



Screening and Hiring

Finding candidates you can trust includes additional steps beyond interviewing and checking references such as periodic criminal and sexual offense background checks.

STEP 1: Basic Requirements

- Develop a standard protocol for gathering screening information, including a timeline, who is responsible for each step, and documentation procedures.
- Identify individuals who are responsible for ensuring all candidates are screened according to your organization's policies.
- Conduct interviews for all staff and volunteers, including asking questions about the staff or volunteers' suitability to work with children.
- Verify all candidates provide at least two references from recent and relevant work and telephone reference checks are conducted for all positions.
- Require a written application and signed Statement of Suitability confirming no circumstances prevent all candidates from working safely with children.
- Consider routine checks of publicly available criminal and sexual abuse history.

STEP 2: Assess Risk and Additional Screening Requirements

- Consider the nature, duration, and frequency of contact between the staff, volunteers, and children and youth.
- Identify the physical locations of activities where staff and volunteers interact with children and youth.
- Assess which employee interactions with children and youth are supervised, monitored, or unsupervised.
- Consider the ages and vulnerabilities of the children and youth being served.
- Identify the potential for any staff or volunteer to be alone with any child or group of children.
- Ensure additional Massachusetts and Federal laws are known and included in your screening policies and procedures.

STEP 3: Implement Additional Screening Measures

- Conduct state criminal records check (CORI) and national criminal background checks at hire and periodically.
- Administer state sexual offender registry check (SORI) and national sexual offense background checks at hire and periodically.
- Verify state and national child abuse registry checks.
- Check professional credentials to ensure the suitability of candidates to work with children.
- Review driving records and ensure adequate licensure if the position includes the responsibility to transport children and youth.
- Conduct a home observation if work is conducted at a child's or staff person's home.