

Vulnerable Sector Screening

8-71

Section:	Registration
Applies to:	All applicants for all classes of registration and all occupational therapists
Approved by:	Registration Committee
Date Established:	March 2017
Date Effective:	April 1, 2017
Date Revised:	September 2017, February 2022

Purpose

This policy explains the requirement for Vulnerable Sector Screening (Vulnerable Sector Check) during the application process and when requested after registering with the College.

Principles

The College has a legal duty to help ensure that the practice of occupational therapy is safe. One of the ways the College does this is by requiring a Vulnerable Sector Check during the application process, and by requesting a Vulnerable Sector check from occupational therapists.

The College recognizes that the results of a Vulnerable Sector Check may not guarantee good character or predict future conduct. However, this type of screening is an important tool for helping to ensure public safety.

Policy

The College requires a Vulnerable Sector Check. All applicants to the College must complete this check **no more than six months before** the date of their registration.

Occupational therapists must submit a Vulnerable Sector Check to the College when requested.

Exception

An individual who can prove to the Registrar that they are not able to obtain the results of a Vulnerable Sector Check (for example, applicants who do not or have not lived in Canada) must undergo a criminal record screening approved by the Registrar and submit the results in the manner and timeframe the Registrar requires.

Process for applicants in all classes

Applicants must submit the results of their Vulnerable Sector Check as part of their application to the College. They are responsible for obtaining the correct type of check and paying all related fees (including fingerprints, if required).

The check must be completed on all the names the applicant is currently using and has used in the past. The applicant is responsible for ensuring that the full legal name, any previous names and date of birth on the check match the information provided to the College during the application process. If the information does not match, the College will not accept the Vulnerable Sector Check.

Suitability to practise

If the results of the check are not clear, the Registrar will review the findings and will ask the applicant to provide additional information about any past findings or convictions, including such things as charging documents and transcripts of court appearances. The review may raise concerns about the applicant's suitability to practise. This means the applicant's previous conduct gives the Registrar reasonable grounds to believe the applicant will not practise occupational therapy safely and ethically. In such cases, the Registrar may refer the application to the Registration Committee.

Process for occupational therapists

All occupational therapists have an obligation to report in writing to the Registrar if they have been charged with an offence or there has been a finding of professional misconduct or incompetence made against them by another regulator.

As well, occupational therapists, when requested, must submit the results of a Vulnerable Sector Check to the College, in the manner and timeframe required. They are responsible for obtaining the correct type of check and paying all related fees (including fingerprints, if required) and for providing follow-up information when requested by the Registrar.

The check must be completed on all the names the occupational therapist is currently using and has used in the past. The occupational therapist is responsible for ensuring that the full legal name, any previous names and date of birth on the check match the information on file with the College. If the information does not match, the College will not accept the Vulnerable Sector Check.

Suitability to practise

If the results of the check are not clear, the Registrar will review the findings and will make inquiries as appropriate, including asking the occupational therapist to provide further information and relevant documents, such as charging documents or transcripts of court appearances. The review may raise concerns about the occupational therapist's suitability to practise. In these cases, the Registrar may appoint an investigator.

Related Policies

[Determining Suitability to Practise at Registration](#)

Legal Requirement

[Ontario Regulation 226/96: General, under the Occupational Therapy Act, 1991, s. 35\(1\)](#)

[Health Professions Procedural Code, being Schedule 2 to the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991, s. 85.6.4 and s15](#)

[College Bylaws, ss. 16.01.1 and 16.01.2](#)