

Background Checks for Volunteers Working with Minors - *Procedures for Staff*

1. Determine if the volunteer needs a background check

- a) All volunteers or staff working in a UNH Youth Program (i.e., a program specifically designed for participants under the age of 18) need to get a background check
- b) A background check is required ***once every calendar year*** for all volunteers working in programs that meet the NH Department of Environmental Services definition of a Youth skills Camp. Consistent with NH State Law, UNH defines a Youth Skills Camp as a program that runs for three or more consecutive days for the purpose of teaching skills to minors. All other volunteers working in youth programs are required to get a background check ***every three*** years.
- c) Volunteers under the age of 18 who work with minors follow different procedures per NH State Law: A background check is not required, but two written references must be submitted before the volunteer works unsupervised with minors. One reference cannot be from a relative.
- d) *Exception: a background check is not needed if a volunteer is serving in a short-term or temporary role where it can be assured that:*
 - i. *the volunteer will not be left alone with youth*
 - ii. *If the volunteer is working directly with youth, another staff or fully screened volunteer is present*
- e) If staff or volunteer will be involved with transporting program participants as part of their official role with UNHCE, then a motor vehicle records check must be run.

2. If it is determined that a volunteer requires a background check, they should not start any unsupervised work with minors under the age of 18 until a review of the results is completed by the hiring supervisor/manager.

3. Get Consent and initiate the background check

A confidential criminal background check can be initiated in two ways:

- a) A UNHCE staff can submit a request using the UNH online [HR Background Check](#) Request Form and 'Request Service.' When making the request:
 1. You will need name and email of the staff/volunteer being checked.
 2. Note the "Multiple Applicants List" section where you can submit multiple requests in one submission.
 3. Put "Volunteer" for *Position Title* and "N/A" for *Position Number*.
 4. Click 'yes' to the question: "Will Applicant be working directly with minors?"
 5. Answering 'yes' to the previous question, will open two additional questions. One for the name of the program the volunteer will be working in, and the other, asking if that program qualifies as a 'Youth Skills Camp' (including a definition of same). Answer those two questions.

6. Click 'Volunteer' on the "Position Information" list. (This will open a new box for "Volunteer: Fund/Org/Account" information.)
7. Enter 'CE' or 'CoopExt' or 'Cooperative Extension' for the "Volunteer: Fund/Org/Account" question.
8. Click the 'Criminal Background Check' box for the "Package Detail: (select all that apply)."
9. After the background check has been submitted to UNH HR:
 - Requesting staff will receive email notice when the request from HireRight for personal information and consent has been emailed to the volunteer
 - Requesting staff will receive email notice when "request is in process" (i.e., the volunteer has submitted their information to HireRight).
 - The volunteer will get email reminders every 3 days.
 - If the volunteer does not respond to the HireRight requests, after 30 days managers will get email notice if the volunteer did not respond after 30 days. This will mean the request has expired, and a new request will be needed.
- b) If a volunteer does not have an email account, contact UNH HR in order to arrange an alternative means for getting the check done.
- c) If a volunteer would prefer to get their check done via the NH State Police, they can do so:
 - Volunteer fills out and submits [CRIMINAL RECORD RELEASE AUTHORIZATION FORM](#) (requires notary)
 - A reduction in cost can be obtained using a non-profit volunteer [REDUCED FEE REQUEST FORM](#)
 - Volunteer must also obtain a national FBI criminal record request using the [SCHOOL EMPLOYEE CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORDS CHECK – RSA 189:13-a FORM](#) (requires fingerprinting)
 - Details for obtaining and submitting these forms can be found at the [NH State Police Criminal Records webpage](#).
 - Volunteer can be reimbursed by UNHCE for the expense of the check.
 - A volunteer may use their employer background check for becoming a 4-H volunteer if it can be confirmed that the background check meets the requirements of the University and NH law. The hiring UNH volunteer supervisor would need to receive the background check results directly from the screening source.
- d) Effective 10/31/18, the process for requesting and completing a Motor Vehicle Records (MVR) search is as follows:
 - **Step 1:** A UNHCE staff member can submit a request using the UNH online [HR Background Check](#) request form and 'Request Service.' When making the request: Complete all required fields and select "Motor Vehicle Search" under the Requested Service Type.

- **Step 2:** Human Resources will review the request and submit the information provided to the MVR Search vendor.
- **Step 3:** The vendor will email instructions directly to the driver. These instructions will include: how to complete a State of New Hampshire [Release of Motor Vehicle Records](#) form and that they will have to sign it in the presence of a Notary Public. The driver will then have to upload the completed form into the vendor (currently HireRight) site. The form may also be faxed or emailed to the vendor. (If the notary used a raised seal/stamp, rub a pencil over the seal to help it stand out.)
- If a volunteer does not want to utilize HireRight, then the volunteer manager will need to work with the volunteer to obtain a NH Motor Vehicle Records Search directly from the DMV. Extension will cover the cost.

4. If the check comes back ‘clean’

Results will be emailed to the staff who requested the check. If the check comes back ‘clean’ (i.e., no discrepancies), print the results and place in the volunteer’s folder and record wherever is appropriate (e.g., 4-HOnline).

5. If the check comes back with a ‘discrepancy’

Results will be emailed to the staff who requested the check. A background check discrepancy is highly sensitive information for both the volunteer and UNH Cooperative Extension. It must be handled with discretion and confidentiality:

Procedure for a volunteer applicant:

- a) When a discrepancy is reported, the hiring/supervising staff should notify their own supervisor
- b) The report showing the discrepancy should be shared with the applicant and the applicant should be given a chance to contest the veracity of the report and/or to clarify the details of what is in the report.
- c) The applicant will not be accepted as a volunteer if a discrepancy, as per state law, includes any of the following: (1) Causing or threatening direct physical injury to any individual; or (2) Causing or threatening harm of any nature to any child or children. (3) Any sex offense; or (4) any violation or attempted violation of RSA 630:1; 630:1-a; 630:1-b; 630:2; 632-A:2; 632-A:3; 632-A:4; 633:1; 639:2; 639:3; 645:1, II or III; 645:2; 649-A:3; 649-A:3-a; 649-A:3-b; 649-B:3; or 649-B:4; or any violation or any attempted violation of RSA 650:2 where the act involves a child in material deemed obscene.
- d) In the case of all other discrepancies, the hiring/supervising staff should work with their supervisor and their Program Team Leader to determine if the applicant can be accepted as a volunteer, accepted as a volunteer with certain restrictions, or cannot be accepted.
- e) The decision should be communicated in writing in a timely and respectful manner with the applicant. Documentation of the process should be saved.

Procedure for a current volunteer:

- a) When a discrepancy is reported, the hiring/supervising staff should notify their own supervisor immediately.

- b) The report showing the discrepancy should be shared with the applicant and the applicant should be given a chance to contest the veracity of the report and/or to clarify the details of what is in the report.
- c) A determination must be made if the reported discrepancy indicates that the volunteer could pose an immediate risk to the program or participants, resulting in a need to suspend the volunteer while the discrepancy is investigated.
 - The volunteer should be suspended immediately if a discrepancy, as per state law, includes any of the following: (1) Causing or threatening direct physical injury to any individual; or (2) Causing or threatening harm of any nature to any child or children. (3) Any sex offense; or (4) any violation or attempted violation of RSA 630:1; 630:1-a; 630:1-b; 630:2; 632-A:2; 632-A:3; 632-A:4; 633:1; 639:2; 639:3; 645:1, II or III; 645:2; 649-A:3; 649-A:3-a; 649-A:3-b; 649-B:3; or 649-B:4; or any violation or any attempted violation of RSA 650:2 where the act involves a child in material deemed obscene.
 - A determination to suspend the volunteer due to any other types of discrepancies should be made by the hiring/supervising staff in consultation with their supervisor and Program Team Leader.
 - If the volunteer is suspended, they should be notified immediately using respectful and clear written communication that outlines the nature of their suspension (i.e., what they can and cannot do). It should also indicate that we are not assuming we know all the facts about the discrepancy but we need to suspend while we look into it.
- d) The volunteer will not continue as a volunteer if the discrepancy includes any of the issues listed above in (c).
- e) In the case of all other discrepancies, the hiring/supervising staff should work with their supervisor and their Program Team Leader to determine if the volunteer can continue in their current role, continue as a volunteer with certain restrictions, or if the volunteer needs to be dismissed.
- f) The decision should be communicated in writing by the hiring/supervising staff member in a timely and respectful manner with the volunteer. Documentation of the process should be saved in the volunteer's file.