

POLICE INFORMATION CHECKS – IN THE NEWS August 17, 2011
19 Alberta Communities Will Soon Have Access to LiveScan

Background

- As part of sound risk management practices, nonprofit/voluntary sector organizations often obtain Police Information Checks (PICs) to screen volunteers as one-step of a multi-step process.
- The outcome of a June 2010 RCMP policy dramatically changes impacted volunteers across the country. It increased the number of volunteers needing to be fingerprinted in order to receive a clear PIC; without access to digital fingerprinting machines, volunteers and volunteer engaging organizations are becoming frustrated with the significant delays in receiving clearances.
- A key concern in the sector has been the **cost** of obtaining police information checks for volunteers. Administration costs impact dollars available for front-line services for Albertans. Nonprofit/voluntary organizations are able to obtain police information checks free-of-charge for volunteers in positions of trust with children, seniors and persons with disabilities (see below).

LiveScan Systems Arriving in 19 Communities in Alberta

- LiveScan Real Time Identification (RTID) is inkless electronic fingerprinting. The fingerprints are electronically transmitted to Canadian Criminal Real Time Identification Services (CCRTIS) for completion of a criminal record check.
- LiveScan avoids many of the problems associated with ink prints, such as smudging, smearing, and over or under inking. A major benefit of LiveScan is in processing speed: nearly all are completed within 72 hours. Rolled ink prints (traditionally submitted on a fingerprint card) can take up to 120 days.
- New LiveScan RTID systems are starting to be delivered to some Alberta RCMP detachments
 - Placement of RTIDs in the following detachments: Airdrie, Brooks, Cochrane, Edson, High Level, High River, Lac La Biche, Leduc, Lethbridge, Lloydminster, Peace River, Red Deer (2), Rocky Mountain House, Spruce Grove, St. Albert, St. Paul, Stony Plain, Whitecourt, and Wetaskiwin.
 - Fort McMurray, Grande Prairie, and Sherwood Park detachments already implemented this technology.
- Edmonton police conducted 2,000 scans since purchasing digital fingerprinting machines December 2010 (an increase of 10,000%). In February, Volunteer Alberta and the Government of Alberta arranged for the arrival of the LiveScan machine in Calgary.
- As return time from the RCMP in Ottawa for non-digital print scans is still 8-9 weeks, Volunteer Alberta welcomes the addition of LiveScan RTID systems to more communities in Alberta as it significantly decreases wait times and gets volunteers active faster! The question is when will the training and installation be completed.



LiveScan RTID System

Volunteer Police Information Check Program (VPICP)-
 The cost of accessing police information checks for volunteers can be a crippling expense for volunteer engaging organizations. VPICP provides funding to police services who were charging volunteers in April 2009 to access Police Information Checks so that volunteers engaged with vulnerable populations did not have to incur an expense. This is a three year program. voan.volunteeralberta.ab.ca

Police Information Checks (PIC) (classified by the RCMP as a Criminal Record Check) - a search used to determine whether an individual has a criminal record. The search is based on an individual's name and date of birth of the RCMP National Repository of Criminal Records. A CRC/PIC may also include a search of a Canadian police service's local records, which may reveal criminal record information that has not been reported to the RCMP.

Vulnerable Sector Verification (VSV) - A certified Vulnerable Sector Verification verifies whether an individual has a criminal record, including the existence of any pardoned sex offences, and provides any relevant details contained within the National Criminal Records Repository.



IS YOUR ORGANIZATION STILL PAYING FOR POLICE INFORMATION CHECKS FOR YOUR VOLUNTEERS?

WELL STOP!

As of April 1, 2009 the Volunteer Police Information Check Program (VPICP) managed by Volunteer Alberta, offsets the costs of police information checks for volunteers engaged with vulnerable populations in communities where there was a charge for this service. Under this three-year program, **eligible nonprofit/voluntary sector organizations can access free police information checks (from police services) for volunteers in eligible circumstances.** For more information visit: <http://voan.volunteeralberta.ab.ca>

- **This program reduces administrative costs and removes barriers to volunteerism.** Now it's our job as a sector to utilize this program responsibly as we continue to meet the needs of Albertans.
- Alberta's nonprofit/voluntary sector organizations continuing to contract with private screening services for volunteer screening should be aware that private background screening companies do not have access to complete criminal records.
 - **Only police services can perform a Vulnerable Sector Search**, which checks the Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC) database for information about applicants.
 - Private background screening companies do not have access to complete criminal records, nor can they disclose pending charges from the courts or police files.
- **This program is for the sector, by the sector.** Volunteer Alberta is the Administrator of the program, and is monitoring and managing the day-to-day operation of the program.

Additional Information on Police Information Checks:

- Fingerprinting is only necessary when a Police Information Check reports that: the applicant's gender and birthdate match that of someone registered in the Convicted and Pardoned Sex Offender Registry. Over 99% of the files do not match.
- Currently, the RCMP has no plans in expanding the number of determinants beyond gender and date of birth to decrease the disproportionate number of males being asked to provide fingerprints for a clearance.
- The RCMP destroys the fingerprint once the police information check is complete.
- Ask your police services if they can maintain a list of completed scans so that volunteers do not have to undergo this process for multiple organizations requiring volunteers to undergo a PIC.

For more information please contact:

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Volunteer Alberta encourages you to share this special update with friends, families and other organizations.

Learn more about comprehensive volunteer screening and the
Volunteer Police Information Check Program
from **Volunteer Alberta** at <http://voan.volunteeralberta.ab.ca>.