



VOLUNTEER SCREENING POLICY **(Effective July 1, 2005)**

In an effort to provide our athletes the safest atmosphere in which to participate, Special Olympics Massachusetts (SOMA) has implemented the following policy:

I. VOLUNTEER CLASSIFICATIONS

A. Class Volunteers

1. Volunteers who have regular, close physical contact with athletes (e.g. coaches, unified partners, medical volunteers)
2. Volunteers in a position of authority or supervision with athletes (e.g. Games Management Team Members, event management team members)
3. Volunteers in a position of trust with athletes
4. Volunteers who handle any amount of cash or other assets of the Program

B. Class B Volunteers

1. Volunteers who only have limited contact with athletes or who have contact with athletes accompanied by coaches and chaperones (e.g. day-of volunteers, Healthy Athletes volunteers)

II. TYPE OF SCREENING

A. Class A Volunteers (Adult)

1. Completion of a Class A Volunteer Registration Form, screen using a national vendor, photo ID check at the time of registration and photo ID check or identity verification check at events. In order to do a thorough national screening, each individual applying to become a Class A volunteer will be required to provide their social security number on the Class A Volunteer Registration Form.

B. Class A Volunteers (Minor)

1. Completion of a Class A Volunteer Registration Form, two personal/professional references who are not related to the minor or the minor's legal guardian (one of whom is from the volunteer applicant's school, church, civic group, etc.), photo ID check at the time of registration and photo ID check or identification verification check at events.

C. Class B Volunteer (Adults and Minors)

1. Completion of a volunteer registration form and photo ID check or identification verification check at events (for minors, IDs are only required to the extent available)

III. MINIMUM ACCEPTABLE BACKGROUND SCREENING

A. Class A Volunteers must be screened using a national vendor that includes the sex offender registry for each State in which the sex offender registry is available electronically. In addition, SOMA conducts a statewide criminal background check and uses the Massachusetts Department of Mental Retardation (DMR) determination of offenses and suspensions.

B. Motor Vehicle Record checks are required if the applicant answers yes to the question regarding suspension or revocation of driver's license, on the Volunteer Application or if the Program has received information through the screening process that the applicant may have motor vehicle related convictions.

IV. PHASE IN AND FREQUENCY

A. New Volunteers

1. Programs shall not permit a New Class A Volunteer applicant (a person who applies after December 31, 2004) to participate as a Class A Volunteer after July 1, 2005 until that person has been screened and approved by the Program.

2. Volunteers registered on or after January 1, 2005, must be re-screened at least every three years.

B. Existing Volunteers

1. Programs must screen all existing volunteers (those registered prior to January 1, 2005) no later than July 1, 2008.

2. Volunteers registered prior to January 1, 2005, must be re-screened every three years following the date of initial screening.

V. RESULTS OF BACKGROUND CHECK USING NATIONAL VENDOR

A. Automatic disqualifiers with no appeals process:

Conviction for crime of:

- a) child abuse
- b) sexual abuse of a minor/adult
- c) causing a child's death
- d) neglect of child or any other individual for whom the potential volunteer had/has responsibility
- e) kidnapping
- f) murder
- g) manslaughter
- h) felony assault
- i) arson
- j) criminal sexual conduct

B. Automatic Disqualifier for Driving on Behalf of Special Olympics Massachusetts

1. DWI, DUI, or comparable offenses within seven years of application

2. Three or more moving violations within the past three years of application

C. Potential disqualifiers for which a Program may establish an appeals process

Arrest for or conviction of any offense listed on the Massachusetts DMR Table of Offenses. These offenses fall into 4 categories:

- a) Lifetime Presumptive Disqualification
- b) Ten Year Presumptive Disqualification

- c) Five Year Presumptive Disqualification
- d) Discretionary Disqualification

VI. NOTIFICATION PROCEDURE FOR DISQUALIFIED OFFENSE

- a) The President/CEO, Vice President for Programs, and Director of Volunteers for SOMA are the only individuals authorized to view criminal background reports.
- b) If a potential Class A volunteer is found to have a offense which will cause him/her to be disqualified from participating in SOMA activities, the President/CEO will send a letter to the potential volunteer indicating that they may not participate.
- c) If an individual has an offense, which falls into the Discretionary Disqualification category, more information may be required of the potential volunteer before a decision is made.
- d) The Director of Volunteers or the Vice President for Programs will contact the Section Director overseeing the program the disqualified volunteer wished to be affiliated with and will inform the Section Director that this person may not volunteer for SOMA.
- e) Quarterly, the Director of Volunteers will e-mail a list of disqualified volunteers, as well as those volunteers who may not drive athletes on behalf of SOMA, to the Section Directors, Associate Section Directors, and Section Assistants.