

Step 4– Application Process

An application form is the first screening tool that potential volunteers/staff will encounter. It collects basic information – name, address, experience – while giving the organization permission to do reference checks and police records checks (if necessary). The reasons for asking for references and the conditions for a police records check should be noted on the application form.

Asking volunteers to complete an application form signals the seriousness of your organization’s commitment to screening and provides a paper trail that will protect both the volunteer and the organization.

Human rights legislation distinguishes between what can be asked of people before they are hired, and what can be asked after they are hired. Organizations should check with the Human Rights Commission or Council in their respective province or territory for a list of the types of information that may be sought before and after someone is hired.

Difficult subjects include age, sexual orientation, marital status, etc. For a comprehensive chart, consult Volunteer Canada’s Ten Steps workbook (see box below).

Note: If you require a police records check for the position a volunteer is applying for, the police will require a date of birth. This, of course, violates human rights. Therefore, police records check forms cannot be completed until the volunteer has been offered the position (with the condition that they “pass” a police records check).

Summary of Key Concepts

1. Ensure your application form only asks for information related to the requirements of the position.
2. Information requests allowed before a volunteer is selected are much more restricted than information requests allowed after selection.
3. Do not ask for information about characteristics among the prohibited grounds of discrimination, as set out by federal and provincial statutes.

For additional information and exercises on ‘Application Forms’ and other Volunteer Canada Screening Resources, or to order the complete Safe Steps workbook, please call 1-800-670-0401 or visit us at: www.volunteer.ca



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Ontario Screening Initiative

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