



## Vulnerable Sector Screening Policy

April 2015

It is the policy of ISE Ontario to require a Vulnerable Sector Screen for anyone 18 years of age or older who will have contact with young people under the age of 18 while in the care and supervision of the organization or residing with a host family. A similar screening process is required from our partner organizations.

Definition: Vulnerable Sector Screening (VSS) is provided for individuals who intend to work or volunteer with anyone who is defined as vulnerable because of their age, disability, or other circumstance. This type of screening is required for persons 18 and older during the hosting period, whether as volunteers or employees with ISE Ontario or as hosting families that receive visiting students in their homes through ISE exchange programs.

### Procedures

- 2-1 Various jurisdictions in Ontario refer to this process by different terms. It may be called a Police Vulnerable Sector Check (PVSC), Vulnerable Sector Screening Programs, or something similar.
- 2-2 Persons required by this policy to obtain such a check, should enquire of their local police authority as to how they should apply for the screening and at what cost. Some jurisdictions will waive the fee for a volunteer with a non-profit organization which could include the hosting family. ISE will provide a letter (Appendix A) to verify the volunteer nature of those associated with the programs whether as workers or hosts.
- 2-3 The ISE Ontario website will clearly indicate the need for VSS for all families, or anyone else living in the home, applying for an exchange. No application will be processed or matched until a clear record is provided. In cases where the record is not clear, permission to participate will be done on an individual basis. The VSS will be one of the items on the checklist of things to be submitted with the Application Form.
- 2-4 The Executive Director will be responsible to do due diligence in examining any records submitted in confidence which require an objective decision regarding the nature of the incident recorded in the report received from the police and whether or not it poses a threat to a visiting student.
- 2-5 Those required to obtain a VSS to volunteer with ISE or to host a student include:

All persons, 18 years and older, who are in contact with young people as part of their role in providing or promoting ISE programs;



Parents and family members, 18 years and older, who will be residing on a permanent basis in the home where visiting students will live during their exchange. This includes family members who do not live within the hosting home but who have the right to keep the exchange student and his or her partner overnight as the result of a custody sharing arrangement.

- 2-6 Among those not required to obtain a VSS but who may be present when a visiting student lives in the hosting home include:

Anyone under the age of 18 who does not have a criminal record or charges pending;

Visitors to the home such as university student siblings who return on an infrequent basis;

Grandparents, other relatives, or friends who may stay overnight on an infrequent basis or invite the exchange partners to their home on an infrequent basis for a day or overnight stay.

The visiting exchange student is not to stay overnight alone at any other home other than those mentioned in the application to host an exchange.

- 2-7 If there are special circumstances, ISE may require a letter (Appendix B) indicating that the person or persons in question do not have a criminal record or charges pending. In such cases, a decision, at the discretion of the Executive Director, will be made.
- 2-8 ISE Ontario will only accept a VSS which has been obtained by applying in person to the local police authority within one year of the start of the hosting period.
- 2-9 If a family is experiencing a lengthy delay in receiving the results of a VSS, parents may submit the receipt showing the check has been applied for with the Application until the document arrives.

Failure to provide a VSS report will result in the Application being rejected by ISE Ontario.