

VOLUNTEER & SCREENING POLICY

Date created: October 6, 2015	Review date: July 8, 2021	Date approved: July 12, 2021
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1 DEFINITIONS

The following terms have these meanings in this Policy:

- a. *BCAS* is BC Artistic Swimming, doing business as BCAS, the governing body for artistic swimming in BC
- b. *CAS* is Canada Artistic Swimming, doing business as CAS, the governing body for artistic swimming in Canada
- c. *Club* means an organized group of registered persons associated for competitive or recreational artistic swimming
- d. *Coach* means any person who instructs figures or routines on a regular basis and includes Instructor, which is a specific level of coach who teaches AquaGO! or other recreational programming
- e. *Executive Director* means the BCAS Executive Director
- f. *Including* means including but not limited to
- g. *Member* means any club registered with BCAS and CAS
- h. *Minor* refers to any person under 18 years of age
- i. *Officials* means all judges including practice judges, referees, and scorers
- j. *Organized group travel* refers to travel where BCAS, a Member, or an affiliated club makes the travel arrangement and Registrants travel as a group by plane, train, bus, or personal or rented vehicles
- k. *Provincial or Territorial Section* means a provincial or territorial organization that is responsible for the management of artistic swimming within its provincial or territorial boundaries, such as BCAS
- l. *Registrant* means any individual that has fulfilled the requirements of registration as required by BCAS and CAS and has paid any associated registration fees to BCAS and CAS.
- m. *Vulnerable person* refers to individuals who, because of age, disability, or other circumstances, whether temporary or permanent are in a position of dependence on others or are otherwise at a greater risk than the general population of being harmed by a person in a position of authority or trust relative to them. This includes children, youth, and people with physical, developmental, or other disabilities.
- n. *Vulnerable sector check* refers to a search based on a name or gender and date of birth against the RCMP National Repository of Criminal Records, Pardoned Sex Offender Database and various other police databases.

2 BACKGROUND

BC Artistic Swimming benefits from a vibrant, talented, and enthusiastic group of contributors such as event volunteers, coaches, officials, Board members, committee members, and others involved in various roles. Without these critical contributions, the organization could not function, thrive, or grow. However, it is critical that BC Artistic Swimming fosters a caring, fair, safe environment for all participants through quality programs and services, as well as skilled leaders and volunteers.

BC Artistic Swimming's Volunteer Policy aligns with safe sport practices established by the Responsible Coaching Movement, the *Canada Artistic Swimming (CAS) Screening Policy*, and other safe sport best practices endorsed by members of the national and provincial sport sectors.

3 APPLICATION & ALIGNMENT

This policy applies to BCAS and its Members and Registrants and aligns with the *CAS Screening Policy*. In such instances as this policy is in conflict with the *CAS Screening Policy*, BC Artistic Swimming will defer to the national policy and procedures.

BC Artistic Swimming is responsible for ensuring that all Participants in designated positions that are registered in the province of BC have a valid E-PIC check or other required background checks on file at the time they submit registration information for the current year.

Affiliate Member Clubs are responsible for ensuring persons involved in club programs and services achieve the appropriate screening requirements and align their activities with the safe sport best practices outlined herein.

All members are accountable for their behaviour and for disclosing any and all information that may be relevant to the safety of other members, including if a member is charged with, subsequently receives a conviction for, or is found guilty of an offense. Failure to disclose relevant information to BC Artistic Swimming or the Affiliate Member Club may result in disciplinary action in accordance with *BC Artistic Swimming's Discipline and Complaints Policy*.

4 PURPOSE

Policy record checks are an important part of the screening process to determine suitability of employees, board members, coaches, volunteers, and other service providers. Policy record checks can mitigate risk of theft and fraud and can help organizations identify individuals who pose a risk to minors and other vulnerable persons.

Screening is an important part of providing a safe sporting environment and has become a common practice among sport organizations that provide programs and services to the community. BCAS and its affiliated clubs are responsible by law to do everything reasonable to provide a safe and secure environment for participants in its programs, activities, and events. Enforcing this screening policy and requiring the submission of valid police record checks and other background checks, as appropriate, is part of this duty of care.

5 TEMPORARY VOLUNTEERS

Temporary volunteers fulfill duties for BC Artistic Swimming during provincial competitions and events such as figure scorers, runners, timers, music person, announcer, videographer, assistant scorer, volunteer coordinator, hospitality, program sales, raffle ticket sales, set up and tear down. These volunteers perform their duties in an open, public environment and are not given direct access to athletes or vulnerable people.

Temporary volunteers must:

- (a) Be registered in the CAS Online Registration System
- (b) Sign up for volunteer duties through the electronic platform used by BC Artistic Swimming or the host organization.
- (c) Are encouraged to have a cleared criminal record check on file with their Affiliated Member Club but are not restricted from volunteering in a short-term role at a BCAS event.

6 SHORT-TERM VOLUNTEERS

Short-term volunteers fulfill duties for BC Artistic Swimming during provincial competitions and events such as photographer and security. While these volunteers generally perform their duties in an open, public environment, they may have access to athletes and vulnerable people and/or images of athletes in a private setting.

Short-term volunteers must:

- (a) Be registered in the CAS Online Registration System or have a contractual relationship with BC Artistic Swimming.
- (b) Sign up for volunteer duties through the electronic platform used by BC Artistic Swimming or the host organization, as appropriate.
- (c) Have a cleared criminal record check on file with their Affiliated Member Club or BC Artistic Swimming.

7 LONG-TERM VOLUNTEERS

Long-term volunteers make a meaningful and ongoing commitment to BC Artistic Swimming in a volunteer role such a member of the Board of Directors, official, committee member, provincial program chaperones, billets, etc. For the purposes of engaging long-term volunteers who undertake a variety of functions and responsibilities for the organization, BC Artistic Swimming undertakes a comprehensive screening process that may include any of the following actions:

- (a) Identification of Risks
- (b) Position Descriptions
- (c) Recruitment
- (d) Application Processes
- (e) Interviews
- (f) Reference Checks
- (g) Criminal Record Checks
- (h) Orientation and Training
- (i) Supervision and Evaluation
- (j) Ongoing Follow Up

7.1 IDENTIFICATION OF RISKS

BC Artistic Swimming conducts a regular review of its Risk Registry to re-evaluate its risks and mitigation strategies. Recognizing that the safety and well-being of its members is paramount and in alignment with the CAS Screening Policy, all staff and volunteer roles that constitute a position of trust or authority require screening. BC Artistic Swimming also mitigates risk by aligning with the Responsible Coaching Movement ensuring that all persons with direct contact with minor or vulnerable persons:

- (a) Complete screening and criminal record checks as outlined herein,
- (b) Implement the Rule of Two,
- (c) Complete Ethical Training.

7.2 POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

BC Artistic Swimming will develop position descriptions for all long-term volunteer positions. Some roles may be grouped into general areas of responsibilities such as chaperones, committee terms of reference, directors at large etc. while others require specific scope of responsibility and accountability such as staff, contractors, President, Director of Finance, etc. Position descriptions will identify the supervisor, who may be a staff person or another volunteer, and will specify screening requirements for each role.

7.3 RECRUITMENT

Volunteer opportunities, the relevant position description and application process for long-term volunteer positions are published and shared with members or the public, as appropriate. The primary platform for recruitment is the BC Artistic Swimming website, electronic notifications distributed to members and social media.

7.4 APPLICATION PROCESSES

The application process for volunteer opportunities will be outlined in the electronic notice. Applicants are expected to provide their personal contact information, emergency contact information, prior volunteer experience, no less than 2 references and, if/when required, a Consent to a Criminal Record Check.

For positions that are filled through an election process, the election should not be confirmed until the elected party completes a Criminal Record Check. Verification of the nominee's experience and reference checks are to be conducted by the *Governance & Nominations Committee* in advance of the election.

7.5 INTERVIEWS

All volunteer candidates may be interviewed to determine suitability of the person for the position, and conversely, suitability of the position for the person. An interview can take on many forms including, but not limited to:

- (a) The presentation of qualifications and answering members' questions when nominated to the Board of Directors;
- (b) A phone call from a program leader;
- (c) A formal or informal discussion with a candidate to discuss the position and its responsibilities;
- (d) A formal interview with pre-determined questions.

7.6 REFERENCE CHECKS

The references for long-term volunteer candidates will be verified prior to the position being confirmed. Upon completion of the reference checks, if the supervisor determines that the applicant is not suitable for the position, the applicant will be advised of the decision to not appoint them to the position.

A reference check will always be undertaken when hiring employees, contractors, or coaches over the age of 18. It is recommended that organizations conduct a 360-degree check and require references from individuals who have supervised, worked with, and reported to the applicant, where available. Employment, education, and credentials verification are also recommended for such positions.

7.7 CRIMINAL RECORD CHECKS

The process for Criminal Record Checks will be in compliance with the *CAS Screening Policy*.

Any person over the age of 18 acting in any of the following designated positions, whether voluntary or paid, must complete a Criminal Record Check:

- (a) BC Artistic Swimming Board of Directors
- (b) BC Artistic Swimming Committee Members
- (c) Provincial and National Officials

- (d) Any coach including competitive, recreational and AquaGO! Instructors, assistant coaches, and junior coaches
- (e) Any person involved in the delivery of developmental programs to minors and other vulnerable persons such as clinics or camps.
- (f) Any person affiliated with provincial teams whether paid or volunteer
- (g) Any person affiliated with BC Artistic Swimming whether paid or volunteer
- (h) Members of Affiliated Club Executives
- (i) Employees and Persons under contract by BC Artistic Swimming or a Member Club
- (j) All chaperones, including parent chaperones, of minors or other vulnerable persons
- (k) Any person with access to sensitive personal or confidential information, financial records or money
- (l) Any role deemed by BC Artistic Swimming or its Affiliated Club Members to be a position of trust or authority

7.7.1 Enhanced Policy Information Check (E-PIC)

Criminal Record Checks must be completed through Sterling Talent Solutions online police record check service. The E-PIC process provides a secure database to store and share results and manage renewals while ensuring Participant information remains confidential.

The Sterling Talent Solutions E-PIC is valid for five (5) years. All participants who are in designated positions must apply for and obtain, at their own expense, the Sterling Talent Solutions E-PIC check via the CAS customized landing page. The Participant will be required to provide written consent and to verify their identity online. The Participant will designate CAS, BCAS or their affiliated club or some combination thereof, as appropriate, as the requesting organization(s). Results will be returned simultaneously to the Participant's personal account and to the requesting organization(s).

E-PIC results must be shared as follows:

Designated Position	Organizations
Any coach over the age of 18	CAS, BCAS & affiliated club
Level 3 Official or higher	CAS, BCAS & affiliated club
Level 1-2 Officials	BCAS & affiliated club
All other designated positions	The organization(s) for which the Participant is working or volunteering

7.7.2 Re-Checks

Every five (5) years following the initial E-PIC check, all Participants who are in designated positions must apply for and obtain, at their own expense, a subsequent Sterling Talent Solutions E-PIC check.

7.7.3 Subsequent Offences

If a Participant is charged with, subsequently receives a conviction for, or is found guilty of, an offense, they must report this circumstance immediately to BCAS or affiliated club. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action under the BCAS Complaint Process. Participants may be subject to disciplinary action ranging from a verbal or written warning to termination of employment or expulsion from the organization.

7.7.4 Screening Disclosure Form

In accordance with the *CAS Screening Policy*, all participants who are in designated positions are required to submit a Screening Disclosure Form and will be asked to confirm the accuracy of this information annually as part of the registration process.

Participants must inform BC Artistic Swimming or their Affiliated Member Club, as appropriate, immediately of any changes that would alter their original responses on this Screening Disclosure Form. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action under the *BC Artistic Swimming Discipline & Complaints Policy*. Participants may be subject to disciplinary action ranging from a verbal or written warning to termination of employment or expulsion from the organization.

7.7.5 Other Background Checks

BCAS or Affiliated Members may also request, based on the position and at their sole discretion, that a Participant submit other background checks including:

- Vulnerable Sector Check
- Reference Check
- Employment Verification
- Education and credentials verification
- Social media check
- Driver abstract
- International background check

7.7.6 Refusal to Comply

A participant that refuses to consent to an E-PIC or other required background checks, as prescribed by BC Artistic Swimming or their Affiliated Member Club, or to submit a Screening Disclosure Form is ineligible for the position.

7.7.7 Relevant Offences

A Participant with an E-PIC check that reveals a relevant offence may be ineligible for the position. A relevant offence is any of the following offences for which pardons have not been granted:

- a. If imposed in the last five years:
 - Any offence involving the use of a motor vehicle, including impaired driving
 - Any offence for trafficking or possession of drugs or narcotics
 - Any offence involving conduct against public morals
- b. If imposed in the last ten years:
 - Any crime of violence including all forms of assault
 - Any criminal offence involving a minor or minors
- c. If imposed at any time:
 - Any criminal offence involving the possession, distribution, or sale of any child-related pornography
 - Any sexual offence involving a minor or minors
 - Any offence involving theft or fraud

Where a Participant's E-PIC check reveals a relevant offence, Sterling Talent Solutions will review the report with BCAS or the Affiliated Club, as appropriate. The report will be referred to the Screening Committee for further review and a decision on the suitability of the Participant to fill the position.

7.7.8 Violations of the Screening Policy

Any failure to comply with this Policy may result in disciplinary action under the BCAS Discipline & Complaints Policy. Participants may be subject to disciplinary or corrective action ranging from a verbal or written warning to termination of employment or expulsion from the organization.

7.8 ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

Appropriate orientation and training are available for all volunteer positions within BC Artistic Swimming.

7.9 SUPERVISION AND EVALUATION

Based on the level of risk associated with a volunteer position, appropriate supervision and evaluation processes will be established in the position description. Evaluations will include a self-assessment completed by the volunteer

7.10 ONGOING MONITORING

All volunteers must be advised that their activities will be monitored on an ongoing basis to ensure compliance with the position description. Regular monitoring will be in place for high-risk positions.

8 SCREENING COMMITTEE

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of BC Artistic Swimming or the Affiliated Member Club, as appropriate. An ad hoc Screening Committee may be appointed by BCAS or the Affiliated Member Club on an as needed basis.

The Screening Committee will consist of three (3) persons appointed to review any background check that triggers a positive response. These individuals may be CAS Registrants or external appointees. None of the members of the Screening Committee may have a significant relationship with the Participant submitting the background check or otherwise have a real or perceived conflict of interest.

The Screening Committee will carry out its duties in accordance with the terms of this policy and independent of BCAS or the club board/executive. The Screening Committee is responsible for reviewing all background checks that trigger a positive response and, based on this review, making decisions regarding the suitability of the Participant to fill the position. The Screening Committee may determine the applicant is suitable for the position, not suitable for the position, or suitable for the position with conditions. The Screening Committee will provide notice of its decision to BCAS or the Affiliated Club, as appropriate.

In carrying out its duties, the Screening Committee may consult with independent experts including lawyers, police, risk management consultants, screening specialists or any other person.

9 VOLUNTEER SERVICES AND REQUIREMENTS

9.1 LIABILITY INSURANCE

BC Artistic Swimming carries liability insurance that provides coverage for volunteers who are directly involved in BC Artistic Swimming activities. Volunteers should be duly registered through the CAS Online Registration System to ensure they have the appropriate insurance coverage.

Volunteers are encouraged to contact their personal insurance carrier for information on additional coverage during volunteer activities.

9.2 TRANSPORTATION WHILE CONDUCTING BC ARTISTIC SWIMMING BUSINESS

Upon request, volunteers who transport athletes or other participants to BC Artistic Swimming or association business in their personal vehicle must submit a copy of their valid driver's license and evidence of appropriate insurance to their Affiliated Member Club or BC Artistic Swimming, as appropriate, before beginning the volunteer assignment, and on an annual basis thereafter.

Only duly insured and properly maintained vehicles may be used to transport BC Artistic Swimming participants. Volunteers must obey all traffic regulations and abstain from operating a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or any other impairment such as health issues or exhaustion while transporting BC Artistic Swimming participants.

9.3 AGE OF VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers under the age of 18 who are not already members with BC Artistic Swimming must provide a signed letter of consent from their parent or legal guardian, with specific reference to the required CRC and reference checks.

9.4 COMMITMENT AND EXPECTATIONS

Volunteers are expected to fulfill their duties as agreed and in accordance with the schedule provided. If a volunteer is unable to meet their commitments, they must inform their supervisor as far in advance as possible so that alternate arrangements can be made.

9.5 CONFIDENTIALITY

From time to time, certain volunteer positions may have access to personal or confidential information. Volunteers must respect and maintain the confidentiality of personal or confidential information about BC Artistic Swimming and its members gained through their volunteer position.

Exceptions to the confidentiality clause include the legal obligations for staff or volunteers to provide information if:

- (a) It is so requested by authorities
- (b) the safety or well-being of participants are in question whereby the appropriate authorities must be notified
- (c) if there is a risk of danger to self or other whereby the appropriate authorities must be notified

9.6 REMOVAL OF A VOLUNTEER

BC Artistic Swimming's primary responsibility is the safety and well-being of its members. BC Artistic Swimming is also concerned with the integrity and reputation of the organization and the sport of artistic swimming. The behaviour of volunteers and anyone representing BC Artistic Swimming reflects on the association and impacts the enjoyment and future involvement of other members. If a volunteer does not adhere to the Conduct Policy, commits a dangerous or harmful act while participating in a BC Artistic Swimming activity or at any other time, the volunteer may be dismissed immediately and without warning.

Grounds for immediate dismissal may include but are not limited to:

- (a) Gross misconduct or insubordination
- (b) Committing a criminal offense (theft, assault, vandalism, etc.)

- (c) Acts of abuse, mistreatment, or violence
- (d) Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs

10 VOLUNTEER DEVELOPMENT AND RECOGNITION

BC Artistic Swimming supports the involvement and personal growth of volunteers through training, professional development and recognition.

10.1 ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

Volunteers will be provided with orientation and training that is appropriate for their position and their level of volunteer involvement, which may include but is not limited to:

- (a) written materials such as position descriptions, policies, procedures, rules, manuals, etc.
- (b) an in-person, electronic or phone orientation session
- (c) an introduction to their supervisor or contact
- (d) information on how to contact their supervisor or BC Artistic Swimming staff
- (e) a schedule of meeting or event dates as soon as it is available
- (f) a schedule of volunteer assignments for BC Artistic Swimming events as early as possible

10.2 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

BC Artistic Swimming will provide appropriate opportunities for the professional development (PD) of volunteers:

- (a) For technical volunteers, including coaches or officials, PD opportunities may include, but are not limited to, technical clinics or camps, mentoring, speaker series, webinars, or financial support.
- (b) For operational volunteers, PD opportunities may include, but are not limited to, workshops, presentations, financial support, mentoring, webinars, or advisory services.

10.3 RECOGNITION

BC Artistic Swimming recognizes the critical contribution of volunteers to both the sport and the organization in a number of ways, including but not limited to:

- (a) Apparel
- (b) Gifts
- (c) Annual Award Celebration
- (d) Appreciative actions – verbal or written thank you
- (e) Public recognition during events or on social media