

WOONSOCKET SCHOOL DEPARTMENT CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK POLICY

(b) Current and Prospective Volunteers

In accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 16-2-18.4 (“Criminal records review for volunteers”), all current volunteers or persons seeking to become volunteers at the Woonsocket School Department, who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children and/or students on school premises, shall undergo a state criminal background check to be initiated prior to or within one week of commencement of such volunteer work. A volunteer’s criminal background check is valid for one (1) year only. The current or prospective volunteer shall be responsible for the costs of the state criminal records check.

In those situations in which no disqualifying information has been found, the Bureau of Criminal Identification, State Police, or the Woonsocket Police Department shall inform the applicant and the Woonsocket School Department, in writing, of this fact. Upon the discovery of any disqualifying information, the applicant will be informed in writing of the nature of the disqualifying information; and, without disclosing the nature of the disqualifying information the Bureau of Criminal Identification, State Police, or the Woonsocket Police Department will notify the Woonsocket School Department in writing that disqualifying information has been discovered.

"Disqualifying information" means those offenses listed in § 23-17-37, and those offenses listed in §§ 11-37-8.1 (First degree child molestation sexual assault) and 11-37-8.3 (Second degree child molestation sexual assault).

A person against whom disqualifying information has been found may request that a copy of the criminal background report be sent to the school department, which shall make a judgment regarding the qualifications and fitness of said person to volunteer for the school department. However, all previously arranged volunteer opportunities or appointments are subject to revision or revocation if a background check contains disqualifying information.

Prospective volunteers shall arrange for criminal background checks to be sent to the building principal of the school where they intend to work. The principal is responsible for obtaining their volunteers’ criminal background check, ensuring it is clear of disqualifying information, and delivering a copy to the Director of Human Resources. The principal shall retain on file the original copy of the volunteer’s criminal background check.

All individuals seeking to volunteer for any purpose within the Athletic Department must first be approved in writing by the Athletic Director. The Athletic Director is responsible for obtaining a criminal background check and ensuring it is clear of disqualifying information for all volunteer coaches or athletic assistants at least ten (10) days before such volunteer activity commences. All paid coaches are responsible for informing the Athletic Director of any potential volunteers and informing such volunteer(s) of the requirement for a clear and current BCI before any volunteer activities can start. A copy of the original criminal background check and written approval shall be sent to the Director of Human Resources.

The Director of Human Resources shall maintain on file, subject to inspection by the Rhode Island Department of Education, evidence that criminal records checks have been initiated on all volunteers or prospective volunteers, and the results of the checks.

Current or prospective school volunteers who may have a question regarding this policy may call the Director of Human Resources and Labor Relation at 401-767-4619.