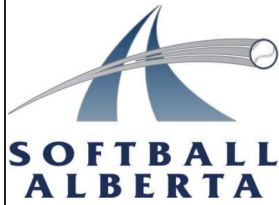
Unacceptable behaviours may include, but are not limited to the following:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sexual offences ▪ Violent or threatening behaviour ▪ Conduct against public morals ▪ Substance or chemical abuse | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Violation of a position of trust including theft or fraud ▪ Criminal driving offences, including but not limited to impaired driving |
|---|---|

An applicant who's PRC reveal a criminal conviction outside of the unacceptable behaviours or police contact, will be given the opportunity to discuss the information revealed in their Police Records Check with a member of the personnel committee.

Consideration should be given to the following:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The nature of the offence for which the applicant was convicted (details including how long ago it took place) ▪ Relevance to the position (is it a bon a fide requirement of the nature of the position) ▪ Efforts made in rehabilitation ▪ Achievements of the applicant since receiving the conviction, | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The character and degree of vulnerability of the client group served and Softball Alberta's duty of care to the participants, to the staff and to the community. • The potential risk involved in the position and its activities, the setting in which it took place, and the way in which it is supervised. |
|---|--|



SECTION FOUR: OPERATING POLICIES

POLICY 4001 – VOLUNTEER SCREENING

Effective date: March 12, 2016

Revision date: March 12, 2016

12. Applicants may also be rejected as a result of other information gained during the police records 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.

If an applicant is not accepted because of the information received from the police check, the applicant should be told why and the information is returned to the applicant. In either case, both the decision and the discussion should be documented.

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

14. A Police Records Check will be valid for three (3) years; however, a PRC will be required every two years for those working in high-risk roles. The PRC can be made available to other sports associations after written permission has been obtained from the applicant. Every volunteer, once accepted, is obliged to immediately inform Softball Alberta if he or she is charged, tried, convicted or involved in any way in a police investigated matter related to offences under the Criminal code or under other provincial or federal statutes. Volunteers will be asked to sign an agreement to this effect. At all times, Softball Alberta reserves the right to request a current PRC if there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the previous PRC is no longer accurate.

15. Softball Alberta 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 volunteers. There shall be no dissemination or disclosure of the information to any other agency, body or organization without the specific approval of the applicant. The information shall be kept in such a manner to prevent unauthorized access. (e.g., in a locked cabinet with limited access).

All information will be collected pursuant to Softball Alberta's Confidentiality Policy.

Screening Process

16. Volunteer & Staff Applications & Recruitment:

Volunteer and Staff positions will be posted publicly and promoted in an attempt to attract the most suitable candidates. Volunteers will fill out an application form which follows legal guidelines in terms of the kinds of questions asked. The posting will indicate the kind of background checks that will be required for each position, and state that any volunteer or employment offers are contingent on satisfactory completion of background checks.

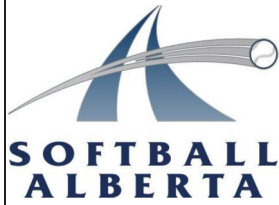
17. Screening Measures:

Softball Alberta staff charged with volunteer recruitment will complete a tracking sheet for active volunteers and staff members.

18. Interviews:

Interviews will be conducted for all prospective Softball Alberta volunteers and staff. Interview questions should be legally compliant. The questions will be standardized for all candidates and will be relevant to the position. The questions will follow this general format:

Motivation: Questions related to reasons for volunteer involvement with the position.



SECTION FOUR: OPERATING POLICIES

POLICY 4001 – VOLUNTEER SCREENING

Effective date: March 12, 2016

Revision date: March 12, 2016

Skills & Experience: Questions related to core abilities required by the position.

Qualifications: Questions related to certified competencies required by the position.

Situations: Questions related to behaviours expected of the volunteer, in different circumstances that involve the position.

Values: Questions related to attitudes or behaviours expected of all volunteers, regardless of position.

Interviewers must avoid asking discriminatory questions as outlined in Human Rights legislation. Questions to avoid include, but are not limited to:

- What year did you graduate from high school or post-secondary school?
- Where were you born?
- Where did you learn a foreign language?
- What are your child care arrangements?
- What are your religious practices?
- How many days did you miss because of illness last year?
- Do you have any disabilities?
- Have you ever been arrested?
- Are you planning to have children anytime soon?
- Are you responsible for parental care?
- Do you have senior parents or another family member that depends on you?

There will be a pre-developed system for assessing responses. Candidates will be reminded that all offers are contingent on satisfactory background checks.

19. **Reference Checks:**

Appropriate background checks, including reference checks, and Police Records Checks will be applied for all candidates in similar positions. These will be conducted and tracked consistently in congruence with the Personnel committee's suggestions.