



Revised Application for Membership Process



Revised September 2009

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Application For Membership Process

Over the last few years screening has become the thing to do. Most of the screening process came about because of organizations that deal mostly with children such as soccer leagues or Girl Guides. The screening processes were put in place to protect the children that participated in community based activities. After a couple of years it became more and more obvious that the screening process needed to be implemented in more areas, within both the work place and in volunteer sectors. It was obvious because it was everyone's Duty of Care (your responsibility) to protect those around us. We are now seeing service organizations like Lions, Meals on Wheels and Big Brothers Big Sisters following suit.

Kin Canada has the same Duty of Care requirements. We need to offer the same kind of protection to our members, our staff and our communities. We need to be able to show the public, members and partners that we are exercising due diligence.

We have actually had basic member screening in place for years in the form of the new member application process. The concern now is that the process has not been consistently used by clubs and now needs some updating to reflect changes in the volunteer sector.

Over the last year the Risk Management Coordinator and the National Risk Management Committee have been doing a lot of research on the subject and have found a few simple ways of enhancing our own screening mechanisms.

The goal is to make the application for membership process more effective as the screening tool it was always intended to be. As of October, 2009 Kin Canada clubs will be using a new membership application form. When viewing the new application form you will notice very little change – just a little fine tuning. The following steps will help apply the tweaked screening practices within your club.

Step 1: Clubs will provide the potential member with the Membership application form. The form will be found on the website as usual. The form will now ask the new potential members to provide references.

Step 2: Once the club has received the completed application form the club will be required to conduct an interview of some kind, and either have a referral from a sponsor *or* will check references. National will be providing examples of 'best practices' questions for interview use and when checking references. Reference check results will remain at the club level.

Step 3: The club will invite the potential new member to the required number of meetings as per the club's house rules.

Step 4: The club will vote to support or deny the new potential member.

Step 5: If the club has agreed to bring the new member into the club, the Membership Director or Club President will order the new member Kit. The ordering process will basically remain the same. The only change on the order form is that the club will be asked if they conducted an interview and if they have checked references or have a referral from a vouching sponsor. Once the club is able to answer yes they will be able to proceed to the payment portion of the order.

Personal Information obtained during the interview process:

Our Privacy Mission Statement (quoted from the Step-by-Step Risk Management Guide)

To protect the personal information and privacy of all members, directors, officers, employees, and other interested parties of the Kin Canada in accordance to the Federal Legislation of the *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA)*.

Your club's personal information

Having personal information on a member within your club is not new. Information such as the members name, home address, work information, spouse and children information and much more has been kept on file by a club executive since the beginning. What has changed is how we protect that information. On January 1, 2004 when the PIPEDA legislation came into affect clubs were forced to make changes to make sure that they complied with this new legislation.

While your club implements a screening practice your club will be privy to more personal information. It is your club's responsibility to continue to exercise reasonable care in protecting the information obtained through this practice. The information collected from a potential member needs to be kept confidential and should be kept secure, or returned to the applicant or destroyed if no longer of use.

Note:

National will not be making any decisions for the club as to whom they accept into the club. The club will be responsible for doing their own screening.

National recommends that those holding certain positions within the club or those working with certain vulnerable sectors provide the club with either a Police Check or a Vulnerable Sector's check. For example: Those acting as club treasurer would provide a Police Check while those working with children would provide a Vulnerable Sector's check. Please check out the "The What and How's of Screening" document to learn the difference between the two.

The What and How's of Screening

What is screening?

Screening is a process designed to create and maintain a safe environment. This process involves identifying any activity of a volunteer position which by virtue of the responsibilities of the position could bring about harm to children, youth, or vulnerable persons. The screening process also ensures the appropriate match is made between volunteer and task. Screening involves recruiting, selection, and managing volunteers.

Why should you screen?

- **Why screen:** Your responsibility is both moral and legal; it is not only the “right” thing to do, but it is legally required under the “duty of care” concept. Volunteer screening is relatively uncontrolled in many organizations, and in many instances is characterized by a desperate plea for volunteers, implying an open door to all. This provides opportunity for perpetrators of abuse to infiltrate our organization.
- **Duty of Care:** is a legal principle that identifies the obligations of individuals and organizations to take responsible measures to care for and protect their participants. Organizations need to understand that Canadian courts will uphold their responsibilities with regard to screening in the context of their duty of care.
- An organization might decide to conduct periodic **credit evaluations or criminal record checks** for volunteers that are assigned to positions involving the handling of large sums of money or close contact with particularly vulnerable persons.

More about record checks

There are two types of checks:

- **Criminal checks:** For people who are not working with the vulnerable sector. It includes National and Local convictions and outstanding charges and warrants. You would use this if the person needs to be bonded. This could be used for our treasurers.
- **Police Records Check for Service with the Vulnerable Sector:** For people who work or volunteer with the vulnerable. It includes National and local convictions, outstanding charges and warrants, sexual offender pardoned database, non convictions (discharged or withdrawn), local police records, firearm interest police flags, mental health act apprehensions, provincial offences for trespass at night and public intoxication. Sometimes other steps need to be taken to confirm some of the information that will be pulled. If more than one person has the same name in the same area they sometimes do finger prints to confirm.

- The only pardoned offences that will show up on checks are sex offenders.
- The check can only be done accurately if the person has provided all their address. For example, if the person did not mention that they lived in another province 2 years ago you may not get all the information that you are looking for.
- There are some for-profit companies who provide records checks. Unfortunately those will only provide you with the National and local summary convictions and outstanding charges and warrants. It will not provide you with sexual offender's info, mental health apprehensions, public intoxication and others. These companies do not have access to the same information as the police even if they claim to.
- A club can keep the record checks if they want. It is suggested that they do not in case the document gets into the wrong hands. The club would be held liable if the information was passed on. The club should simply take record of having seen it. If the member wants the check back the club does not have a choice but to return it to the applicant.

Terminology for types of Non-Convictions:

- Acquittal: the party is found not guilty of the charge
- Dismissed: the judge determines there is not enough evidence to proceed with a charge
- Stayed: the proceedings have been “frozen”, the charge is held for a year and could be reopened if charged party re-offends again
- Withdrawn: the crown determines there is not enough evidence to proceed with a charge
- Diversion: the charged party is given terms that must be completed and lacking the completion of these terms, the charge could be reactivated.

Q&A

Q: *If we make all new members go through a screening process, won't some people feel we are intruding and decide not to volunteer?*

A: Most people understand and appreciate that screening will help to protect participants, volunteers and staff. It is becoming increasingly common, even in many workplaces. Some people feel screening is not necessary, that “it can't happen here.” While very few people betray a trust, physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, theft of property, harassment, property damage, extortion and assault can and do happen in all types of organizations – even ours. Screening helps create and maintain a safe environment and ensures an appropriate match between volunteer and task.

Q: *I'm just a volunteer. I understand the need to screen paid employees-but why me?*

A: There is no such thing as “just a volunteer”. Volunteers do everything paid staff would do. The organization can be just as responsible for something a volunteer does as for something a paid employee does. For example, suppose someone wants to be a volunteer driver. If the organization learns that the person has a bad driving record and the organization ignores the record, or doesn't check, and the volunteer causes an accident while volunteering for the organization, both the organization and the volunteer might be held responsible.

Q: *Could I be held liable for things I do as a volunteer?*

A: Yes. Volunteers can be held liable if they hurt someone while doing their volunteer work. They are not always found to be liable, but they can be. Organizations have to be very careful about who they accept as staff or volunteers because more and more, the courts are holding non-profits and charitable organizations accountable for their volunteers' actions.

Q: *Is doing a background check on a new potential member not a little harsh?*

A: The application wording is purposely designed to give notice up front to any applicant who may have a history of some issues that more stringent screening steps could occur. This will allow the potential member the opportunity to disclose their background and gives them the opportunity to remove him or herself from the application process with their dignity intact.

****Some of the information above appears at <http://volunteer.ca/>.****



KIN CANADA

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

"I hereby request membership in the Kinsmen/Kinette/Kin Club of _____

How did you learn about Kin Canada?

- Current member
- Advertisement
- Website/Google
- Other _____

GENERAL INFORMATION

Name: _____ *Nickname: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Province: _____

Postal Code: _____ Phone: _____

Cell: _____ Email: _____

*Work Email: _____ Occupation _____

Date of Birth: _____

Have you attained the current Canadian minimum age of 19 years? _____

Do you work or live in this community?: Yes__ No__

HAVE YOU BEEN A MEMBER OF KIN CANADA IN THE PAST?

If yes; where & when? _____

SKILLS, EXPERIENCE, INTERESTS

Present/previous employment, community or volunteer involvement:

Other skills, experience and special interests:

Kin Canada seeks to protect its members, volunteers, employees and the communities it serves. References are required for all new applicants. Background checks may be required at any time for a number of positions or events. I understand that I do not have to agree to these background checks and that to do so will not preclude me from being a Kin Canada member, but that refusal to do so may exclude me from holding certain executive positions and /or participating in events that include children and other vulnerable sectors.

Upon acceptance, I agree to be subject to Kin Canada's General Operating Bylaws and it's official policies, and agree to pay a club initiation fee, where applicable and to pay the regular membership dues of the club, zone, district and national association, as billed by the club"

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the above information is true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that a false statement may disqualify me from further consideration as a member or result in termination of my membership.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Authorization for collection of personal information:

I, _____ (name of applicant), authorize Kin Canada to collect personal information concerning my academic background and employment / volunteering history, and to verify the character references I have supplied. I understand that the information obtained will be confidential and shared within Kin Canada only.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

If for any reason this application does not move forward Kin Canada promises to discard all personal information provided on this application.

For Club use only

Interview was conducted on _____

Interview was conducted by _____

References were checked on _____

References were checked by _____

Or

DECLARATION OF SPONSOR

I hereby declare that the above applicant is a personal acquaintance of mine. I understand that by agreeing to be the applicant sponsor that I am vouching on his behalf that he/she is a person of good character.

Signature: _____ Date: _____



REFERENCES for _____
Name of applicant

One personal and one professional

1.Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ **Province:** _____
Postal Code: _____ **Phone:** _____
Email Address: _____

2.Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ **Province:** _____
Postal Code: _____ **Phone:** _____
Email Address: _____

For Club use only

References verified on _____
Date

References verified by _____
Name of active member



FOR CLUB USE ONLY

Re: Application for membership

Club name: _____

Name of Applicant: _____

PROPOSER: _____ **Date:** _____

SECONDER: _____ **Date:** _____

***Please note that this application will need to be made available to Kin Canada Headquarters upon request.**

Publication of Club Bulletin/Minutes

Notice of Application published in the Issue on theday of20.....

Notice of acceptance published in theissue on theday of20.....

Report by Executive

1. Approved by motion by the club/executive at their meeting on theday of 20.....
2. Approved for publications in the Club minutes theday of 20.....
3. No objection having been made the candidate is accepted by a two-thirds vote of the entire Executive thisday of 20



Example Interview Form for prospective members interested in joining Kin



We protect and respect your privacy. Your personal information will only be used for membership purposes.

Interviewer: Please read this statement to prospective member if interview is conducted verbally

Name of prospective member: _____

Date interview is taking place: _____

1. What motivated you to apply to be a member of a Kin Canada club?

2. What do you know about the work done by Kin Canada and its clubs?

3. Do you have any volunteer experience? ____ Yes ____ No

Please explain:

4. Discuss time commitments (e.g., club meetings, district meetings, training, planning) and ask: Can you make this time commitment? ____ Yes ____ No

5. What are your strengths?

6. Do you have any other skills that could benefit the club's operation? i.e. event planning, accounting, book keeping. ____ Yes ____ No

Please explain:

7. Our policy states that certain offences may prevent membership within our organization, some of which include child abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse. Have you ever been charged, convicted or pardoned of one of these abuse offences? __ Yes __ No

It is important to note that a Police Record Check or a Vulnerable Sectors Check might be necessary when participating in events relating to the vulnerable such as children or when working within the club finances, i.e. treasurer.

Do you have any questions regarding Kin Canada or the club?

Name of Interviewer 1 (Print)

Signature

Name of Interviewer 2 (Print)

Signature



Example Reference questions re: prospective members interested in joining Kin



We protect and respect the prospective member's privacy. His or her personal information is used only for membership purposes.

Interviewer: Please read this statement to the person you are contacting for a reference.

Name of prospective member: _____

Date interview took place: _____

Personal Reference:

Name: _____ Contact number: _____

Date of contact: _____

1. How long have you known _____? _____

2. How do you know _____? _____

3. _____ has applied for membership in the _____ (club name).

Do you feel that _____ is a person of good character? ___ Yes ___ No

Please explain:

4. How would you describe _____? _____

5. Is _____ well suited for community volunteer work? ___ Yes ___ No

6. Is there anything I haven't asked that you would like to share with me?

Professional Reference:

Name: _____ Contact number: _____

Date of contact: _____

- 1. How long have you known _____? _____
- 2. How long has _____ worked for your company? _____
- 3. _____ has applied for membership in the _____ (club name). Do you feel that _____ is a person of good character? ___ Yes ___ No

Please explain:

- 4. How would you describe _____?

- 5. Is _____ a team player? ___ Yes ___ No

- 6. Is there anything I haven't asked that you would like to share with me?

(If required by the club)



Date: _____

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter will confirm that _____ will be volunteering for the
Name of volunteer

_____ located at _____.
Name of club club address

Her/His volunteer duties will include:

- Club treasurer
- working with children
- working with the elderly
- working with someone with a physical disability
- working with someone with a mental disability.

Name of President: _____

Signature of President: _____ Date: _____

_____ is requesting a:
Name of club

- Vulnerable Sectors check
- Standard Police Check