

Standard for Criminal Reference Checks

Lifesaving Society Standard Approved by the Ontario Board of Directors, January 2001

Standard

Aquatic volunteers or employees who provide direct service to vulnerable clients and who will be in a position of leadership or supervision, should be subject to a criminal reference check prior to placement in an aquatic position, and throughout their employment period. At a minimum, these checks should be conducted on a random or “for cause” basis.

Definitions

- Vulnerable Clients: Children (under the age of 18), seniors and the disabled.
- Criminal Reference Check: A check done through the police department on individuals to determine whether they have a police record. It can involve both a nationwide or local record check.

Background/Rationale

- Vulnerable clients are at risk.
- Employers have a duty of care to prevent those with an inappropriate criminal background from working or volunteering in any setting where vulnerable clients are involved.
- Among the standard of care are criminal reference checks for those in a position of authority.
- Opinions of the aquatic community support the position of criminal reference checks being conducted on aquatic leadership levels.

Implementation

- Applicants for aquatic positions should be aware of the requirements for police reference checks prior to applying for a position.

- Applicants should be encouraged to start the application process when they apply for a position.
- Applicants should not begin working with the public until the report is received and reviewed by their employer.
- Criminal reference checks should be provided when working in aquatics.

Sources

- Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Criminal Reference Checks. Types of criminal background checks | Royal Canadian Mounted Police (rcmp-grc.gc.ca)
- Ontario Provincial Police, Criminal Record Checks. Ontario Provincial Police - Criminal Record Checks and Police Checks (opp.ca)
- Toronto Police, Background Checks. Level 1-3. Vulnerable Sector Screening, (torontopolice.on.ca)

Disclaimer

Lifesaving Society Safety Standards are developed using Coroners' recommendations, the latest evidence-based research, and reflect the aquatics industry's best practices at the time the publication was approved.

The purpose of these standards is to encourage swimming pool, waterpark and waterfront owners, managers, operators and regulators to adopt these standards, in order to prevent drownings in aquatic environments.

Lifesaving Society Safety Standards do not replace or supersede local, provincial/ territorial legislation or regulations, but they are considered the standard to which aquatic facility operators should work towards in order to enhance safety within their operations and to prevent drowning.

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