

Volunteer and Employee Screening

Policy statement: All eparchial and parish volunteers and employees will be properly screened by pastors and/or leaders of parish and/or eparchial ministries to determine their suitability for ministry and/or employment.

Intent of policy: To outline what is required in recruiting and selecting volunteers and employees in a ministry or program
To ensure current and new volunteers and employees meet set standards
To ensure ministries, programs and activities are managed in a safe and professional way

Procedure **The Eparchy of Edmonton follows a ten step screening process.¹**
Before Selection and Recruitment

1) Determine the risk

There are two types of ministries, general risk and high risk. The nature of the ministry and the inherent risk factor dictate the need for screening, not the character of the volunteer. For example, a volunteer who is alone with a vulnerable person necessitates a more thorough screening procedure than a volunteer who participates in a group setting.

a) Examine the potential for abuse in programs/ministries to help prevent or eliminate the risk of abuse by assessing the following:

- i) Vulnerability of those served
- ii) Nature of the service or position
- iii) Context of the service or position
- iv) Degree of supervision given or received

b) General Risk Ministry

Those involved in general risk ministry:

Examples: altar server, choir member, cantor, greeter

- i) do not require close contact with minors or vulnerable adults
- ii) are supervised directly or indirectly
- iii) perform duties in a strictly public setting
- iv) are not involved with parish or eparchial finances

¹ Volunteer Canada, Screening <https://volunteer.ca/screening>

c) **High Risk Ministry**

Those involved in high risk ministry:

Examples: priest, youth leader, treasurer, custodian, parish secretary, Extraordinary Eucharistic Minister, keyholder, catechist

- i) work with minors or vulnerable adults
- ii) work in an unsupervised setting where ministry, food, transportation or other necessities could be provided to minors and/or vulnerable adults
- iii) have access to confidential information
- iv) are entrusted with money, or parish and eparchial finances
- v) are keyholders and have access to church property

2) Write a position description

Volunteer/employee position descriptions:

- a) sends the message that the Eparchy of Edmonton is serious about screening
- b) clearly state responsibilities and expectations
- c) the screening procedure may change according to the risk assessment when a volunteer changes position
- d) [Position Description Sample link](#)

3) Establish a formal selection and recruitment process

- a) requests for volunteers/employees should be done publicly
- b) publicly state that screening is part of the recruitment process and that all applicants are carefully screened

Recruitment and Selection Process

4) Gather Volunteer/Employee Information Forms:

- a) All volunteers and employees must complete a [Volunteer/Employee Information Form](#) to keep accurate records of all volunteers and gather information pertaining to the ministry position
- b) All volunteers and employees must read and sign a [Covenant of Care](#), thereby committing to follow all eparchial safe environment procedures, including the Eparchy's [Code of Conduct](#)

5) Conduct Interviews

- a) be interviewed about their background, skills, interests and availability to determine their suitability for ministry

6) Obtain References

- all high risk ministry volunteers and parish and eparchial employees must provide three references by completing the **References List/PIC Form**
- references must be interviewed using the **Reference Check Questionnaire**

7) Obtain Police Information Checks, Vulnerable Sector Information Checks and **Intervention Records Check**

- a **Police Information Check (PIC)** is requested by an eparchial office, parish, camp, or other approved organization is conducted by the police service to determine if the individual has a criminal record that would exclude them from the ministry for which they are being considered.
- a **Vulnerable Sector Police Information Check (VSC)** includes a check of local police records to determine the existence of a pattern of behaviour that may result in harm to vulnerable persons.
 - a Vulnerable Sector Check may be required when the applicant will be in a position of trust or authority with children under 18 years of age, the elderly or the disabled, or any other vulnerable person or entity.
 - a position of trust or authority must be more than an opportunity for casual contact.²
- **For high risk ministries involving children, volunteer leaders and volunteers are required to have an Intervention Records Check (IRC) under the Alberta Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act. The IRC provides any record indicating whether he/she might have caused a child to need intervention. ???**

After Selection and Recruitment

8) Conduct Orientation and Training

² EPS

- clear information should be provided about the volunteer/employment position, specific tasks, procedures, including specific guidelines for working in high risk ministries
- training sessions are mandatory
- should be a predetermined probationary period
- volunteers are required to read and sign the back of the Volunteer Information Form, thus acknowledging the parameters of the volunteer position **and that they will comply with the policy as outlined???**

9) Supervise and Evaluate

- provide appropriate support and supervision for all volunteers and employees
- offer volunteers and employees the opportunity to give and receive feedback
- use the **Self-Review for Parish Ministers/Volunteers**

10) Follow up with ministry participants

- Proactively seek feedback from program participants and parishioners to monitor the suitability of the volunteer and the quality of the program offered
- advise volunteers and employees that regular contact with program participants is an essential part of eparchial risk management procedures
- advise all volunteers, employees and participants of where to call with questions or concerns
- use the **Participant Follow-Up Report**