

VOLUNTEER POLICY

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1 BACKGROUND

Synchro BC enjoys a vibrant, talented and enthusiastic group of volunteers as event volunteers, coaches, officials, Board of Directors, committee members and others involved in numerous roles. The organization could not function and the sport could not grow without these critical contributions. In order to continue to offer that level of quality service, to make the best use of the skills of volunteers and to ensure that a caring and safe environment is provided for our athletes, Synchro BC has implemented a Volunteer Policy.

Synchro BC has referenced Volunteer Canada *Safe Steps Screening Program* (2012) and Sport BC's *Volunteer Management Policy for Sport Organizations* (2003) to provide direction for the Synchro BC policies and process.

2 SHORT-TERM VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT

Short-Term Volunteers...:

- a) ...are registered in eReg
- b) ...sign-up for volunteer duties through the iVolunteer Program
- c) ...fill duties such as: Figure Scorers, Runners, Timers, Music, Announcer, Photographer, Videographer, Security, Assistant Scorer, Volunteer Coordinator, Officials Hospitality Room, Raffle Ticket (50/50) Sales, Set-up, Take down

3 LONG-TERM VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT AND SCREENING

Synchro BC is responsible for the work carried out on its behalf whether that work is undertaken by paid employees, fee for service contractors or by unpaid volunteers. Synchro BC is also responsible for the way that the individuals working on our behalf are engaged, regardless of their status as volunteers, employees or contractors. The hiring and screening processes for staff and contractors are embedded in the Employee and Contractors Policies and Procedures document. For the purpose of engaging volunteers to undertake a variety of functions within the organization, Synchro BC will employ Volunteer Engagement and Screening procedures.

Volunteer “screening” is not limited to the initial recruitment, reference check and criminal record check of a volunteer, but includes follow-up monitoring and an evaluation process. Volunteer Canada's Safe Steps Screening Program outlines a menu of 10 steps for a safe screening program and within this context, Synchro BC will:

3.1 DETERMINE RISKS

Synchro BC will examine all facets of the organizations’ services and programs, the role of staff and volunteers in those services and programs, and identify any potential risk or danger. Further, Synchro BC will work to limit or eliminate any risks or danger.

3.2 POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

Synchro BC will develop clear “position descriptions” for all volunteer positions. Some positions may be grouped into general areas of responsibilities (e.g. Chaperones, Committees, Program Volunteer, etc.) while other levels of positions require specific scope of responsibility and accountability descriptions (e.g. Board of Directors). Position descriptions will include the supervisor (staff or another volunteer) for that particular volunteer role.

Specific screening requirements will be set for each volunteer position and included in the position description information.

3.3 THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Ongoing volunteer opportunities, using position descriptions or a condensed version, will be posted on the Synchro BC website, and when appropriate, notification sent to Synchro BC member clubs, Synchro Canada or posted in other sources. The posting will indicate the specific requirements for screening that the position entails, such as a Criminal Records Check, and/or References, and/or monitoring and evaluation processes.

3.4 THE VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM

An application form will be used for all designated volunteer positions. The application form requires contact information, emergency contact information, previous volunteer experience, at least two references and if required, compliance for a Criminal Record Check.

The timing of submission of applications for elected volunteers such as the **Board of Directors** is more difficult, but an election should not be confirmed until completion of an appropriate Criminal Record Check and receipt of acceptable information from references.

For appointments to **committees** or task groups, the application process, appropriate Criminal Record Check (if required) and checking of references should be completed before the appointment is finalized.

3.5 CONDUCT INTERVIEWS

All volunteer candidates may be “interviewed” to determine suitability of the person for the position, and conversely suitability of the position for the person. The “interview” may be a presentation of qualifications and answering questions from members when nominated for a Director position*, to a phone call from the program lead to a volunteer candidate.

(this assumes that Synchro BC continues to allow nominations from the floor at an AGM. If nominations have to be received 10 days ahead of the AGM, then a suitability interview can be conducted by the chair of the Nominations Committee before the meeting. If someone is not deemed to be suitable, the Nominations Committee can ask the individual to withdraw their nomination. If the reason has any legal implications (ie: criminal record in one of the areas of concern) they can be advised that they will be removed if elected.)*

Appropriate interview questions will be developed for each level of volunteer position within Synchro BC.

3.6 REFERENCES

The references for long term applicants will be checked prior to the position being confirmed. If the supervisor determines that the applicant is not suitable, based on the reference check, the applicant will be advised that they are not going to be named / appointed to the position.

3.7 CRIMINAL RECORD CHECKS

Synchro BC will require a Criminal Records Check every three years for all volunteers who have any connection to the under 19 years of age members of the association, or to other minors through school program, clinics or “learn to” programs.

The necessity of the CRC requirement will be applied to each Volunteer level and appended to this policy.

3.8 ORIENTATION AND TRAINING SESSIONS

Appropriate orientation and training is available for all volunteer positions with Synchro BC.

3.9 SUPERVISION AND EVALUATION

The level of risk for each volunteer position will be assessed and an appropriate supervision and evaluation process determined. Evaluations will be based on position descriptions and any feedback given throughout the year. Volunteers will have an opportunity to submit their own personal evaluation of the experience and their performance prior to the formal discussion taking place.

3.10 FOLLOW UP

Volunteers should be made aware of any follow-up activities that may occur to monitor their activities. This could include spot checks for volunteers in high-risk positions.

4 VOLUNTEER SERVICES AND REQUIREMENTS

4.1 LIABILITY INSURANCE

Synchro BC does carry liability insurance that includes volunteers in the coverage when they are directly involved in Synchro BC activities. Contact the Executive Director to get information about the specific coverage. Volunteers may want to also contact their personal carrier for information on additional coverage.

4.2 TRANSPORTING SYNCHRO BC MEMBERS OR OTHERS ON SYNCHRO BC BUSINESS

All volunteers who transport athletes or others relating to Synchro BC events or association business in their own vehicle must submit a copy of their driver's license and evidence of appropriate insurance before beginning their volunteer assignment, and on an annual basis thereafter. Volunteers can only drive Synchro BC activity participants in an insured and properly maintained vehicle, and will at all times obey all traffic regulations, and abstain from driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs or any other kind of impairment such as health issues or exhaustion.

4.3 AGE OF VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers under the age of 19 who are not already members with Synchro BC must provide a signed letter of consent from their parent or legal guardian, with specific reference to the required CRC and reference checks.

4.4 COMMITMENT AND EXPECTATIONS

Volunteers are expected to perform their duties as agreed to and in accordance with the schedule given. If unable to meet their commitments, volunteers need to inform their supervisor as far in advance as possible so that alternate arrangements can be made.

4.5 CONFIDENTIALITY

At times, volunteers in certain positions and in the context of their volunteer responsibilities, may have access to personal information of members such as addresses, birthdates or other information. Volunteers must respect and maintain the confidentiality of information about athletes, other volunteers, participants, and staff gained through the involvement as a volunteer within Synchro BC.

Information gained through the volunteer role within Synchro BC is strictly confidential except under the following circumstances:

- a) There is a legal obligation for staff or volunteers to provide information when required to do so.
- b) There is an obligation for staff or volunteers to inform the appropriate authorities if there is reason to believe that the safety or well-being of participants is at risk.
- c) Staff or volunteers are required to inform the organization and/or appropriate authorities if there is potential for danger to self or others.

4.6 REMOVAL OF A VOLUNTEER

Synchro BC's primary responsibility is the safety and well-being of athletes, participants, volunteers, other members and staff. Synchro BC is also vitally concerned about the integrity and reputation of the organization. The behavior of volunteers does reflect on the association and impacts the enjoyment and future involvement of other members. If a volunteer does not adhere to the code of conduct, commits a dangerous or harmful act in the context of their Synchro BC activities or at any other time, that volunteer may be dismissed immediately and without warning.

Grounds for immediate dismissal may include but are not limited to the following:

- a) Gross misconduct or insubordination
- b) Committing a criminal offence (theft, assault, vandalism, etc.)
- c) Acts of abuse, mistreatment or violence
- d) Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs

5 VOLUNTEER DEVELOPMENT AND RECOGNITION

Synchro BC supports the involvement and personal growth of volunteers through training, professional development and recognition.

5.1 ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

Volunteers will be provided with the orientation and training appropriate to their level of volunteer involvement in the organization. Every volunteer will:

- a) receive a position description outlining the scope and expectations of the role
- b) have an assigned supervisor or contact, with phone and email contact
- c) be provided with a calendar of meeting dates or event dates as early as possible
- d) for an event, be given a schedule of expected volunteer hours as early as possible

Every volunteer will be provided with written material, or a face-to-face, electronic or phone orientation for their position prior to starting.

5.2 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Synchro BC will provide appropriate opportunities for professional development for volunteers regularly.

- a) For technical volunteers such as coaches or officials, these opportunities could take the form of technical clinics or camps, mentoring, speakers, webinars, financial support or other resources.
- b) For operational volunteers, these opportunities could take the form of workshops, presentations, financial support, mentoring, webinars, advisory services, or other resources.

5.3 RECOGNITION

Synchro BC recognizes the critical contribution of volunteers to the sport and the organization in a number of ways:

- a) Volunteer apparel for Board of Directors
- b) End of the Year Awards

Access to this Policy will be provided to all members. By using these policies, all parties agree that they will not commence any action, legal or otherwise, against Synchro BC.

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