

## Volunteers Policy and Procedure

Recognizing that the Broad Reach Foundation is a volunteer-based organization, it is necessary to have a framework in place to attract, retain, reward and recognize those individuals who contribute to the club and the sport of ultimate. This **Volunteers Policy** sets out that framework. The Volunteers Policy will be administered by the Executive Director.

### Terminology

#### Duty of Care

A general principle in civil law that identifies the obligations of individuals and organizations to take reasonable measures to care for and protect its participants and deliver its programs in a safe and well-managed manner. Canadian courts will hold organizations accountable on the basis of “neglect” if appropriate screening has not been conducted and some incident has occurred.

#### Full Disclosure

Volunteers have the right to know and to be informed from the outset of all screening procedures that will be used with respect to any position for which they apply.

#### Participants

Those who participate in programs or who receive services from BRF. The word participant is used as a generic term for the participating youth.

#### Position of Trust

1. Situations in which someone has a significant degree of:
  - Authority or decision-making power over another
  - Unsupervised access to another person and to her/his property
  - Conduct with vulnerable individuals.
2. Situations where the success of the service depends on the development of a close, personal relationship between the individuals as in mentoring or coaching.

#### Risk Management

A process of assessing potential problems and developing strategies for solutions to minimize the risk. In other words; it involves looking at the possibilities of loss or injury that might arise in programs, activities and services and taking steps to stop, minimize, prevent or eliminate them. Screening is an exercise in risk management.

### Volunteer

A person who:

- Chooses to undertake a position, service or activity;
- Does this activity in service to an individual, or to assist BRF
- Not coerced or compelled to do this activity;
- Does not receive a salary or wage for this service or activity.

### Vulnerable Person

Normally refers to persons who, because of their age, a disability or other circumstances, whether temporary or permanent, are in a position of dependence on others, or, deemed by the Foundation, to be at greater risk than the general population of being harmed by persons in a position of authority or trust relative to them.

## Statement of Purpose

It is the purpose of Broad Reach:

### **1. To safeguard, in all respects, all of those, but most especially the vulnerable, whom we serve.**

- We have an obligation to protect everyone whom we serve. However, when vulnerable people participate in our programs, we have a much higher obligation to ensure their protection. This means screening, very thoroughly, people who are going to work with them.

### **2. To ensure the integrity, safety and reputation of our volunteers.**

Our volunteer management program ensures that:

- Volunteers are working in an organized, structured environment;
- Policies and procedures outline the volunteers' rights as well as responsibilities, and how they will be supported when an incident occurs;
- Position descriptions, interviews and supervision of the volunteer is placed in a position that is best suited to her/his abilities and interests;
- By doing a risk assessment, we take into consideration the personal safety of all involved. The risk assessment ensures that we are not placing a volunteer in a dangerous location (i.e. unsafe equipment) or placing an inexperienced volunteer alone.

**3. To ensure, that we fulfill all our obligations.**

- The development of screening policies and procedures is intended to meet our legal obligations, but even more importantly adequate screening measures will fulfill our ethical and moral responsibilities to promote wholeness, accountability, trust and care in our organization.

**The Screening Process**

Screening begins long before any person offers herself for volunteering and ends only after the person leaves the organization. The Ten Safe Step process, developed by Volunteer Canada, is divided into three sections: before selecting volunteers, the selection process and managing the volunteers.

**Ten Safe Steps of Screening**

Before selecting volunteers

1. Determine the Risk
2. Position Description
3. Recruitment Process

The selection process

4. Volunteer Information Form
5. Interviews
6. Reference Check
7. Criminal Record Check

Managing the volunteers

8. Orientation and Training
9. Supervision/Evaluation
10. Participant Follow-Up

*Ten Safe Steps of Screening (Detailed)*

**Step 1 - Determine the Risk**

The nature of the organization and the inherent level of risk involved dictate the degree of screening required. The greater the risk, the greater will be the degree of screening applied. Factors that will help determine the level of risk include: the participant, the setting, the nature of the activity required and the level of supervision.



Volunteers and employees who are active in more than one organization will be screened for the position with the highest level of risk. When a person moves from a position with a general level of risk to a position of high risk, the other screening steps will be carried out for the new high risk position.

### **Step 2 - Organization Position Description**

There will be a role description for every volunteer organization position. This description defines the tasks of the positions and sets the ground rules for all involved. By documenting the role, these descriptions provide greater protection for the youth, the volunteer and the organization.

### **Step 3 - Recruitment Process**

All recruitment for volunteers and staff will be done in a formal public process.

Requests for volunteers should be done in a public way through notices in newsletters, Facebook and the website. The notice should be accompanied by an "Organization Position Description" and notice that a "Volunteer Information Form" will need to be completed. These two items are powerful screening tools in themselves and prompt people to reflect on the seriousness of their call to this organization even before any formal interview. Recruiting materials will clearly indicate that the organization takes its responsibility towards participants seriously and screens all applicants.

Do not leave people with the impression that everyone who applies will be accepted. Be very clear that you are extremely careful about selecting those who work in organization and do not apologize for that fact.

### **Step 4 – Volunteer Information Form**

An application form must be completed for all organization positions.

The completion of an application form is intended to ensure that adequate records are kept. In addition, as with the use of a organization position description, asking individuals to complete an application form demonstrates the seriousness of your commitment to screening and provides a paper trail that will protect both the applicant and the organization.

### **Step 5 - Interview**

An interview will be conducted for all high-risk organization positions.

The interviews will be carried out with at least two interviewers. The interview provides you with an opportunity to talk with the applicant about her/his background, gifts, talents, skills, interests and availability. It also allows an opportunity to explore any concerns you may have about the suitability of this person for the organization position in question and to ensure there will be a "good fit" between the person and the organization.

The interview includes questions, which are directly related to the specific risk concerns for the position being applied for: i.e. interpersonal style with children or vulnerable adults, history working with money, and so on. Notes from the interview will be kept in a secure file.

### **Step 6 - Reference Check**

Three (3) References must be completed for all high-risk positions.

It should be made clear to the referee that the individual is being considered for a position of trust i.e. with children, with other vulnerable people, with money, etc. Reference forms must be kept in the volunteer's file.

A reference check may be the most effective screening step during the selection process. References will confirm the background, gifts, talents and skills of the applicant and will provide an outside opinion on the suitability of the person for the organization.

### **Step 7 – Criminal Record Check**

A Criminal record check report must be received for all high-risk positions.

The police record check signals, in a very public way, our concern about the safety of our people. The candidate will be asked to comply with obtaining her/his police report. If any conviction appears, the candidate will be asked to provide details and give permission to confirm their nature with the police. It is not only important to know if someone has been convicted of a crime, but also to know the nature and severity of the crime.

The Limitations of Criminal Record Checks

- The report is only good up to the checking day
- A recent conviction may not show yet
- There are time lags in sending records from one country to another



- The individual may be using an alias so only fingerprint checks will be accurate
- The person may have obtained a “pardon” and therefore is no longer on the list
- OR, the person may never have been caught!

We must NOT rely solely on Criminal Record Checks, to do so would be dangerous.

However, despite the limitations of Criminal Record Checks, they do signal, in a public way, that we are concerned about the safety of our participants, particularly in those cases (high-risk volunteer organization positions) where the group is committed to a full and complete screening process.

### **Step 8 - Orientation and Training**

Appropriate orientation and training will be provided along with guidelines for working with the vulnerable for all organization positions.

In fairness to volunteers, it is essential that orientation and training be provided to ensure that the individual is able to perform her/his organization effectively.

Applicants are required to sign the back of their volunteer information form stating that they have read the position description and the screening policy and that they understand and will comply with them.

### **Step 9 - Supervision and Evaluation**

All positions will be appropriately supervised.

The intensity and nature of the supervision will vary with the risk involved in the position. This entails a more “senior or experienced” person in the organization spending time with the incumbent to observe, support and give feedback on their gifts, skills, style, strengths and challenges. In the case of high-risk the supervision should be systematic and recorded.

There will be a Self-Review on a regular basis. By instituting a formal supervision and evaluation process, the volunteer can be observed "on the job" and can be monitored on an ongoing basis.

### **Step 10 - Participant Follow Up**

Management will monitor all high-risk positions by checking from time to time on participant satisfaction.



Regular ongoing contact with program participants helps to ensure that programs remain relevant and of high quality. Such monitoring can also act as an effective deterrent to someone who might otherwise do harm and go undetected. It is vital that the BRF lets all volunteers know that regular contact with program participants is part of our risk management procedures and that this practice is not personal.

### **Screening Protocol for Each Risk Level**

The nature of particular positions and the level of risk involved will determine the intensity of the screening process employed.

#### **I. Protocol for General Risk Organization Positions**

General Risk Volunteer Positions within our organization will use the following steps:

- Determine the Risk
- Organization Position Description
- Volunteer Information Form
- Orientation and Training
- Supervision and Evaluation

#### **II. Protocol for High-Risk Organization Positions**

High-Risk BRF Volunteer Positions will use ALL of the "Safe Steps of Screening".

- Determine the Risk
- Organization Position Description
- Appropriate Recruitment Process
- Volunteer Information Form
- Interview
- Reference Check
- Criminal Record Check
- Orientation and Training
- Supervision and Evaluation
- Participant Follow-Up

### Checklist for GENERAL Risk Volunteer Positions

- Have the Volunteer Information Form completed, all of pages 1, 2 and 4.
- For those under 18 years of age, ensure that the appropriate Volunteer Information Form is used and if required the Parent/Guardian signs the Consent.
- Ensure that the person receives a copy of the Position Description.
- Provide the contact information of the Coordinator/Supervisor/Executive director.

**Once the completed Volunteer Information Form is returned, the person will then be able to begin their BRF volunteer organization position.**

- Create a file for the person.
- Put the following documents in the file;
  - Organization Position Description
  - Volunteer Information Form
- Have the Volunteer Information Form completed in its entirety; all sections.
- For those under 18 years of age, ensure that the appropriate Volunteer Information Form is used and if required the Parent/Guardian signs the Consent.
- Ensure that the person receives a copy of the Organization Position Description.
- Provide the contact information of the Organization Coordinator/Supervisor/Executive Director.
- Conduct the Interview in-person, with two members of the BRF Volunteer Screening Committee and using the appropriate forms.
- Conduct three personal reference checks using the appropriate forms.

**For those over 18 years of age; once the Interview and Reference Checks have been conducted.**

- Give the necessary form to obtain the Criminal Record Check report and receive the completed form back with required ID's.
- Prepare a list of persons for whom we will receive a Criminal Record Check report.
- Wait for the report via mail from Total Security Management (TSM).
- Executive Director will take any necessary action and then notify the BRF Volunteer Screening Committee about whether or not they may continue with the Orientation of the person to this position. The ED is responsible for keeping this information strictly confidential and for ensuring that it is confidentially prepared for filing.



**The person will then be able to begin their BRF volunteer organization position.**

- Create a file for the person
- Put the following documents in the file;
  - Organization Position Description
  - Volunteer Information Form
  - Interview forms
  - Reference forms
  - Criminal Record Check report in a sealed envelope and is marked 'confidential' (for those over 18 years of age)
  - *Annually add the completed "Self Review" form and "Offence Declaration" form.*

### **Strategies for the Management of Risk**

When a position is classified as high risk, an effort will be made to manage or reduce the risk by applying one of the following strategies:

1. Eliminate the risk

There may be activities that have risks and consequences so great that they should be discontinued.

For example: we may decide an overnight sailing trip is an activity with unacceptable risks.

2. Transfer or Share Liabilities

Involve other organizations or service groups, which are better prepared to handle the specific risk issue.

For example: transportation of youth could be arranged through a local bus or taxi company.

3. Assume the risk but minimize it wherever possible

Design all volunteer tasks with risks in mind. Ensure that volunteers are screened appropriately. Ensure everyone gets a copy of the Guidelines for BRF Volunteers.

### **Abuse/Inappropriate Conduct Reporting Protocol**

In the case of the discovery of abuse by or against a volunteer, employee, or any other person, the person who has uncovered this information has the responsibility to report it in the following manner:

**IN THE CASE OF A CHILD UNDER 16 YEARS OF AGE THERE ARE TWO (2) STEPS:**



Step 1: Contact the local Children’s Aid Society (CAS) (or Catholic CAS) to report an abuse. \* This means that if a person suspects abuse, they must report this to the Children’s Aid Society personally. They are not to pass the information to anybody else with the expectation that he will report it. You can find your local CAS in the telephone directory.

Legislation states that if a person, including a person who performs professional or official duties with respect to children, has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is or may be in need of protection on the grounds outlined in this section of the Act, shall forthwith report the suspicion and the information on which it is based directly to the Children’s Aid Society and not rely on any other person to report on her/his behalf. {Child & Family Service Act, s.72 (1)}.

*A person who makes a report about a child to the Children’s Aid Society in accordance with this section is protected from legal action, unless the report was made maliciously or without reasonable grounds for the suspicion. {Child & Family Service Act, s.72(7)}.*

Step 2: Contact the Executive Director to update her/him on the situation. The Executive Director will notify the volunteer that she/he is to immediately withdraw from her/his organization until further notice. The Executive Director will then notify the President.

**IN THE CASE OF A PERSON, 16 YEARS OF AGE AND OLDER:**

Contact the Executive Director to update him on the situation. S/he will in turn notify the President.

Documentation of Suspected Abuse/Inappropriate Conduct:

Document all statements, conversations and observations as soon as possible. Keep these documents strictly confidential and only pass them on to the Executive Director.

*Report to Include;* Dates, Times, Name of Persons Involved, Locations, a clear and complete Summary of Incident, Situation or Warning Signs.

**Complaint Resolution Procedure**

The BRF is committed to open and on-going communication with Volunteers. It is anticipated that most issues will be resolved within the BRF at the personal level. Volunteers should feel free to discuss any concerns they may have with their Executive Director.

When there is a complaint or a disagreement, misunderstanding or expressed dissatisfaction on the part of a Volunteer relating to the conditions of their organization position, the



purpose of these procedures is to provide Volunteers with a uniform process for a prompt and equitable resolution when a complaint or dispute exists.

The complaint resolution process is not intended to be adversarial in nature. The objective of this process is to resolve disputes in a cooperative atmosphere. Volunteers are assured freedom from restraint, interference, coercion, discrimination or reprisal in their pursuit of resolution through the complaint resolution process. Retaliation, of any kind, is absolutely prohibited.

If a Volunteer believes that any volunteer condition or the application of any policy is unjust or inequitable, and has been unable to resolve the issue through discussion with the Executive Director, the following process should be used:

Steps 1:

The Volunteer will set forth his/her complaint in writing, stating the nature of the complaint, all relevant details, and the desired remedy. The written complaint must be submitted to the Executive Director within ten (10) working days after discussion of the complaint with the immediate supervisor. The Executive Director will investigate the complaint and reply in writing within ten (10) working days after receipt of a written complaint.

*Incident Report to Include:* Dates, Name of Person Reporting Incident, Location of Incident, Parties involved in incident and their roles, a clear and complete Summary of Incident and the Desired Remedy.

Step 2:

If the complaint was not resolved in Step 1, the Volunteer may, within ten (10) working days of receipt of the Executive Director's written response, present his/her written complaint to the President. The President will investigate the complaint and reply in writing within ten (10) working days after receipt of the written complaint with appropriate recommendations. The decision on the matter shall be final.

### **Criteria for Rejecting a Volunteer Applicant**

Grounds include;

- They pose a danger to others
- They are not able to dedicate the necessary time commitment
- They do not have the skills to carry out the responsibilities as outlined in the Organization Position Description
- Other Organization Position Description requirements cannot be met
- The Executive Director has some information that would prevent the applicant from participating.

The information that a volunteer applicant has been rejected must never be made public. If there is uncertainty about selecting a person, the Executive Director must be consulted.

### **Notifying Unsuccessful Volunteer Applicants**

When a person is believed to be unsuitable for the position for which they applied, this information must never be made public; this information is CONFIDENTIAL. Report your findings only to the President and provide her/him with the relevant information needed.

- When you feel you have an inappropriate candidate, assess the reasons for your reaction. Is there a clear lack of qualifications or is there something less tangible that is making you cautious? Just as in the hiring of employees, when screening volunteers all the techniques of personnel management should be used.
- The potential need to turn someone down is why it is so important to make it clear as you recruit that candidates must undergo the entire screening process. It is so much harder to turn someone down if you have implied that everyone will be accepted.
- Prior to calling an unsuccessful applicant, review the interview notes for their positive qualifications as well as those areas, which needed further development. Avoid giving negative feedback especially if you are not asked for feedback, but do find a positive way to make your suggestion if it is appropriate.
- It is vital, however, not to evade turning someone down by saying “we’ll call you” and then not doing so. If you must turn any applicants down, be clear about it. You can still be supportive in their search for the right volunteer placement for them. There may well be general risk organization positions that would work for this person.

### **Confidentiality**

All information gathered either in writing or verbally must always be kept in the strictest of confidences in all circumstances except when;

- A person threatens suicide
- A minor (16 and under) reports physical or sexual abuse
- Someone’s life is in danger
- Any person’s physical well being is threatened (including your own)
- Someone exhibits psychotic behaviour
- A situation occurs that is beyond your own experience and expertise.

In these situations it is appropriate for volunteers to always notify the Executive Director.

The information gathered for the purposes of screening will be accessible only to the volunteer applicant and to the BRF Governance Committee Members and the Executive Director.



Confidentiality is a serious issue. We must be aware of the potential legal liability if information about someone is made public. Even if something that is written or said is true, telling it to others or allowing them to see something written may still constitute an invasion of privacy, which might also give rise to a lawsuit.

All volunteers have the right to expect that any personal information will be kept confidential. It is important that these guidelines on the maintenance and confidentiality of records be explained to all volunteers and volunteer applicants so that they know who has access to their information. It should be made clear to them that they can examine their file at any time and may insert documentation of their own if they so desire (such as certificates and awards) however, the file remains the property of the organization.

### Record Keeping Protocol

High Risk Volunteer Files must contain:	General Risk Volunteer Files must contain:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteer Information Form</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteer Information Form</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organization Position Description or list of Ministries involved in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organization Position Description or list of Ministries involved in</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview Notes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any Letters of Praise/Appreciation, Awards, Certificates of Training, etc.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reference Forms (three)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Envelope (sealed, marked 'confidential' and signed by the Executive Director) containing the Criminal Record Check</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yearly Self-Review &amp; Annual Declaration Forms</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participant Follow up (if applicable)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any Letters of Praise/Appreciation, Awards, Certificates of Training, etc.</li> </ul>	
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Files are to be kept in a locked and secure filing system on BRF property; the files must be alphabetical by last name and clearly labeled. Mark the High Risk files so that they stand out for easy recovery.

Criminal Record Check Reports: The Executive Director is the only person who will handle Criminal Record findings. To ensure that no one else has access to this document, the Executive Director will put the findings in an envelope, seal the envelope and sign the seal of the envelope. This is placed in the volunteer's secure file.



File Retention (How long files must be kept)

All files will be kept and updated while the volunteer is in a position at the BRF. For legal reasons data on screening and ongoing service should be kept on file at the BRF for seven (7) years after a person has ceased her or his organization and then all files should be shredded.