



SCREENING POLICY			
Reviewed:	March 21, 2018	Effective:	
Next Review:	March 21, 2021	Approval:	Board of Directors

1. Purpose:

As an organization offering programs and services which benefit from volunteer assistance, it is Athletic Ontario’s duty to ensure measures are in place to safeguard our athletes, members, volunteers and staff. Sport, like other interactive social activities has inherent risks both on and off the field of play. The potential for inappropriate behavior including mental, physical and sexual abuse is present.

Athletics Ontario supports screening at all levels, especially for those who are involved with participants who are vulnerable (i.e., age, gender, disability, etc.). We identify six primary types of misconduct:

- Bullying
- Harassment
- Hazing
- Emotional Misconduct
- Physical Misconduct
- Sexual Misconduct, including Child Sexual Abuse.

All forms of inappropriate behavior are intolerable and in direct conflict with the values of Athletics Ontario.

Screening is an integral part of Athletics Ontario’s Risk Management program. It is intended to safeguard our athletes, members, volunteers, and staff through reasonable measures.

2. Definitions:

Screening: Is the evaluation or investigation of applicants as part of the interview process, to assess the suitability for a particular role or position.

"Duty of Care" is the fundamental principle and premise underlying the question of screening. The Duty of Care identifies the obligations of individuals and organizations to take reasonable measure to care for and to protect their members to an appropriate level and standard.

“Vulnerable Person” are persons who, because of age, a disability, or other circumstances, whether temporary or permanent, are:

- In a position of dependence on others or;
- Otherwise at greater risk than the general population of being harmed by a person in a position of authority or trust relative to themselves.

“Position of Trust (Authority)” A position of trust or authority is created when a person has:

- Decision making power;
- Unsupervised access;
- Closeness inherent in the relationship;
- Personal nature of the activity itself.

3. Policy:

All members, staff, registered coaches, technical officials, directors and volunteers of Athletics Ontario must follow the screening process as outlined in the Screening procedures outlined in Appendix A.

AO Staff, Board members and interns must submit a police background check prior to working with the Association.

All member clubs with Athletics Ontario, shall follow the AO Screening program. As well, all member clubs shall implement their own comprehensive screening process to protect their members, athletes, staff and volunteers.

All coaches must submit an AO Registration form every year and submit a police background check every three years. As well, coaches must submit an offense declaration form in the years in between their police background check.

Technical Officials must submit an offense declaration form every year with their registration, after completion of their original police background check.

4. Screening Process:

The screening processes helps to identify applicants with characteristics that would increase the risk of harm if they were placed in a particular position of trust. The process is based on the requirements of the position, the nature of the contact with athletes and participants and the legal limits placed on the use of screening tools.

Sound, practical and responsible screening practices reduce the chances that an athlete will come in contact with potentially dangerous individuals. Athletics Ontario follows the Screening procedures and principles as prepared by **Volunteer Canada for the Public Safety and Partnerships Branch**.

The Screening Program provides an easy to use method for clubs and other groups affiliated with AO to ensure that the people they serve are safe.

The Ten Steps of Screening prepared by Volunteer Canada are outlined in Appendix A.

A sample registration form is included in Appendix B.

5. Non-Compliance:

Non-compliance with this policy may result in sanctions pursuant to the Athletics Ontario *Code of Conduct* and related policies.

Appendix A:

Ten Safe Steps of Screening

Organizations should have a comprehensive and ongoing screening practice in place that recognize the importance and value of all the relevant steps in determining the right fit for the given responsibilities. The following ten steps provide clear guidelines for developing a screening practice that reflects the organization's commitment to a safe and rewarding environment for its members.

The Safe Steps of the Screening Program should be applied specifically to positions within the organization.

The 10 Safe Steps are:

1. **Assessment**
Assess the program, activity, position. Assess the risks and liabilities.
 - What is the nature of the activity?
 - What is the setting?
 - What is the level of supervision?
2. **Position – Assignment**
Clearly articulate the requirements and level of risk that were identified from Step 1 Assessment.
 - Scope of the activity
 - Tasks/responsibilities
 - Skills, experience and qualifications required
3. **Recruitment**
Recruitment plans and practices need to be clearly communicated. They need to be:
 - Fair
 - Consistent
 - Appropriate for the position or assignment
4. **Application**
 - Use a detailed application form for all volunteer positions and assignments.
 - Seek written consent to obtain a Police Check if required.
5. **Interview**
 - Use a set of questions pertinent to the position
 - Explain the selection process
 - Describe the position or assignment
 - Document the responses
6. **References**
 - References need to be checked in accordance with the requirements of the position.
 - Always check more than one reference

7. Police Checks

- Police checks are required for all coaches and associates once every 3 years.
- After initially submitting a police check. Required members are to submit an Offence Declaration form with their yearly registration.

8. Orientation and Training

- New volunteers should be considered "on probation" for a training period of 3 to 6 months.
- Orientation and training sessions should be made mandatory
- Updates, refreshers should be on-going

9. Support and Supervision

- Ongoing support and supervision are essential to ensuring the match between people and assignments is effective.
- Feedback on job performance should occur annually with a review.

10. Follow Up and Feedback

- Schedule follow up calls or visits with volunteers
- Provide contact numbers to volunteers about where to call with questions/concerns
- Document all incidents or complaints

Full description of the Ten Steps to Screening can be found in the Screening Handbook from Volunteer Canada. <https://volunteer.ca/content/2012-screening-handbook>

Appendix B: Sample Application Form

Name of Organization _____		
Last Name _____		
First Name _____		
Address: _____ _____		
Residential Phone: _____	Business Phone: _____	
Email _____		
Occupation and Employer: _____	How long _____	
Volunteer Experience: _____	How long _____	
Employment Experience: _____ _____ _____		
Interests, hobbies: _____		
Special Skills, languages: _____ _____		
Formal certification (e.g. NCCP, First Aid) _____		
Type of volunteer work preferred _____ _____		
Available for Volunteer Work:	WEEKDAYS (specify days)	WEEKENDS (specify days)
Morning	_____	_____
Afternoon	_____	_____
Evening	_____	_____
How did you hear about our organization? _____ _____		
Names and telephone number of other references:		
Former players/parents _____		
Professional _____		
Employment _____		
Family and/or friend _____		
I understand that a Criminal Record Check and Reference Checks are conditions of volunteering at (Name of Organization)		
Signature of Volunteer Applicant _____ Date: _____		