

Society of St. Vincent de Paul Toronto Central Council

Policy Manual

Policy: **Member Screening and Risk Management**

Policy Number: **15 - 06**

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Statement of Intent or Purpose

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is committed to the safety and well being of those we serve and of our members. This commitment is demonstrated by a combination of measures designed to help ensure that appropriate people are accepted for this form of service, and that there is adequate orientation, training and supervision, and that risks are reduced and managed to the extent that is practical. To this end, and in compliance with policy directives of the Ministry of Community and Social Services and the Archdiocese of Toronto, the following policy is approved for implementation.

Policy:

All members, including Associate and Provisional members (as defined in the Membership Policy), since they regularly or, from time to time, serve vulnerable adults and/or children, shall successfully meet each of the following requirements, as listed and detailed below.

1. Application for Membership
2. Interview
3. Criminal Reference Checks – *see Policy 7- 06*
4. Service Covenant
5. Orientation
6. Risk Management Rules

Procedures:

1. Application

All new applicants shall submit a completed Application for Membership form. Current members will submit a completed Member Information form.

2. Interview

Interviews for members and for applicants for membership will be conducted according to the procedures in place at the time.

3. Criminal Reference Check – *see policy 7 -06*

The member/applicant will submit a police records check application to the police services in the jurisdiction in which they reside. They will then submit the letter from the police services, stating that no convictions or charges/incidences are on file, nationally or locally, or will submit the report outlining these, to the appropriate person/committee.

Where convictions, charges or incidences in the report raise a concern, the onus will be on the member/applicant to demonstrate that these do not have a bearing on their suitability for membership. In this regard, the Toronto Central Council Screening Committee (described below) will carefully consider convictions or other occurrences related to the following:

- issues related to assault (physical or sexual), or difficulty with anger management;
- hate crime issues;
- breach of trust issues;
- ongoing substance abuse;
- ongoing mental health issues;
- other areas that may affect the person's ability to consistently act in the best interests of those being served.

Where a member/applicant has submitted a police report for consideration, the original report will be returned to the person. No copy will be retained in the file. The recommendation of the Screening Committee and the decision of the Toronto Central Council President will be included on the Member Information/Application for Membership form.

4. Service Covenant

Each member/applicant shall complete and submit this form.

5. Orientation

The member/applicant will complete the orientation requirements in place at the time.

6. Risk Management Rules

Rules are in place for all programs operated under the Special Works of Toronto Central Council. In addition to these and any rules approved by a conference or Particular Council that do not contradict the intent of the following rules, the following rules shall apply to all members.

- No member will visit the home of any client unless accompanied by another member or responsible adult;
- All visits to the home of women living on their own will be done by two women or by a male/female team. Where it is not practical to abide by this requirement, previous agreement with the client or an alternative location will be arranged;
- If, in the course of performing one's duties as a Vincentian, it is deemed appropriate to transport an unaccompanied person by automobile, the member must be accompanied by another member, or other adult deemed by the member to be responsible.

In carrying out their duties, the Vincentian will at all times be governed by what a reasonable person would determine to be in the best interests and safety of the client and in the interests of their own safety.

Note: Immediate implementation of 6.ii above may cause a significant disruption in service in some small conferences. Therefore, this aspect of the policy will not come into effect until May 1, 2003. In the interim, members will make every reasonable effort to abide by the spirit of this rule.

Toronto Central Council Screening Committee

The Committee will consist of three members, namely:

- A Vincentian, appointed by motion of Board from time to time, who will act as Chair;
- The Executive Director;
- The Spiritual Adviser (or designate) for Toronto Central Council

The Committee will consider all cases where a police report is presented and will make a determination regarding membership status.

Failure to Comply

Where a member fails to comply with the above requirements or rules, membership will be reviewed by the Toronto Central Council Screening Committee and a recommendation made to the Toronto Central Council President, as per procedures in place at the time.