

BACKGROUND SCREENING POLICY FOR VOLUNTEERS

PURPOSE

The primary purpose of this policy is to preserve the safety and well-being of all persons who choose to participate in programs offered by the City of Republic Parks & Recreation Department. This policy shall outline procedures for conducting criminal background checks on specific volunteers, as defined by this policy, who may have unsupervised contact with youth under the age of 18 involved in a program offered by the City of Republic Parks & Recreation Department.

BACKGROUND CHECK COMPANY SELECTION

The City of Republic Parks & Recreation Department has selected Southeastern Security Consultants, Inc. (SSCI) to conduct background checks on all volunteers required to go through the background screening process. The Missouri Park & Recreation Association is a national affiliate of the **Operation TLC² Making Communities Safe**, a background check program administered by SSCI. SSCI is a corporation specializing in conducting criminal background checks for volunteers in full compliance of the parks and recreation industry standards and expectations.

BACKGROUND CHECK REQUIREMENT

All individuals who wish to serve as a volunteer and who are at least 18 years of age or older will be subject to a criminal background check. Minors, individuals under the age of 18, who wish to serve as a volunteer will not be subject to a criminal background check. A 30-day grace period shall apply from the date of the 18th birthday in order to allow time for the background screening to be processed. Upon the conclusion of the 30-day grace period, the individual may not participate unless the background screening requirement is met.

Within the athletic division of the Republic Parks & Recreation Department, the following volunteer positions shall be subject to a criminal background check: **Youth Head Coaches and Youth Head Co-Coaches**.

BACKGROUND SCREENING PROCESS

1. Every individual who is required to complete the background screening process must complete, sign, and date a Volunteer Background Release form provided by the Republic Parks & Recreation Department.
2. The Republic Parks & Recreation Department will establish deadlines for volunteers to submit the Volunteer Background Release form dependent on the program in which the volunteer is wishing to take part.
3. All Volunteer Background Release forms must be submitted to the Republic Parks & Recreation Department by the deadline specific to the program at hand. Failure to provide a Volunteer Background Release form by the deadline will automatically disqualify the individual. Falsification of information on any Volunteer Background Release form is grounds for disqualification/revocation/dismissal.
4. Upon receipt of the Volunteer Background Release form, the Republic Parks & Recreation Department will request that SSCI perform the background check for the individual submitting the form.
5. SSCI will then conduct the screening that will entail the following:
 - **Social Security Verification**
Social Security Verification verifies the applicant's name and date-of-birth against the social security number provided. This is utilized to help eliminate the possibility of false names and/or information.
 - **Address Trace**
Address Trace verifies the applicant's current address and identifies previous addresses. This critical information is then utilized to determine the jurisdiction in which the background screening will be conducted.

- **Sex Offender Registry**
A national search of all 50 state repositories and the District of Columbia for known sex offenders.
 - **National Criminal Record Search**
The national database search provides access through the National Background Directory™ to criminal data from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico and the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) history. (Over 800 million criminal records.)
 - **Local Criminal Record Search**
State and county criminal record searches are performed to capture all misdemeanor and felony records. This is based on address history and multiple county searches may be performed. All county record searches are conducted on site in the appropriate courthouse.
6. Results will be available within 2-5 business days. SSCI will cross-reference the screening results with the 'Criteria for Exclusion' listed in this policy and assign a pass/fail grade for each individual. The pass/fail grade will then be communicated to the Republic Parks & Recreation Department by SSCI as soon as the results become available. A pass grade for any volunteer that has zero disqualifying crime matches, a fail grade for any volunteer that has one or more disqualifying crime matches.
 7. All information pertaining to the background check will remain with SSCI, subject to applicable laws subject to disclosure. The Parks & Recreation Department will not be informed of the specific results of any background check; rather, the Parks & Recreation Department will only be issued a pass/fail grade for each volunteer.
 8. In the event of a fail/disqualification, the individual shall not be eligible to volunteer in any role with the Republic Parks & Recreation Department. **The prospective volunteer will be notified immediately of such by telephone or by written notice (certified mail) by the Athletic Superintendent or Parks & Recreation Director.** The prospective volunteer may contact SSCI and request to receive a copy of the background check report, a copy of the "Summary of Your Rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA)" and information on how to dispute the results of the profile if he or she so chooses.
 9. If the volunteer should choose to appeal the contents of the report, the individual is responsible for taking appropriate action with SSCI to have the results of the criminal background check report corrected if they believe information was reported in error. The volunteer is responsible for providing any and all documentation to support his or her claim.

Any person who willfully fails to comply with the background screening process or procedures shall be automatically disqualified. The Republic Parks & Recreation Department will not allow an individual to volunteer who refuses to consent to the background screening policy and procedures.

PROPER DOCUMENTATION

The background check records on all individuals who both pass and fail the screening procedures will remain with SSCI. No records will be kept by the Republic Parks & Recreation Department other than the volunteer's name and the date of a pass or fail.

CONFIDENTIALITY

In respect of the individual and their privacy, all personal information is closely protected, not disclosed outside of the City of Republic, shared within the City of Republic only on a need to know basis, and used solely for the purpose of conducting the background check. In special circumstances, the City of Republic acknowledges a duty to disclose to third parties, including government agencies, certain types of information when the law requires that the information be disclosed.

The **Athletic Superintendent or Parks & Recreation Director** will administer the process of background checks. He/she will be responsible for providing the Volunteer Background Release forms, submitting the received Volunteer Background Release forms to SSCI, and informing volunteers of a pass or fail. All information received as a result of the screening will be kept confidential.

FREQUENCY

Individuals who wish to volunteer for the Republic Parks & Recreation Department in a repeated manner will be screened every two (2) years. All “pass” background checks will expire two (2) years from the date of the “pass” report.

Individuals who receive a failing grade and are deemed as disqualified shall not be able to reapply as a volunteer and go through the background screening process again for one (1) calendar year from the date of their last failing report.

PENDING CASES

Should the background check indicate that an individual has criminal charges pending that fit the description of charges in the Criteria for Exclusion; the individual will be disqualified until there is a resolution of the charges.

Should an approved individual subsequently have any criminal charges brought against him/her that are listed in our Criteria for Exclusion during their term of service to the Republic Parks & Recreation Department, they will be required to immediately disclose the nature of the charges to the **Athletic Superintendent or Parks & Recreation Director** and voluntarily terminate their duties until a determination is made by the **Athletic Superintendent or Parks & Recreation Director** regarding the effect of the pending charges on the individual’s functions within the program.

CRITERIA FOR EXCLUSION

A person who wishes to volunteer for the Republic Parks & Recreation Department may be disqualified and prohibited from doing so if they have been found guilty of any of the following crimes:

For purposes of this policy; Guilty shall mean that a person was found guilty following a trial, entered a guilty plea, entered a no contest plea accompanied by a court finding of guilt (regardless of adjudication), or received court directed programs in lieu of conviction.

SEX OFFENSES

ALL SEX OFFENSES

- **Any sex offense regardless of the amount of time since said offense.**

Examples include, but are not limited to: child molestation, rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, sodomy, prostitution, solicitation, indecent exposure, etc.

FELONIES

ALL FELONY VIOLENCE OFFENSES

- **All felony violence offenses regardless of the amount of time since said offense.**

Examples include, but are not limited to: murder, manslaughter, aggravated assault, kidnapping, robbery, aggravated burglary, etc.

ALL FELONY OFFENSES OTHER THAN VIOLENCE OR SEX

- **All felony offenses other than violence or sex within the past ten (10) years.**

Examples include, but are not limited to: drug offenses, theft, embezzlement, fraud, child endangerment, etc.

MISDEMEANORS

ALL MISDEMEANOR VIOLENCE OFFENSES

- **All misdemeanor violence offenses within the past seven (7) years.**

Examples include, but are not limited to: simple assault, battery, domestic violence, hit and run, etc.

MISDEMEANOR ALCOHOL OFFENSES

- **Two or more misdemeanor alcohol offenses within the past five (5) years.**

Examples include, but are not limited to: driving under the influence, drunk and disorderly, public intoxication, etc.

MISDEMEANOR DRUG OFFENSES

- **All misdemeanor drug offenses within the past five (5) years.**

Examples include, but are not limited to: simple drug possession, possession of drug paraphernalia, etc.

ANY OTHER MISDEMEANORS

- **All other misdemeanor offenses within the past five (5) years that would be considered a danger to children or is directly related to the functions of that volunteer.**

Examples include, but are not limited to: contributing to the delinquency of a minor, providing alcohol to a minor, etc.

PENDING CASES

It is recommended that anyone who has been charged for any of the disqualifying offenses listed above or for cases pending in court should not be permitted to volunteer until the official adjudication of the case. If the disposition of the pending case does not meet the criteria for the disqualification as listed above, the individual would then be cleared and reinstated.

WHY THESE CRIMES?

The National Recreation & Park Association (NRPA) has reviewed the resources of the National Association of Professional Background Screeners and sought the counsel of recognized background screening experts to develop a set of Recommended Guidelines for Volunteer Background Screening in park and recreation settings. These guidelines were produced as a result of this review.

SUMMARY CHECKLIST

- ❑ The Republic Parks & Recreation Department will provide the Background Screening Policy and Volunteer Background Release form to each prospective volunteer.
- ❑ Volunteer retains Background Screening Policy for his or her records and completes, signs, dates and returns Volunteer Background Release to the Republic Parks & Recreation Department.
- ❑ Republic Parks & Recreation Department sends the Volunteer Background Release form to SSCI to perform the background check.
- ❑ SSCI conducts background screening and provides the results along with a pass/fail grade to the Republic Parks & Recreation Department.
- ❑ In the instance of a fail, the Republic Parks & Recreation Department notifies the prospective volunteer of the disqualification.