

### **Change in Volunteer Selection Policy**

#### **Why has the OSU Extension volunteer selection policy and procedures changed?**

Over the past several years, several changes have taken place in relationship to volunteers working with youth, elderly, and individuals with disabilities. Included in those changes are increased expectations of parents, guardians, and caregivers that the organization provide a safe and positive environment for their child/charge; new state law providing guidelines for volunteer selection policy and procedure; and desire of the organization to continually provide an emotionally and physically safe environment.

#### **Can you provide an overview of what the new policy and procedure will require?**

Each new volunteer will: (1) receive a position description at time of application or when changing position; (2) complete an application in it's entirety; (3) have, at minimum, two references collected; (4) complete an interview; (5) successfully pass a criminal history fingerprint background check; and (6) read, agree to, and sign a Standards of Behavior.

#### **When will the new volunteer selection policy and procedures be implemented?**

The new Ohio State University Extension Volunteer Selection Policy and Procedures will become effective on November 1, 2002.

#### **What are the benefits of the changes in the volunteer selection policy and procedures?**

Ohio State University Extension desires to provide positive, educational experiences for all members and service recipients. Implementing a more comprehensive selection process allows O.S.U. Extension faculty and staff to make sound decisions regarding an individual's knowledge, skills, and abilities in relationship to the position they wish to volunteer. Additionally, this selection process allows potential volunteers the opportunity to become better acquainted with O.S.U. Extension programs and determine if this organization best fits their volunteer interests. Finally, this new selection process continues to communicate to parents, guardians, community leaders, and potential and current service recipients/members of the importance the organization places on engaging volunteers.

#### **Who is affected by the new volunteer selection policy and procedures?**

All new, potential volunteers recruited by OSU Extension faculty and staff, who will be working with members of a vulnerable population, will be required to adhere to the new policy and complete each procedure as outlined in the policy.

### **Policy & Procedures Implementation**

#### **How do we determine if this policy applies in our situation?**

Extension professionals should carefully examine the responsibilities of specific positions within their program area. If the position identifies actual or potential responsibilities for working with members of vulnerable populations, then individuals applying for those positions will complete all procedures associated with the volunteer selection policy that is effective November 1, 2002.

**What happens if a potential volunteer refuses to complete any part of the required policy or procedures?**  
Individuals must fully complete all requirements in order to be considered for acceptance as a volunteer for Ohio State University Extension. Individuals not fully completing all requirements will not be accepted to volunteer by the organization.

**Who determines if a potential volunteer is going to be accepted or not accepted?**

The appropriate Ohio State University Faculty or Staff member will make the final decision of acceptance or non-acceptance, based on information collected throughout the selection process.

**Another organization that I work/volunteer for is collaborating with OSU Extension to deliver an educational program; do I need to complete OSU Extension's volunteer selection procedures?**

Individuals in this situation will be required to meet, at minimum, the standards set by the Ohio State University Extension volunteer selection policy and procedure.

**I am a volunteer in ABC County and am moving to XYZ County and would like to volunteer in that county. What requirements do I have to complete?**

It is acceptable to transfer volunteer status from one county to another county. It would likely not be necessary to have an individual complete the newly implemented volunteer selection policy and procedures, however Extension professionals should consider the responsibilities of the individual position and base their decision on those factors. For example, it may be necessary to require additional training or education or even to contact references or conduct an interview to ensure that the individual has the necessary skills, abilities and knowledge. It would be acceptable for the county in which the individual is moving from to provide the volunteer file to the new county and retain a copy of that file for their records. In an effort to obtain current contact information, Extension professionals may require that the individual in the above referenced situation complete a new application.

**We are attempting to determine when it is necessary for an individual, who considers themselves a "parent helper" to complete the OSU Extension volunteer process.**

First, we must recognize that it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between the two, however answering the following question may provide some clarity: (1) does the individual provide on-going support, leadership, supervision or guidance to children, other than their own and on two or more occasions each year? If the answer were yes, then the individual would need to complete the volunteer selection process.

Please know that this same scenario may be used for any member of a vulnerable population, not just a 4-H club!

**Is there a specific time period that the "2 or more times" covers?**

There is not a set definition of what this means, however if the individual is volunteering two or more times in any given year (or twelve month time period) it would be advisable for them to complete the volunteer selection procedures as outlined.

**What type of information do I need on individuals who are not required to adhere to the new policy?**

Ohio State University Extension has not established specific information needed from individuals' who are volunteers, but not serving nor having the opportunity to serve members of vulnerable populations. However, it would be beneficial to collect much of the basic information found on the application and have the individual sign the standards of behavior. Extension professionals should closely examine the responsibilities of individuals in these situations and implement a selection process that is representative of the level of responsibility of the potential volunteer.

# Ohio State University Extension Volunteer Selection

## Evaluating Criminal Offenses

### Statement on Criminal Offenses

Revised Ohio Senate Bill 187 identifies offenses that are to be considered disqualifying for those who desire to work with minors. Ohio State University Extension considers those offenses, and those that are substantially equivalent, as automatically disqualifying when considering an individual's qualifications for working with members of a vulnerable population (minors, elderly over age 65, and individuals with disabilities).

There are likely to be additional criminal offenses, not identified on this list that will surface when conducting criminal fingerprint background checks on potential volunteers. Offenses identified that are not listed as disqualifying offenses must be thoroughly evaluated prior to making a decision concerning a potential volunteer's acceptance into the organization.

### Considering Criminal Offenses

As decisions are made concerning individuals who have criminal records, the following information is critical and must be thoroughly evaluated and discussed prior to making any decision. It will be necessary to discuss the facts with the county chair, district specialist, district director, and/or identified representative from your state program area or Extension administration. Extension professionals will consider the following:

- Nature of offense identified
- Time the offense occurred (year) or age when offense occurred
- Parties affected by the offense (minors, elderly, disabled)
- Potential volunteer responsibilities (i.e. relationship to vulnerable populations)
- Relationship of offense to potential responsibilities
- Opportunity to place individual in alternative role (no responsibilities for vulnerable populations)

## Offenses Listed under section 109.572 (a)(1)

- 2903.01 Aggravated murder; specific intent to cause death
- 2903.02 Murder
- 2903.03 Voluntary manslaughter
- 2903.04 Involuntary manslaughter
- 2903.11 Felonious assault
- 2903.12 Aggravated assault
- 2903.13 Assault
- 2903.16 Failing to provide for functionally impaired person
- 2903.21 Aggravated menacing
- 2903.34 Patient abuse, neglect
- 2905.01 Kidnapping
- 2905.02 Abduction
- 2905.04 Child enticement
- 2905.05 Criminal child enticement
- 2907.02 Rape
- 2907.03 Sexual battery
- 2907.04 Unlawful sexual conduct with a minor
- 2907.05 Gross sexual imposition
- 2907.06 Sexual imposition
- 2907.07 Impositioning (now importuning)
- 2907.08 Voyeurism
- 2907.09 Public indecency
- 2907.12 Felonious sexual penetration
- 2907.21 Compelling prostitution
- 2907.22 Promoting prostitution (children)
- 2907.23 Procuring
- 2907.25 Prostitution: after positive HIV test
- 2907.31 Disseminating matter harmful to juveniles
- 2907.32 Pandering obscenity
- 2907.321 Pandering obscenity involving a minor
- 2907.322 Pandering sexually oriented matter involving a minor
- 2907.323 Illegal use of a minor in nudity oriented material or performance
- 2911.01 Aggravated robbery
- 2911.02 Robbery
- 2911.11 Aggravated burglary
- 2911.12 Burglary
- 2919.12 Unlawful abortion
- 2919.22 Endangering children
- 2919.23 Interference with custody
- 2919.24 Contributing to the unruliness or delinquency of a child
- 2919.25 Domestic violence
- 2923.12 Carrying concealed weapons
- 2923.13 Having a weapon while under a disability
- 2923.161 Improperly discharging a weapon at or near a school or dwelling
- 2925.02 Corrupting another with drugs
- 2925.03 Trafficking in drugs
- 2925.04 Illegal manufacture of drugs or cultivation of marijuana
- 2925.05 Funding of drug or marijuana trafficking
- 2925.06 Illegal administration or distribution of anabolic steroids
- 2925.11 Possession of drugs (that is not a minor drug possession offense)
- 3716.11 Placing harmful objects in food or confection

And any "substantially equivalent offense"