



**VOLUNTEER  
ALBERTA**



# **Is a Police Information Check the Only Way?**

**2020 Volunteer Screening Series**



# What is VSP?

## The Volunteer Screening Program

- Provides educational resources and tools designed to help nonprofit organizations improve their volunteer screening processes and procedures
- Offers financial opportunities, including the Vulnerable Sector Check Fee Waiver and Volunteer Screening Development Grants, to aid organizations in their volunteer screening efforts
- Is managed by Volunteer Alberta and funded by The Government of Alberta



# Introduction

## Police Information Checks

- Are only one step in a **robust, multistep** volunteer screening policy
- Vary across the country and province, providing different information from different databases depending on where you are
- More or less the same as an Criminal Record Check performed by RCMP or certified third-party
- Difference between “Basic” and “Enhanced” PICs and CRCs
- Are a snapshot in time and provide limited indication of future behavior



A police information check (PIC) is a collection of offence information, including convictions, non-convictions, and other police information available from police record management systems, and provincial court records

*Alberta Police  
Information Check  
Disclosure  
Guidelines, 2019*

## Important Definitions

# Duty of Care

A legal principle (*can be embedded in legislation - explicitly & implicitly*) and fundamental premise underlying volunteer screening



# Standard of Care

The degree or level of service, attention, care & protection that one owes another according to the law (*typically the law of negligence*)

Required standards vary according to circumstances & situations



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## Vulnerable Person

The federal *Criminal Records Act* definition:

A person who, because of his or her **age** (*under the age of 18 or over the age of 65*), a **disability**, or **other circumstances**, whether **temporary or permanent**:

- a) is in a position of dependency on others
- b) is otherwise at a greater risk than the general population of being harmed by a person in a position of trust or authority towards them



# Important Definitions

## Positions of Trust/Authority

The federal *Criminal Records Act* definition:

When someone has:

- Decision-making power
- Unsupervised access
- Inherent closeness in the relationship

When someone:

- Conducts personal tasks
- Takes full responsibility for well-being



# The PIC Process

## Before getting a PIC, consider:

- Terms to describe types/levels of police checks
- Information included & disclosed on police checks
- To whom information is released  
(*volunteer/organization*)
- Different approaches to processing requests  
(*including costs & timelines*)





# The PIC Process

## Police Information Check (and Enhanced Criminal Record Checks)

Canadian Police  
Information Centre  
(CPIC)

Police  
Information Portal  
(PIP)

Justice Online  
Information Network  
(JOIN)

Local police records



## Vulnerable Sector Check

*A VSC includes all the information you'd normally receive in a PIC*

All of the above

A query to confirm the applicant has not  
received a record suspension for sexual  
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## Vulnerable Sector Check

*Provides all the information you'd normally receive in a PIC*

A query to confirm the applicant has not received a record suspension for sexual offences

If the applicant had resided in other jurisdictions within the past five years, it is recommended that a PIC also be obtained from those other jurisdictions

# Police Information Checks

## Reasonable uses

- When a volunteer works with or comes in contact with vulnerable persons, but is not solely responsible for their well-being or in a position of trust and authority
- Has access to money, financial, or otherwise sensitive information
- Has access to or operates vehicles or expensive equipment

*There may be other risk considerations which would make it necessary to request a PIC. Volunteer Alberta does not provide legal advice.*

# Vulnerable Sector Checks

\*Performed as *part of a* Police Information Check, when requested.

## Reasonable uses

- A volunteer is in a position of trust or authority with vulnerable persons and is solely responsible for their well-being, like a coach or mentor.
- Has unsupervised access to a vulnerable person, like a meals on wheels delivery driver

*There may be other risk considerations which would make it necessary to request a VSC. Volunteer Alberta does not provide legal advice.*

# Weighing the Considerations

Cost  
Time  
Privacy/Protection  
Participation  
Trust



Protection  
Risk & Liability  
Care & Safety  
Participation  
Trust

Social norms  
& cultural  
awareness

3:1 drop-off rate  
when PIC/VSC  
required

Court mandated  
volunteers/  
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See opportunities  
- not just barriers

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# Example

## Worksheet

1. Review the basic position description
2. Fill out the considerations section
3. Decide if a PIC or VSC is needed



### VOLUNTEER SCREENING - EXAMPLE Is a Police Information Check Necessary?

Volunteers work with vulnerable persons may/may not require a Police Information Check or Vulnerable Sector Check. Use these examples as a tool to explore making a determination.

#### ELEMENTS OF THE POSITION

<b>POSITION TITLE</b>	Hospice Client Support Volunteer
<b>DUTIES / ACTIVITIES</b>	Enhance client quality of life through emotional/social care and practical (non-medical) assistance, support clients without giving advice, judging or trying to fix <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide one-to-one, end-of-life support</li> <li>• Co-facilitate a group session of bereavement support</li> </ul>
<b>CLIENT / PEOPLE SERVED</b>	Seniors living with a life-limiting illness, as well as their families
<b>LOCATION / SETTING</b>	Seniors facilities, private residences
<b>SUPERVISION / TRAINING</b>	On-going support, no direct supervision for one-to-one, co-facilitator for group sessions
<b>OTHER DETAILS</b>	Comfortable talking about death, dying, and bereavement

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ALBERTA**



**Thank you!**

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