

Associated System Volunteer Screening Policy

Background

Volunteers are a vital asset to The Associated system. They provide value in excess of \$1 million annually as providers of critical client services, pro bono expertise, and physical labor. Agencies that provide social services as well as cultural and educational programming rely on volunteers to meet the needs of their clients and members.

To manage risk and ensure the best client and member services, volunteer screening should be an integral part of the volunteer management process. Currently, there is no consistent process or policy by which volunteers for The Associated and its agencies are screened. Current processes range from no screening through background checks, fingerprinting, and interviews. Policies and processes depend on the agency as well as on the specific volunteer job.

Policy Statement

The Associated and Jewish Volunteer Connection (JVC) recommend that all agencies adopt a policy that minimizes risk by maximizing the number of volunteers who are screened at a significant level. The Associated and JVC has centralized all volunteer screening under a single vendor and agency, in order to streamline the process for Associated agencies and programs and create efficiencies of scale.

Volunteers can be divided into several categories, each with its own recommended screening policy.

Tier 1: Episodic and one-time volunteers. No screening recommended and no individual (one-on-one) client contact should be permitted. Examples of Tier 1 volunteers include JVC's Community Mitzvah Day, JCC's Block Party, and Pearlstone's Family Farm Day.

Tier 2a: Ongoing volunteers with adult client contact only or with no direct client contact. Standard criminal background check completed biannually. Examples of Tier 2a volunteers include CHAI's Adopt a Neighbor or JCCs Gordon Center volunteers.

Tier 2b: Ongoing volunteers with adult client contact only whose roles include transportation of clients. Standard criminal background check completed biannually. MVA check completed annually. License and insurance information provided to The Associated. Examples of Tier 2b volunteers include JCS's Mitzvah Mobility drivers, CHAI's NNC Driver volunteers.

Tier 3a: Ongoing volunteers with contact with youth. Fingerprinting completed at start of service. Examples of Tier 3a volunteers include JCS's Tutors, JCC Maccabi coaches (if not driving athletes), and CJE's Geshet L'Torah.

Tier 3b: Ongoing volunteers with contact with youth whose roles include transportation of clients. Fingerprinting completed at start of service. MVA check completed annually. Examples of Tier 3b volunteers include JCS's Big Brother Big Sister program and JCC Maccabi coaches (if driving athletes).

Note: *Volunteers under the age of 18 should not be screened through standard criminal background checks as any offenses would not show up through these methods.*