

Policy Criminal Reference – Volunteers
Board Approved July 12, 2016

Effective Date: July 12, 2016

Policy:

Owen Sound Little Theatre (OSLT) requires completion and receipt of a satisfactory criminal reference check for all volunteers as a condition of their volunteer placement to address its responsibility of protecting the safety and security of persons and assets on its premises and in its care. This policy applies to all persons who want to volunteer for OSLT.

Process:

1. As part of the communications process, it is essential to indicate on all external postings and during any preliminary discussions with potential volunteers that a criminal reference check will be required. For example, it will be added to the membership application form and to the membership section of the website.
2. A criminal reference check will be required for all potential volunteers who are 18 years of age or older. Criminal records for persons under 18 cannot be released and therefore, all volunteers under the age of 18 will be supervised by an adult 18 years of age or older.
3. OSLT will accept criminal reference checks completed within the past six (6) months.
4. If there is no issue with the criminal reference check, the person will be permitted to volunteer for OSLT.
5. If the findings of the criminal reference check indicate “may or may not have a record” the theatre manager and a member of the board of directors will discuss this with the potential volunteer. The presence of the above mentioned statement does not mean a person cannot volunteer for OSLT, however, more information will be required.
6. If the statement in #5 presents itself, the potential volunteer will be advised that in order to volunteer, they must attend their local police station and request (at their own expense) a clearance letter and have a Vulnerable Sector search completed. If they

agree to do this, once obtained, the documents will be submitted to OSLT to determine if the information constitutes a risk to the organization. If the potential volunteer chooses not to obtain the additional documents and Vulnerable Sector search, they will be advised they cannot volunteer for OSLT.

7. Once a clearance letter has been obtained and a Vulnerable Sector search completed and submitted, the theatre manager and a member of the board of directors will review the documents and consider the following factors:
 - a. The nature and number of conviction(s)
 - b. Length of time since the conviction(s)
 - c. Responsibilities of the volunteer
 - d. Relevance of the criminal conviction
 - e. Potential risk to OSLT if the person is permitted to volunteer
8. Convictions of a certain nature automatically disqualify a person from volunteering with OSLT, those include:
 - a. Any assault or violent offence conviction(s)
 - b. Any sexual offence convictions(s)
 - c. A designation on the national, or any provincial, sex offender registry
 - d. A designation on the national, or any provincial, dangerous offender registry
9. If, after the review as indicated in #7, it is determined there is a risk to the organization, the potential volunteer will be advised verbally and in writing that their criminal record prevents them from volunteering with OSLT.
10. Potential volunteers will cover the cost of their criminal reference check. For those for whom the cost creates a barrier to involvement, OSLT will assess covering the cost on a case by case basis.
11. All information obtained regarding criminal reference checks is to be viewed only by the theatre manager and the board of directors and the contents are considered confidential. Documents obtained from volunteers will be kept in a separate file in a secure location.

12. Volunteers may ask for a copy of their criminal reference check.

13. Any existing volunteers and/or persons currently volunteering for OSLT (including members of the board of directors) will be asked, in writing, the following question: Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offense for which a pardon has not been granted?
 - a. If the person answers no, they will be asked to complete and sign a Criminal Reference Check Waiver Form, witnessed by the theatre manager and a member of the board of directors.
 - b. If the person answers yes, they will be asked to follow the same criminal reference check procedures outlined for potential new volunteers.

14. All volunteers will be required to sign a new criminal record check waiver annually.

15. An individual can appeal an OSLT decision based on information in a criminal reference check by submitting in writing to the theatre manager and the board of directors the following information: Name, Contact Information, Reason for Appeal
 - a. Appeals will be reviewed by the theatre manager and board of directors to determine the risk to the organization. Results will be shared with the person verbally and in writing.