



#WeRideTogether

Hiring Best Practices


#WeRideTogether is a nonprofit organization dedicated to eliminating abuse from sports. From grassroots clubs to elite international organizations, we are here to support **you** in making sport safe and healthy for all.


Connect Hiring Practices to Your Safeguarding Policy

This guide includes information on:

- Background checks and going beyond: references and interviews
- How safeguarding is in everyone's job description
- Trainings on safeguarding
- Checks and balances for those in power

Safeguarding is a part of everyone's job description. This pertains to incorporating safeguarding into your hiring processes, training your staff on safeguarding, and communicating about your safeguarding requirements and initiatives. This also means evaluating organizational structure and having checks and balances for those in power or isolated positions to keep interactions transparent and observable. There are clear action steps organizations can take, from interviews to job titles, to instill and embed safeguarding in your organization – starting with recruitment.






The following measures can be taken during the recruitment process to minimize the possibility of hiring a person unsuitable to work with minors.


Through these actions, your club can better support all participants in having safe and healthy interactions and sporting experiences.

Candidate Profile: Determine what skills and knowledge are needed to safely work with minors, and include these in the profile. This will depend on the position—for example, a coach will have more contact and need better skills working with children than someone in an administrative or grounds keeper's role.

Advertisement: Include a clear statement about your club or organization's commitment to safeguarding minors in any advertisement about the position. Your club or organization can also add a screen-out question in the application process regarding an applicant's willingness to participate in a particular background screening as a condition of employment.


Written Applications: Each applicant for a position of employment seeking to participate in a program or activity within your club or organization will complete an application form consisting of personal, identifying information and a general release with applicant's signature. The written application will:

- Ask about previous work and volunteer experiences;
 - Ask questions intended to elicit information concerning high-risk behaviors;
 - Provide a written release for contacting personal references and performing a criminal background check, including an indemnification clause; and
 - Ask open-ended questions that encourage broad answers.
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Personal Interview: When possible, your club or organization should ensure that each applicant whose experience and credentials meet the hiring criteria for a particular position receives a face-to-face, in-person interview. Through the personal interview, your club or organization has the opportunity to evaluate applicants' temperament, knowledge of the sport, coaching techniques, and/or training methodologies (if required for the job position), and to have open-ended discussions regarding an applicant's experience working with minors, including their understanding of athlete safeguarding principles and any situations that may call into question the applicant's suitability to work with minors.


Interview questions should explore, for example, how an applicant would respond if they suspected that a minor was being subjected to abuse or sexual misconduct; whether the applicant has been subject to disciplinary action due to their interactions with minors; and how the applicant maintains appropriate physical and emotional boundaries with minors.


- Ensure at least two people interview or meet with the applicant and check out any gaps in the application form, including any gaps in employment history. Make sure the applicant has the ability and commitment to meet the standards required to adhere to your club's Safeguarding Policy.
 - Include at least one question that relates to safeguarding children and young people.
 - Explore the applicant's views on power, authority, and discipline, and ask for a response to a potential problem faced at your club or organization. This will assess their commitment to promoting good practices and their ability to communicate with minors.
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Example Interview Questions

- If a child or vulnerable person disclosed abuse to you, what steps would you take?
 - A child discloses abuse but asks you not to tell anyone. What do you do?
 - You suspect a colleague is behaving inappropriately around vulnerable individuals. How do you handle it?
 - What safeguarding training have you completed, and how do you apply it in your role?
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Reference Checks: Reference checks are another key component of the background screening processes, as they serve to provide your club with a more thorough understanding of an applicant's qualifications. Checking references also puts your club in a better position to avoid claims of negligent hiring.


As a best practice, your club should request **at least two personal references** and **at least one professional reference** from each former employer at which the applicant worked directly with minors.


If the applicant has not previously worked directly with minors, **at least two personal references** and **at least one professional reference** from each former employer should be requested.

References should always be sought and obtained directly from the referee using an email address, postal address, or phone number. Open references (i.e., a written reference provided by the candidate) are not sufficient.

The reference checks should include inquiries to determine whether the applicant was the subject of any reports of inappropriate conduct with minors, including grooming behaviors, child abuse, or sexual misconduct.

During the hiring process, your club may also contact individuals who know the applicant, even if such individuals are not listed on the applicant's provided reference list. This is an acceptable practice and may often lead to valuable information regarding sensitive information, such as incidents of previous safeguarding concerns, inappropriate adult-minor interactions, and observed grooming behaviors.






Education and Employment Verification: To help ensure that an applicant possesses the requisite training, knowledge, skills, and experience for the role to which they applied, your club should verify the applicant's education, degrees, experience, and/or employment history, as described in their job application and/or resume. The verification may be performed by the Safeguarding Officer or other club employee responsible for conducting background checks.


Qualification and Registration Checks: Any qualifications or professional registrations claimed in the application should be verified by asking to see original certificates.

Motor Vehicle Records Check: Anyone who will be driving minors on behalf of your club is required to undergo a motor vehicle records check that provides information regarding the applicant's driving record for at least the past three years in the applicant's state of licensure.

***Background and Police Checks:**

Your club or organization should engage a qualified third party to conduct a comprehensive background check.

- **USA:** A Criminal Record Check must be conducted. This check is conducted by a qualified third party and includes a Social Security Trace (identity verification), Sex Offender Records Search, National Criminal Search, Country Criminal Search, and possibly the running of a Credit Report if it is relevant to the position.
 - **International:** When recruiting an employee from another country, the person should be asked for an International Police Clearance Certificate (IPCC) from their country of origin and from any other countries they have worked in for the last 10 years.
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Proof of Identification: An applicant's identity must be verified by checking their passport or national ID card, as predatory offenders may provide false information and even a false identity to secure a position. This process is completed during the Social Security verification and the I9 process.


CDD Check: Before extending an offer, your club should enter the name of the applicant into the U.S. Center for SafeSport's Centralized Disciplinary Registry ("CDD"). Any applicant who is banned from sport may not be hired.

Internet/Social Media Checks: Before extending an offer, your club may consider entering an applicant's name into one or more general search engines to see if the applicant appears on any websites or in any form of news media coverage in a manner that violates your club or organization's Policy.

Self-declaration: Applicants may complete and sign a declaration of good character, including a section confirming they are safe to work with children and giving permission for checks to be made. A sample statement can include: "I confirm that I have never been involved, charged, or implicated in any manner of whatsoever nature involving inappropriate behavior in regard to any minor or adult."

Acknowledgement of the Athlete Safeguarding Policy: To ensure that applicants support your club's commitment to safeguarding principles and understand the club's Safeguarding Policy, the club should ensure that each applicant, before proceeding through the hiring process, (1) is informed about your club or organization's Safeguarding Policy and procedures relevant to prevention and (2) is willing to sign a document acknowledging their agreement to comply with your club or organization's Safeguarding Policy.





Onboarding: As soon as possible after starting at your club or organization, staff should be briefed on your club or organization's Safeguarding Policy. The name and contact details of the designated Safeguarding Officer should be provided.

****Examples of background check companies include:***

- *Praesidium, Inc. www.praesidiuminc.com (focused on helping organizations prevent sexual abuse, including training, consulting, risk management, and responding to incidents of sexual abuse);*
- *HireRight www.hireright.com (tailor background screening packages based on industry, including industries that regularly work with minors);*
- *Sterling Check www.sterlingcheck.com (national background check company).*