



Archdiocese of Regina

TEN STEPS OF SCREENING DETAILED

Step 1 - Determine the Security level Required

The nature of the ministry and the inherent security level required dictates the degree of screening to be applied. Factors that will help determine the security level include: the participant, the setting, the nature of the activity and the level of supervision.

Volunteers and employees who are active in more than one ministry will be screened for the position with the highest security level. When a person moves from a General Security position to a High Security position, the additional screening steps for the High Security position must be carried out.

Step 2 - Ministry Position Description

There is a role description for every volunteer ministry position. (*See Section Four*) It is imperative to describe each ministry position and define the security level required. The description defines the position, identifies the tasks to be completed within the position, and sets the ground rules for all involved. By documenting the role, these descriptions provide greater protection for the person being ministered to, the volunteer, and the Parish/Archdiocese.

Step 3 - Recruitment Process

All recruitment for volunteers and staff shall be conducted in a formal public process.

Requests for volunteers shall be done in a public way through notices printed in parish bulletins, church newsletters or other forms of communication. The notice should be accompanied by the Ministry Position Description and advise that a Volunteer Information Form will need to be completed. These two items are powerful screening tools in themselves and prompt people to reflect on the seriousness of their call to this ministry even before any formal interview. Recruiting materials will clearly indicate that the faith community takes its responsibility towards participants seriously and screens all applicants.

Do not leave people with the impression that everyone who applies will be accepted. Be very clear that the parish is careful about selecting those who work in ministry and do not apologize for that fact. The Pastor/Administrator is the authority to accept and appoint all ministry volunteers following a recommendation from the Screening Committee that the prospective volunteer is qualified to serve in the ministry they have been screened for.

Step 4 – Volunteer Information Form

A Volunteer Information Form must be completed for all Volunteer Ministry Positions. (*See Section Three*)

The completion of an information form is intended to ensure that adequate records are kept. In addition, as with the use of a Ministry Position Description, asking individuals to complete a Volunteer Information Form demonstrates the seriousness of their commitment to screening and provides a paper trail that will protect both the applicant and the Parish/Archdiocese. There is one form for adults and one form for those under 18 years of age. Use only the official Archdiocese of Regina forms.

Step 5 - Interview

An interview will be conducted for all High Security Volunteer Ministry Positions.

The interviews will be carried out by a Parish Volunteer Screening Committee Member and/or the Pastor. The interview provides an opportunity to talk with the applicant about his or her background, gifts, talents, skills, interests and availability. It also allows an opportunity to explore any concerns you may have about the suitability of this person for the ministry position in question and to ensure there will be a "good fit" between the person and the ministry.

The interview includes questions that are directly related to the specific security concerns for the position being applied for: i.e. interpersonal style with children or vulnerable adults, history working with money, and so on. Notes from the interview shall be kept in a secure parish file, administered by the Parish Volunteer Screening Program Coordinator. Use only the official Archdiocese of Regina forms.

Step 6 - Reference Check

Two (2) non-family references must be completed for all High Security Volunteer Ministry Positions.

It should be made clear to the person giving the reference, that the individual is being considered for a position of trust i.e. with children, with other vulnerable people, or with money. Reference forms must be kept in the volunteer's file.

A reference check may be the most effective screening step during the selection process. References will confirm the background, gifts, talents and skills of the applicant and will provide an outside opinion on the suitability of the person for the ministry. Use only the official Archdiocese of Regina forms.

Step 7 – Criminal Record Check

A criminal record check must be received for all High Security Volunteer Ministry Positions.

The police record check signals, in a very public way, our concern about the safety of our people. The candidate will be asked to provide the original of his or her criminal record check. If any conviction appears, the candidate will be asked to provide details and give permission for the Pastor to confirm their nature with the police. It is not only important to know if someone has been convicted of a crime, but also to know the nature and severity of the crime.

There are limitations to a criminal record checks such as:

- The report is only good up to the checking day.
- A recent conviction may not appear.
- There are time lags in sending records from one country to another.
- The individual may be using an alias so only a fingerprint check will be accurate.
- The person may have obtained a “pardon” and therefore a conviction is no longer on the list.
- The person may never have been caught.

We must NOT rely solely on Criminal Record Checks, to do so would be dangerous.

Despite the limitations of criminal record checks, they do signal, in a public way, that we are concerned about the safety of our participants, particularly in those cases (High Security Volunteer Ministry Positions) where the faith group is committed to a full and complete screening process.

Step 8 - Orientation and Training

Appropriate orientation and training will be provided along with guidelines for working with the vulnerable for all ministry positions. (*See Section Two – Guidelines For Parish Volunteers*)

In fairness to volunteers, it is essential that orientation and training be provided to ensure that the individual is able to perform his or her ministry effectively.

Applicants are required to sign the Volunteer Information Form stating that they have read the Ministry Position Description and the Screening Protocol and that they understand and will comply with them. Use only the official Archdiocese of Regina forms.

Step 9 - Supervision and Evaluation

All ministry positions will be appropriately supervised.

The intensity and nature of the supervision will vary with the security level involved in the position. This entails a more “senior or experienced” person in the ministry spending time with the incumbent to observe, support and give feedback on their gifts, skills, style, strengths and challenges. In High Security Volunteer Ministry Positions the supervision must be systematic and recorded.

There shall be a self-review on a regular basis. (*See Section Three – Self Review for Ministry Volunteer Form*).

By instituting a formal supervision and evaluation process, the volunteer can be observed "on the job" and their ministry can be monitored on an ongoing basis. Use only the official Archdiocese of Regina forms.

Step 10 – Participant Follow Up

Supervisors will monitor all High Security Volunteer Ministry Positions by checking from time to time on participant satisfaction. (*See Section Three – Participant Follow-Up Report*)

Regular ongoing contact with program participants and their family members ensures that programs remain relevant and of high quality. Such monitoring can also act as an effective deterrent to someone who might otherwise do harm and go undetected.

If a volunteer and a participant are usually alone together, it would be appropriate for someone to conduct random spot checks by visiting the location where they are together.

It is vital that the parish let all volunteers know that regular contact with program participants and their families is part of the parish’s security management procedures and that this practice is not personal. Use only the official Archdiocese of Regina forms.