

Science Club for Girls CORI Policy

This policy is applicable to the criminal history screening of prospective and current employees, subcontractors, volunteers and interns, professional licensing applications, and applicants for the rental or leasing of housing. Where Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) and other criminal history checks may be part of a general background check for employment, volunteer work, licensing purposes, or the rental or leasing of housing, the below practices and procedures will be followed.

I. Conducting CORI Screening

Science Club for Girls (SCFG) is authorized to conduct CORI checks in accordance with Massachusetts state law M.G.L. c. 6, § 172.

The SCFG *CORI Acknowledgement Form (CAF)* gives authorized SCFG staff permission to obtain information about an applicant's criminal background in order to safeguard the health, safety, and well being of the girls in our programs. Prior to working for or volunteering with SCFG in any capacity, applicants must submit a completed *CORI Acknowledgement Form* to SCFG for subsequent review and screening.

Each applicant must complete a *CAF*, and have it verified in person by an SCFG staff member, or notarized and returned to SCFG.

A signed *CAF* is valid until exactly one year after receipt. SCFG may conduct subsequent CORI checks within one year of the date of receipt, after providing the applicant with written notice at least 72 hours before the check is conducted. SCFG requires all volunteer, employees, and applicants to re-submit an updated *CAF* each fiscal year (July 1-June 30).

If SCFG obtains criminal history information about an applicant, regardless of the source, SCFG will provide the criminal history to the applicant.

Completed *CAF* will be kept for the current and previous fiscal years, and then destroyed and disposed of in a manner that is acceptable for private and sensitive information.

II. Access to CORI

All CORI information obtained from the Department of Criminal Justice Information Services (DCJIS) is confidential, and access is limited to SCFG staff members who have a "need to know." This may include, but is not limited to, hiring managers, staff submitting CORI requests, and staff tasked with processing job applications. SCFG will maintain and keep a current list of each individual authorized to have access to, or view, CORI data. This list will be updated every six (6) months and is subject to inspection by DCJIS at any time.

III. CORI Training

An informed review of a criminal record requires training, and SCFG is required to maintain a CORI policy per M.G.L. c. 6, § 171A. All personnel authorized to conduct criminal history background checks and/or to review CORI information will review, and be thoroughly familiar with, the educational and relevant training materials regarding CORI laws and regulations made available by the DCJIS.

I.V. Use of Criminal History in Background Screening

CORI checks for employment and volunteer purposes shall only be accessed for applicants who are otherwise qualified for the position for which they have applied.

V. Verifying a Subject's Identify

If a criminal record is received from DCJIS, the information will be closely compared by an authorized SCFG staff member with the information on the *CORI Acknowledgement Form* and any other identifying information provided by the applicant to ensure the record belongs to the applicant.

If the information in the CORI record provided **does not** exactly match the identification information provided by the applicant, a determination will be made by an SCFG staff member authorized to make such decisions based on a comparison of the CORI records and the documents provided by the applicant.

VI. Inquiring about Criminal History

Prior to questioning the applicant about his/her criminal history, a copy of the applicant's record will be sent to them along with the source of the record (i.e. DCJIS). This may occur on the same day, if the applicant agrees to meet a SCFG staff member in person to review the findings.

Please note: Applicants are not required by SCFG to notify SCFG of their criminal record, convictions, arrests, or any other information regarding their background prior to their acceptance as an employee or volunteer. Applicants may disclose this information on their application, at their discretion.

VII. Determining Suitability

If a determination is made, based on the information as provided in section V of this policy, that the criminal records belongs to the subject, and the subject does not dispute the record's accuracy, then the determination of suitability for the position will be made. Unless otherwise provided by law, factors considered in determining suitability may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- a. Relevance of the record to the position sought;
- b. The nature of the work to be performed;
- c. Time since the conviction;
- d. Age of the candidate at the time of the offense;
- e. Seriousness and specific circumstances of the offense;
- f. The number of offenses;
- g. Where the applicant has pending charges;
- h. Any relevant evidence of rehabilitation or lack thereof; and
- i. Any other relevant information, including information submitted by the candidate or requested by the organization.

The applicant is to be notified of the decision and the basis for it in a timely manner.

VIII. Adverse Decisions Based on CORI

Candidates whose records indicate a history of child abuse, violent crime, or sexual crimes will be denied a position. At SCFG's discretion, candidates may be denied appointment due to financial



irresponsibility, drug/alcohol related offenses, or other serious offenses or history that would reflect adversely on the organization, its mission or the safety of participants.

Prior to formally rejecting an applicant, SCFG will meet in person with the applicant to review and discuss their CORI record. A formal statement will be given to the applicant, in person or via post mail, to the applicant detailing our decision. Applicants will also receive a copy of DCJIS' ***Information Concerning the Process for Correcting a Criminal Record***. Applicants may submit a written appeal of this decision, and we will contact them to discuss our findings and action steps.

If the applicant's criminal record is invalid, the applicant will have the opportunity to dispute the accuracy of their record and amend the information contained in the CORI.

SCFG will document all steps taken to comply with DCJIS requirements.

IX. Secondary Dissemination Logs

All CORI obtained from the DCJIS is confidential and can only be disseminated as authorized by law and regulation. A central secondary dissemination log shall be used to record any dissemination of CORI outside this organization, including dissemination at the request of the applicant.

SCFG will not send CORIs to outside organizations or third parties. SCFG will send CORI results to applicants, if required by law or if the applicant makes a formal request.

Secondary dissemination logs will be kept in hard copy and will contain:

- Applicant's name;
- Applicant's date of birth;
- The date and time of dissemination;
- The name of the person to whom the CORI was disseminated along with the name of the organization for which the person works, if applicable; and
- The specific reason for dissemination.