



WEBINETTE

Do I need a Vulnerable Sector Check?

2023 Volunteer Screening Program



DO I NEED A VSC?



What is VSP?

- Partnership between Volunteer Alberta and Government of Alberta
- Provides educational resources and tools designed to help nonprofit voluntary sector (NPVS) organizations improve their volunteer screening processes and procedures
- Offers financial opportunities to aid organizations in their volunteer screening efforts, including the Vulnerable Sector Check Fee Waiver and Volunteer Screening Development Grants



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Volunteer Alberta does not provide legal advice.

- This webinette and our resources will provide some useful, general information, but you should bring any concerns specific to your organization and work to a legal professional



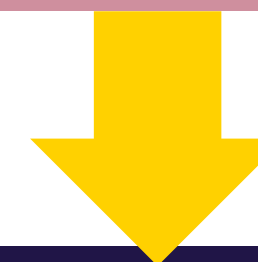
DO I NEED A VSC?

What is a Vulnerable Sector Check?



A Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC) is an added search to a Police Information Check (PIC)

Police Information Check (PIC)			
Canadian Police Information Check (CPIC)	Police Information Portal (PIP)	Justice Online Information Network (JOIN)	Local Networks



Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC)

A VSC includes all information revealed in a PIC

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



A **vulnerable person** is defined as:

One who, because of their age (under the age of 18 or over the age of 65), or a disability (mental or physical disability or mental illness), is in a position of dependence on others and is otherwise at greater risk than the general population of being harmed by a person in a position of trust or authority towards them.



Who should you ask to obtain a VSC?

Individuals over the
age of 18 years old

Someone who has
unsupervised access to
a vulnerable person(s)

Someone in a significant
position of
trust/authority



A position of trust or authority is defined as:

A position in which a volunteer has a significant degree of authority or decision-making power over a vulnerable person and unsupervised access to a vulnerable individual. A position of trust may also include the development of a close, personal bond between the volunteer and the individual (e.g. mentor). A significant level of trust and authority must be inherent within the position, and not incidental or occasional.

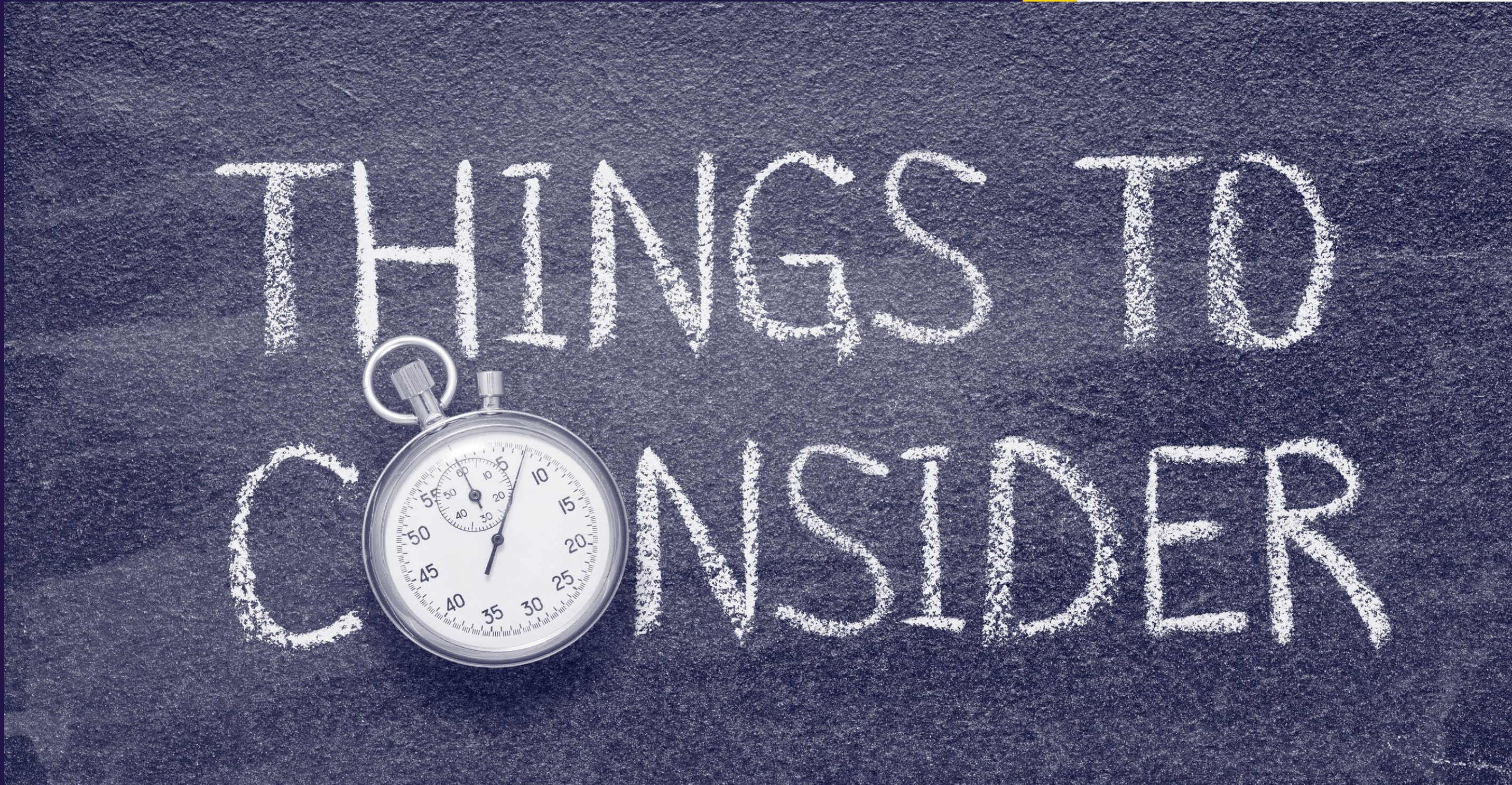


So... Do you need a VSC?

- Check your insurance provider, your organization's policies and legislation first.
- Not everyone needs a Police Information Check, let alone a Vulnerable Sector Check.



DO I NEED A VSC?

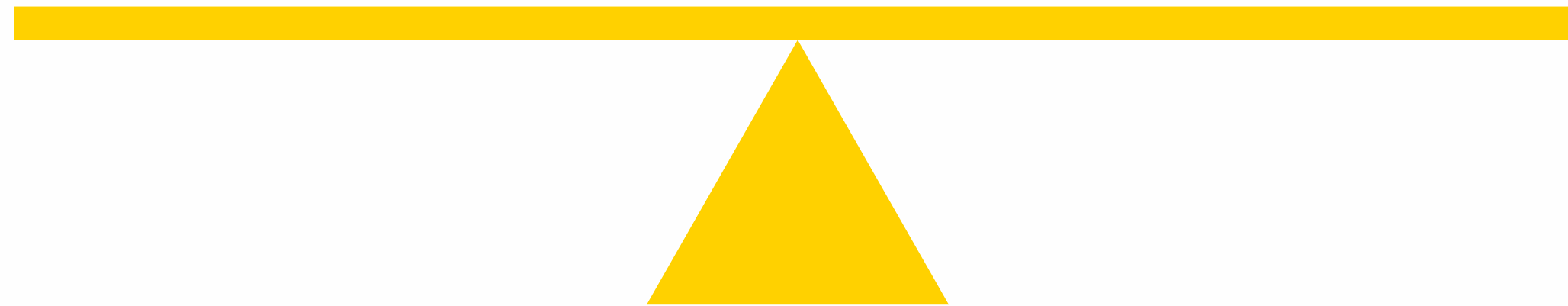




DO I NEED A VSC?

Level of
Risk

Level of
Screening



DO I NEED A VSC?

Example: Festival Volunteer

Constantly around
children

Application, interview
and constant
supervision

Risk

Screening



Relationship Based Screening is defined as

Screening practices that emphasize human connection, empathy, and mutual understanding. Relationship based screening goes beyond collecting personal documents: it welcomes volunteers to participate and be equal players in the volunteer screening process, while organizations create safe and welcoming volunteer programming to promote volunteerism.



A note on Relationship Based Screening

Only use VSCs if completely necessary – VSCs have been found to be a poor indicator of determining risk.¹

Complete a [risk assessment](#) for each volunteer position to determine the level of necessary screening.

Discussing a criminal record check can be invasive for people who have been systemically targeted by law enforcement.



DO I NEED A VSC?

What if something is revealed on a Vulnerable Sector Check?

Check with your policies and insurance provider.

Review the *Alberta Police Information Check Disclosure Procedures*.





VOLUNTEER SCREENING PROGRAM

Apply today!



<https://volunteeralberta.ab.ca/fororganizations/volunteerscreeningprogram/>



DO I NEED A VSC?

Step 1: Scroll to the bottom and click the application link

If you need an example of a **VSPN letter** to send to police/RCMP, click [here](#).

Looking to apply and **do not** have an existing Volunteer Screening Program Number?

NEW APPLICANTS APPLY HERE →



New applicants
apply here

Needing to update and/or renew **an existing** Volunteer Screening Program Number?

RETURNING APPLICANTS APPLY HERE →



DO I NEED A VSC?

Step 2: Fill in your contact info and review the application documents

Email *

Your email

Program Contact Name (First and Last): *

Your answer

Primary Contact's Position/Title: *

Your answer

Phone Number: *

Your answer

Before beginning your application, please ensure you have read all of the documents below. Use this space as a checklist and indicate which documents you have reviewed before starting the application. Each of these documents can be found at the bottom of the [Volunteer Screening Program](#) webpage. *

- ☐ Fee Waiver Eligibility Requirements
- ☐ Application Guide
- ☐ VSC Fee Waiver FAQs
- ☐ Terms of Use

DO I NEED A VSC?

Please upload your current Volunteer Screening Policies and/or Procedures below. If you have formal volunteer role descriptions, please also upload those here. We encourage you to have formal policy documents outlining your screening processes, practices, and role descriptions and to review/update these documents on a regular basis.

If you need any help developing screening policies, procedures, or role descriptions, please see our [Volunteer Screening Program resources](#) or contact the team at screening@volunteeralberta.ab.ca.

Please note: to access the VSC Fee Waiver it is required that your organization has screening policies in place that do not solely rely on the use of background checks (CRCs, PICs, and/or VSCs) for volunteer screening. Any combination of *two or more* of the below steps may be approved. However, if your organization ONLY uses background checks, your application will not be approved.

- Risk Assessments for volunteer roles
- Application Forms
- Interview
- Reference checks (personal, professional, or other)
- Background checks (Criminal Record Check, Police Information Check, Vulnerable Sector Check, Child Intervention Check, Other 3rd party checks)
- Orientation and other Training
- Supervision and support from paid staff or senior-level volunteers (someone to check in on the volunteer regularly and offer help or support if needed)
- Follow up and feedback from volunteers and/or program participants

Please upload your current Volunteer Screening Policies and/or Procedures here ^{*} as well as any formal role descriptions you may have:

 Add file

Step 3: Upload Volunteer Screening Policies and/ or Procedures and any Volunteer Position Descriptions you may have

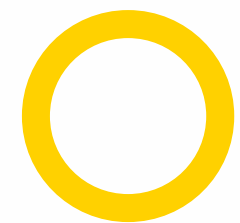


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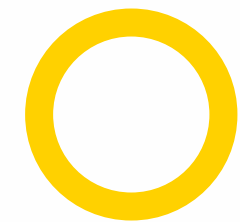
Step 4: Fill in your organization info including:

- ☐ Your legal name
- ☐ Your operating name (if different from legal name)
- ☐ Nonprofit/Charity Registration Number
- ☐ Organizational Cause Category
- ☐ Mailing Address
- ☐ City/Town, Province, Postal Code

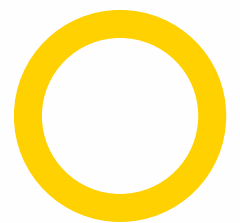
Step 5: Complete Eligibility Criteria



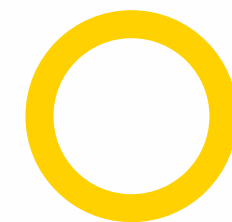
Registered nonprofit in AB in operation for at least 1 year



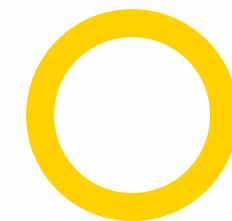
Your organization works with a vulnerable population



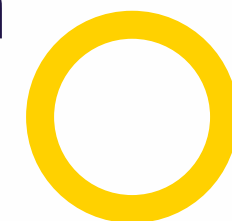
Completed risk assessments on volunteer roles within the last 2 years



The volunteer has 1) a significant level of trust, and 2) unsupervised access



Your organization has an active volunteer screening policy



For faith-based orgs: provide services to the broader community

DO I NEED A VSC?

Step 6: Describe your programming, mission vision, and values, services, clientele, and the communities you serve or operate within

Section 7 of 16

Program Information

Description (optional)

Mission, Vision, and Values (Please describe organization mandate and/or purpose): *

Long answer text

Programs and Services (Please provide a brief description): *

Long answer text

Clients, Participants, and Recipients (Please describe the people served by organization): *

Long answer text

Communities Served and/or Operating Within (please describe the area and reach): *

Long answer text

Step 7: Fill in Volunteer Position information. Volunteer positions must:

- ☐ Work directly with vulnerable persons
- ☐ Be in a position of trust and authority in relation to vulnerable persons
- ☐ Have regular unsupervised access to vulnerable persons

DO I NEED A VSC?

Step 7 (continued): Fill in Volunteer Position information. Repeat if you have multiple.

Describe:

1. How the role interacts with vulnerable persons
2. The level of authority and trust
3. The level of unsupervised access



Position Title *

Short answer text

Estimated number of volunteers requiring a Vulnerable Sector Check Fee Waiver this year: *

Short answer text

Please provide a **detailed description** of the role including: *

1. How the role interacts with vulnerable populations
2. The level of authority and trust the volunteer has over the vulnerable population
3. The level of unsupervised access the volunteer has with the vulnerable population.

If there isn't sufficient information provided in this description, Volunteer Alberta will contact you to request more information on the nature of the volunteer position which will delay application processing times. For help developing position descriptions, visit our [Resource Library](#) or the [Volunteer Screening Program](#) page.

Long answer text

Step 8: Complete a risk assessment for each volunteer position.

A risk assessment looks at the risks **inherent** to the role, no matter who fills it.

A risk assessment considers the risks for **all** involved, including staff, volunteers, participants, and the larger community.

For the VSC Fee Waiver application, you will need to describe *how* you assess risk - What conversations do you have? Who do you have them with? Do you consult with a third party? Do you use a risk assessment tool, such as the Volunteer Screening Program's [risk assessment matrix](#)




Contact Us!

Email us

 screening@volunteeralberta.ab.ca

More resources

 <https://volunteeralberta.ab.ca/for-organizations/resources/>

