

Chapter 4 Human Resources Management

4.14 Volunteer Policy

Policy Statement

The Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority (APSEA) recognizes and supports the important role that parents/guardians and other community members play in supporting the delivery of programs and services, while maintaining the safety of learners and the integrity of programs and services. Therefore, APSEA shall ensure that, through supervisors, appropriate procedures are in place for the screening, selection, orientation, training, supervision, recognition, and evaluation of volunteers with APSEA.

Definitions

Certificate of Conduct – Refers to the screening process of requiring a criminal reference check, including a vulnerable sector check, by a police force including, but not limited to, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP).

Criminal Offence Declaration (COD) – A Criminal Offence Declaration is a written declaration by an individual, listing any and all charges and convictions for criminal offences under the Criminal Code of Canada and provincial Acts since last submitting a Criminal Reference Check or Criminal Offence Declaration to APSEA, up to and including the date of the declaration.

High Risk Settings/Situations – Volunteers who work with small groups/individual children in isolated areas or participate in off-site field trips are considered to be in a high-risk setting. These volunteers will be under occasional supervision of a supervisor/teacher or educational professional from within APSEA (e.g., a volunteer for an offsite fieldtrip to a post-secondary institution or play group at a public library).

Low Risk Settings/Situations – Volunteers who are under the direct and constant supervision of a teacher or educational professional are considered low risk. A low-risk situation might also include the engagement of volunteers in open common areas at schools, where teachers/educational professionals are present (e.g., volunteers assisting a teacher a classroom), or volunteers who do not come into contact with children .

Medium Risk Settings/Situations – Volunteers who might be working with a large group of students in isolated areas with frequent supervision by a supervisor/ teacher or educational professional from APSEA are considered to be in a medium risk setting (e.g., a volunteer non-teaching coach for a school team or extra-curricular club/activity who meets with students in the gym or a room within a school where the teacher sponsor does periodic checks on the activities of the group).

Volunteer – An individual who, with the approval of a supervisor or director, agrees to undertake a task that supports learning within a classroom, a virtual setting, or a setting related to an APSEA activity. Such a task is undertaken without pay and under the supervision of a supervisor/teacher or educational professional from within APSEA.

Policy Objectives

APSEA recognizes that volunteers make a valuable contribution to educational programming and services. Volunteers also derive a sense of satisfaction from their involvement and build important skills in becoming contributing community members. APSEA also recognizes its responsibility to ensure children’s safety and security, and that appropriate measures are taken when selecting volunteers.

Application

This policy is applicable to all programs within APSEA, including co-curricular and extra-curricular programs, and to all those who aspire to volunteer for the various programs and services offered within and associated with APSEA.

Policy Directives

1. Prior to being approved for volunteer duties, all aspiring volunteers will be required to complete a Volunteer Information Form and a Volunteer Agreement that will be reviewed by the supervisor/director.
2. All aspiring volunteers will be required to complete a Criminal Offense Declaration to be submitted to Human Resources on an annual basis. In addition to submitting an annual Criminal Offense Declaration, aspiring volunteers for medium or high-risk settings/situations will be required to obtain all appropriate required background checks in the province where the work is being performed.
3. Volunteers for medium or high-risk settings/situations must provide an updated satisfactory background check every two years.

4. APSEA reserves the right to require that any active volunteer provide an updated satisfactory Criminal Record Check at any time during a school year.
5. The supervisor shall ensure volunteers are provided with orientation to the work location, appropriate to their volunteer roles and responsibilities.
6. The supervisor shall ensure that volunteers are advised of policies and expectations relevant to the volunteer events and tasks.
7. The supervisor shall ensure that volunteers are provided with a level of supervision appropriate to their volunteer roles and responsibilities.
8. The personal information of volunteers shall be treated as confidential, and will be collected, maintained, used, disclosed, and disposed of in accordance with the [Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act \(ATIPPA\)](#), in Newfoundland and Labrador, the [Right to Information and Protection of Privacy Act \(RTIPPA\)](#) in New Brunswick, the [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act \(FOIPOP\)](#) in Nova Scotia, and the [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act \(FOIPOP\)](#) in Prince Edward Island.

Accountability

All APSEA Employees

APSEA employees are responsible to understand and follow all APSEA policies and documents related to volunteers.

Superintendent/Directors/Supervisors/Managers

As members of the Leadership Team, these individuals are responsible for implementing APSEA's volunteer policy and any related documents. Members of the Leadership Team will take reasonable measures to bring this policy to the attention of all employees and to ensure directives are being followed.

Monitoring

- The Superintendent of APSEA or their designate will review this policy annually.

References

- [Protection of Privacy Policy](#)
- [Reporting Child Abuse Policy](#)
- [Respectful Workplaces Policy](#)
- [Background Check Policy](#)

This is an organizational policy designed to supplement other APSEA policies and is not intended to replace or preclude them. If a situation occurs where there is a conflict between application of this policy and any other APSEA policy, the policy most specific to the situation will apply.

Approval Dates

Approved: December 2023

Reviewed/Revised: