



The Army Cadet League of Canada's

# SCREENING COORDINATOR'S HANDBOOK

4-Step Common Sense Guide to Volunteer Selection  
ONTARIO EDITION



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# INTRODUCTION

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The League accepted to perform the civilian Volunteer Screening function for the Army Cadet Movement as part of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed on 01 Dec 2005. This decision was taken after careful consideration and for three reasons:

1. **“It’s what we do”**: Recruiting and managing a pool of volunteers and parents at a Cadet Corps is not new to us and is one way the League has traditionally supported The Royal Canadian Army Cadets. We did not want to delegate this responsibility.
2. **“Simplicity”**: The Leagues can implement a simple and straightforward screening process as opposed to the process currently in place by the Canadian Forces enrolment procedure. We can implement a simpler, quicker, flexible system executed locally by and for the benefit of the Cadet Corps.
3. **“Safety”**: The best people to make judgment calls on potential volunteers are the people who live in the communities where the volunteers are going to work. References are best checked by local people and the knowledge that this process is in place will in itself deter unsuitable individuals from applying.

This Handbook is designed to guide the Screening Coordinators and Liaison Officers through the screening process. It also lays out the standard procedure that The Army Cadet League of Canada (ACLC) will use to process Volunteer registration and screening. We recognize that regional and provincial exceptions will arise and that common sense practical solutions are required to address any unforeseen problems. The League has committed to work with these exceptions so long as we are able to deliver on the fundamental requirements that were identified by the National Cadet Council (NCC) Working Group to ensure the protection of the youth in our care:

1. **The identity of the Applicant is checked and accurate;**
2. **The Applicant is thoroughly interviewed;**
3. **A Canadian Police Record Check (PRC) confirms the applicant has no criminal history;**
4. **The local Liaison Officer verifies the applicant’s references.**

If we efficiently meet these four requirements, we will have done all we possibly can do to ensure the young cadets in our cadet corps are going to be provided with safe and effective Volunteers. Canadian Forces (CF) personnel, including the Cadet Instructor Cadre (CIC) and the Civilian Instructors (CI) are presently considered to be screened as a result of the Enhanced Reliability Check (ERC) they are subjected to when they enroll.

As you read through this Handbook, please remember it was designed as a guide to give you an overview of what is required. However, all four requirements must be met. If you need any clarification feel free to contact the Provincial League at:

**Toronto local: (416) 264-4591**  
**Toll- free: 1-800-561-4786**  
**Email: [armyleag@bellnet.ca](mailto:armyleag@bellnet.ca)**

# STEP ONE

## THE INITIAL MEETING & APPLICATION

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1. Identifying and recruiting volunteers is a prime activity of the Corps Support Committee, however the involvement of Corps Commanding Officers (CO) is essential to an effective volunteer recruiting program. Out of common courtesy, prospective volunteers should be formally introduced to both the Corps CO and the Liason Officer as soon as they arrive to apply.
2. The Liason Officer coordinates the activities of the Committee and its volunteers and should conduct the initial interview. The Liaison Officer may delegate this to someone else. During this initial meeting, the following information should be passed on to the applicant:

√	<b>An explanation of the Volunteer Registration Form (Annex “A” to Policy 10.1);</b>
√	<b>Photograph specifications (Digital “Head &amp; Shoulders” preferred):</b>
√	<b>A description of the interesting and fun opportunities within the Cadet Corps and Committee;</b>
√	<b>Contact information for the Volunteer Screening Coordinator and/or the Liaison Officer.</b>

3. Most new Volunteers will be known to the Cadet Corps and/or The Support Committee when they apply. The goal of the first meeting is to confirm to the applicant that volunteering with the Army Cadet League of Canada (ACLC) can be a both an enjoyable and rewarding experience. It is important not to overwhelm them with the paperwork and policies at this initial stage. The best approach is to offer them the pre-made Registration Kit available from the National Office. This consists of an envelope or folder which should include the Registration Application form, some policies, recruiting material and contact information. This will provide them with the information they need in one simple package. As the interviewer hands them the package it is important to stress the importance of the Screening procedure. You could say:

*“Thank you for expressing interest in volunteering with us. We are thrilled to have you on board. Before you start, we have to follow some screening procedures. We must do reliability checks on all volunteers. I’m sure you can understand why it is so important for us to make sure our volunteers have our cadets’ best interests at heart. Please review this information and feel free to call me or the Screening Coordinator [name] if you have any questions. When the screening process is complete, you will be able to start working with us.”*

4. The forms and policies are self-explanatory. Giving these to the applicant to review later allows the interviewer to focus on building the eagerness and enthusiasm of the applicant. Reputable volunteers will understand the need for screening and safety policies. By presenting a professional package you will demonstrate to a potential volunteer that the ACLC appreciates their volunteer efforts and is determined to prevent disreputable individuals from joining the Army Cadet Movement.

5. After the Initial Meeting, the name and phone number of the applicant should be retained by the Volunteer Screening Coordinator for follow-up. Whether or not the initial meeting is followed-up is a local decision.

6. Information must be kept confidential. Once the screening process is complete, any information collected must be sent to the National Office, where it will be stored in accordance with the Federal Privacy Act and the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA).

7. When the applicant submits their paperwork, several points need to be checked:

√	<b>Volunteer Application Form</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Each section is complete and legible</li> <li>– Contact information matches Identification</li> </ul>
√	<b>Identification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Two pieces of ID</li> <li>– Verify originals to ensure they match the photocopies.</li> </ul>
√	<b>CPIC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Ensure it is an original, name and birth date match the ID provided and it has the stamp or Impression from the Police Service.</li> </ul>
√	<b>Photograph</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Photos may be submitted either in original format, digitally on diskette or e-mail from the Liaison Officer to the Provincial Office.</li> </ul>

When all these documents are in order, the screening process can proceed.

**Remember :** *At any stage of the screening process, the Branch Screening Coordinator may decline the volunteer or a recommendation may be made in confidence, to the Provincial or National Office, to decline the application.*

# STEP TWO

## THE FORMAL INTERVIEW

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8. Once all of the documents in Step One are in order, there should be a formal interview with the applicant. The formal interview should be conducted by a panel of at least three persons. The Panel should be composed from the Volunteer Screening Coordinator, one or two other volunteers, the Cadet Corps CO and perhaps one other individual from the Sponsoring Committee. The different perspective brought by each individual will help determine if the candidate is suitable. The Liaison Officer is responsible for establishing the Interview Panel and will decide the place, time and conduct.

9. Before meeting the applicant, the Volunteer Screening Coordinator should brief the members of the Interview Panel as to how the interview should be conducted. This includes reviewing the list of questions and outlining generally **prohibited areas of questioning**, such as:

<b>Sex, sexual orientation</b>	<b>Religion</b>
<b>Age</b>	<b>Disability *</b>
<b>Race</b>	<b>Family Status</b>
<b>National/Ethnic Origin</b>	<b>Marital Status</b>
<b>Colour</b>	<b>Pardoned Convictions **</b>

\* *The Interviewer may ask, "Do you know of any limitations, physical, mental or otherwise, that will impede on your ability to carry out the duties of an Army Cadet League Volunteer as they have been described to you?", without violating the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.*

\*\* *The Interviewer may ask, "Have you ever committed a criminal offence?" If the response is yes, he may ask for the circumstances of the offence (what, when, punishment/rehabilitation issued) to determine if the person represents a risk.*

10. The following suggested questions are simply a guideline. Feel free to ask any questions that are not prohibited by any of the ten factors listed above, but bear in mind the interview is part of a process that addresses a greater good: the safety of Youth in the Cadet Program. As well, consider that the Applicant is not applying for paid employment. There is no risk of lost wages. If the Panel feels a sensitive question should be asked to determine or clarify a sensitive point, that question should be asked. Following are some suggested questions:

### **Volunteer Interest**

- Did you review the documents we provided and do you have any questions about them?
- Did you review the Harassment and Abuse, Drug and Alcohol and Safety Policies?
- As a volunteer, do you agree to abide by these policies?
- Why did you decide you would like to volunteer with us?
- What are your personal goals for involvement within the Army Cadet League?
- What activities are you interested in assisting with?

### **Background**

- How long have you lived here? If applicable, follow with:
- Where have you lived before?
- Why did you move?

- Why have you moved so often?
- Have you worked with youth before? If applicable, follow with:
- What organizations did you work with?
- What were your duties?
- How long did you volunteer for?
- Why did you leave?
- What are your hobbies and interests?
- What skills do you possess that relate to a volunteer position with the Army Cadet League?
- Ask any questions relating to the reference check, for instance, "What do you think your references will say about you?"

**Suitability**

- Do you know of any limitations, physical, mental or otherwise, that will impede your ability to carry out the duties of an Army Cadet League volunteer as they have been described to you?
- Are you comfortable working in a multi-cultural environment with teenagers?
- Are there any groups or individuals you would prefer not to work with?
- How would you motivate cadets to follow your direction?
- How do you think youth should be disciplined?
- Can you think of a situation involving youth that you handled poorly?

Follow with:

- What did you learn from it?
- How would you handle it differently?
- Former cadets: Ask if they understand the differences between cadets and volunteer staff, and how they will manage the professional separation required between themselves and cadets.

11. The use of hypothetical scenarios is also a good way of determining how an individual may act in a leadership role. Ask the applicant to comment on how they would handle one or two different scenarios. This will create a dialogue that will open any number of questions:

**Examples:**

<b>One of your cadets is a loner and doesn't interact well with the other cadets and is very shy towards the staff.</b>
<b>A staff member is yelling at cadets for no apparent reason.</b>
<b>Some of your cadets are not following direction, and are a disruptive influence on the other cadets. Their continued disobedience has made you angry and frustrated.</b>

**Challenge the applicant:**

- How would you handle this?
- Why would you handle it this way?
- Are there any other ways to handle it?
- What is the most important aspect of this problem?
- How could this problem be avoided?

At the conclusion of questioning, the applicant should have another opportunity to ask any questions.

12. How the applicant answers a question can be more important than the answer itself.

<b>Watch out for:</b>	<b>How to handle it:</b>
Simple Yes or No answers	Ask for details if you feel something is being left out.
Evasive answers	These are responses that do not really answer the question or steer the interview in a different direction. Ensure you keep on topic. If necessary, ask the question again.
Inconsistencies	The answer given does not match previous answers or information you have gathered. Ask the question again later, phrased differently, to see if you get a consistent answer. Ask the applicant about any inconsistencies you have noted.
Body language	Does the applicant make eye contact? (Note however that in some cultures it is considered impolite to make direct eye contact with an official or a senior). Do they appear overly uncomfortable or fidgety? Note whether behaviour is different from the first interview.

13. After the interview is over, the members of the Interview Committee should discuss the applicant. The Volunteer Screening Coordinator may need to follow up on points raised during the interview. If it is deemed useful, you can call a second interview to clarify any unresolved concerns. It is important there be no doubt that the applicant is a worthy and reliable person.

# STEP THREE

## THE LOCAL REFERENCE CHECK

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14. After the completed application has been received and the interview has been conducted the Screening Coordinator must contact each of the references provided in the Registration Form, prior to making a recommendation. The purpose of contacting these references is twofold:

- a. **To verify the information provided from the applicant is accurate.**
- b. **To seek further information about the suitability of the applicant to work with youth.**

15. When a Screening Coordinator contacts a reference, they should identify themselves and why they are calling. A suggested form can be found on page 16 of this manual and at Annex "D" to ACLC Policy 10.1 which might be useful:

*"Hello, I'm John Johnson from the Army Cadet League of Canada, and I'm calling about a reference check for John Doe. The Army Cadet League is a Charitable Organization that runs youth programs and John has offered to volunteer with us. Do you think you would be able to answer a few questions to confirm information he/she has provided to us?"*

16. Ask personal references about:

- How long have you known the applicant?
- What is your relationship with the applicant?
- Does the applicant interact well with children?
- Would you place your child in the care of this person?

17. If an employer, ask for confirmation about:

- How long has the applicant worked at your firm?
- (If the applicant is a former employee) Why did he/she leave?
- How did the applicant relate with co-workers?
- Would you rehire this individual?
- Would you recommend the applicant to volunteer to work with Army Cadets?
- Would you place your child in the care of this person?

18. There is no set list of questions that will satisfy every scenario a Screening Coordinator will encounter. Each Coordinator will have to rely on their best judgment when interviewing each reference. Screening Coordinators may not ask questions about:

<b>Sex, sexual orientation</b>	<b>Religion</b>
<b>Age</b>	<b>Disability</b>
<b>Race</b>	<b>Family Status</b>
<b>National/Ethnic Origin</b>	<b>Marital Status</b>
<b>Colour</b>	<b>Pardoned Convictions</b>

These subjects are protected under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and may not be used in determining the suitability of an applicant. Balancing the rights of the applicant against the need to protect Cadets can sometimes be difficult. However it is the position of the Army Cadet League that the welfare of youth is a greater need and takes precedence.

# STEP FOUR

## THE APPROVAL

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19. Once the Liaison Officer has collected all the requested paperwork, conducted the interviews and verified the applicant's references, it is time to make a recommendation.

20. Selecting volunteers is always a judgment call. Liaison Officers have a major responsibility in determining whether or not an applicant is a suitable volunteer. Even if there is no clear evidence that an applicant will cause problems as a volunteer, the Liaison Officer can still use their 'Gut Instinct' to make a determination. The only reasons that may not be used, as defined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom, to make a determination are:

<b>Sex, sexual orientation</b>	<b>Religion</b>
<b>Age</b>	<b>Disability*</b>
<b>Race</b>	<b>Family Status</b>
<b>National/Ethnic Origin</b>	<b>Marital Status</b>
<b>Colour</b>	<b>Pardoned Convictions**</b>

\* *While the League cannot discriminate against a person with a disability, the Army Cadet League can present a bona fide case for the need to protect our cadets. The best way to approach this is to provide the applicant with a description of their duties (in Step One) and ask "Do you know of any limitations, physical, mental or otherwise, that will impede your ability to carry out the duties of an Army Cadet League volunteer as they have been described to you?" **Do not ask this question to references**, it must only be asked to the applicant. On the other hand, we may not be able to provide a safe environment for such individuals and this must also be considered.*

\*\* *If the Interviewer or Panel determine that a criminal conviction discussed during the interview does not constitute a danger to cadets and that the Applicant deserves to be considered, a recommendation to this effect should be prepared and signed by all members of the Panel as well as the Liaison Officer and the Commanding Officer of the Cadet Corps. This recommendation, marked CONFIDENTIAL should be sent to the Provincial or Territorial Branch President. Upon that President's recommendation the waiver will then be forwarded for consideration by the National Office. This should be done quickly. It is unfair to all concerned to allow this process to be drawn out.*

21. As the well-being and safety of cadets is the first priority of any youth program, it has clear precedence over the wishes of any prospective volunteer. As such, The Army Cadet League of Canada maintains the right to select its volunteers and will stand by and support the recommendation of the Liaison Officers and the Support Committee Chairs.

22. Liaison Officers that have questions or concerns about an applicant may phone the Provincial Branch Office at 1-800-561-4786 to discuss their recommendation.

23. Once the Screening Coordinator has made a positive recommendation, they will package up all of the information and send it to the provincial or territorial office where it will be reviewed for completeness. The Liaison Officers should keep a copy of page 1 of the Volunteer Registration Form only. All other information on the form is confidential and must not be copied or shared with any other party. The completed package will then be forwarded to the National Office in Ottawa for processing. The ID card will be sent directly to the Chair of the Cadet Corps' Support Committee for delivery to the Volunteer.

24. If an applicant is declined, the applicant must cease all activity at the cadet corps. The registration documents and all of the information must be packaged up and sent to the National Office. This will include the Volunteer Application Form, identification documents, CPIC, and any personal notes taken by the Screening Coordinator.

25. For political and social reasons, a Liason Officer may request that the refusal of an application be made from the Provincial or National Office.

26. When the Photo ID card is received at the Cadet Corps the Volunteer should contact the Cadet Corps Commanding Officer and undertake to sign the DND Volunteer Agreement.

27. Applicants may not work with cadets until such time as the screening process is successively completed and they have signed a Volunteer Agreement.

# DRIVERS LOG

## WHAT ABOUT IT?

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28. The Driver's Log (see next page) was designed to ensure that parents and friends who help out with one-time events are permitted to do so, all the while ensuring the safety of our cadets. It is a straightforward form that will identify the driver, the name of the cadets he/she agrees to provide transportation for, as well as ensure that he/she has a valid driver's permit and adequate insurance coverage. Cadets must always travel in groups of two or more, and must NEVER be left alone with an unscreened worker.

# DRIVERS LOG

*To be used where parents or casual volunteers are used to transport cadets during local events, fund raising activities or are otherwise transported in private vehicles. This form is to be retained on file.*

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## INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Provide cadets with a contact phone number. This should be the corps number and the driver's home or a mobile phone number.
  2. Drivers **MUST** supervise the cadets under their charge.
  3. The driver **MUST** make contact with the adult in charge of the location or destination.
  4. If the activity is fundraising, cadets should be instructed clearly on why they are fund-raising and can even be given introductory lines the cadets can use when communicating with the public.
  5. The parent/volunteer/guardian must produce their Driver's license prior to signing this log.
- 

NAME OF DRIVER: \_\_\_\_\_

DRIVER'S TEL: \_\_\_\_\_ Vehicle License Plate: \_\_\_\_\_

DESTINATION: \_\_\_\_\_

EVENT / ACTIVITY: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ CORPS TEL: \_\_\_\_\_

CADET CORPS # \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF CADETS TRANSPORTED: (1) \_\_\_\_\_

(2) \_\_\_\_\_ (3) \_\_\_\_\_

(4) \_\_\_\_\_ (5) \_\_\_\_\_

(6) \_\_\_\_\_ (7) \_\_\_\_\_

**I hereby certify that I am a licensed and insured driver entrusted with the care and control of the Cadets assigned to me. I understand the policy of The Army Cadet League of Canada requires that cadets must at all times, travel and work in pairs or groups.**

**DRIVER'S SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_



## The Army Cadet League of Canada Volunteer Registration Form

*In the interest of protecting our Cadets, the Army Cadet League of Canada has established a Volunteer Screening Program, in conjunction with our partner, the Department of National Defence. All information collected for this program will be kept confidential. Information about our privacy policy can be found online at [www.armycadetleague.ca](http://www.armycadetleague.ca)*

*If you have any questions about our Volunteer Screening Program, please call the National Office at:  
**1-877-276-9223***

National Office Use Only

**Who has to fill out this form?** Any person who is applying to work with Army Cadets and who may find themselves working alone with Cadets who are on “*cadet duty*” as defined in “*The Queen’s Regulations and Orders for the Canadian Cadet Organization*”. There are two exceptions:

1. Active members of the Cadet Instructors Cadre or serving members of the Canadian Forces, are presently considered to be screened as a result of their enrollment process, or
2. Volunteers or parents who occasionally drive cadets to and from organized activities do not need to be screened in depth. The Army Cadet League has provided a Driver’s Log that records basic information requirements for Drivers and Cadets. See ACLC Policy No. 10.1, Annex “B”.

To complete your application, we will require (1) the application fully completed, (2) a Canadian Police Records Check (PRC) for the Vulnerability Sector (working with youth), (3) photocopies of two pieces of official identification one of which must include a photo, and (4) a recent head & shoulders photograph (taken within the last 3 months) of yourself, preferably in digital format, for the ID Card.

The completed application package will be archived at the National Office. After five years you must be re-screened. Basic information will be recorded on our secure Confidential Volunteer Screening Database. Your name may be shared with other youth organizations, but only for the purpose of volunteer screening. Your name and address will not be distributed to any third party for commercial or unauthorized use.

### Section 1 – Contact Information

<b>Family Name</b>	<b>First</b>	<b>Middle</b>
<b>Address</b>		
<b>City</b>	<b>Province</b>	<b>Postal Code</b>
<b>Phone Number</b>	<b>Fax</b>	<b>E-mail</b>
<b>Province or Territorial Branch:</b>		

### Section 2 – Personal Information

<b>Date of Birth (dd/mmm/yyyy)</b> Optional	<b>Place of Birth (City, Province/State, Country)</b>		
<b>Previous Address (if less than one year at your current address)</b>			
<b>Street Address</b>			
<b>Employer(s)</b>	<b>Address / City / Province</b>	<b>Postal Code</b>	<b>Telephone</b>

### Section 3 – Previous Military Service

Have you ever been in the military? (Check one box)  Yes  No

If you answered 'Yes' above, please provide proof of service or your release document:

### Section 4 – References

First Reference	
Name	Relationship to You
Phone Number	E-Mail
Second Reference	
Name	Relationship to You
Phone Number	E-Mail
Third Reference	
Name	Relationship to You
Phone Number	E-Mail

### Section 5 – Personal Declaration

I, the undersigned, agree that all information contained within this application is factual and has been completed to the best of my knowledge and ability. I permit The Army Cadet League of Canada, or its agents, to interview any of the contacts listed in my application.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Sponsoring Committee Check List	Branch Check List
<input type="checkbox"/> Identification Check (photocopies enclosed) <input type="checkbox"/> PRC obtained <input type="checkbox"/> Photograph obtained <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Interview completed <input type="checkbox"/> Reference Checks completed <input type="checkbox"/> Prior CF Service documents obtained <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Recommended <input type="checkbox"/> Not Recommended	<input type="checkbox"/> Application Complete <input type="checkbox"/> Recommended ___ Not Recommended  <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Comments	Comments
Print Name Telephone #	Print Name Telephone #
Signature	Signature
Date	Date

# TELEPHONE REFERENCE CHECK FORM

## **INTRODUCTION:**

"Hello, I'm \_\_\_\_\_ calling from the Army Cadet League of Canada, and I'm calling about a reference check for \_\_\_\_\_.

The Army Cadet League is a Charitable Organization that runs youth programs and John has offered to volunteer with us. Do you think you would be able to answer a few short questions to confirm information he/she has provided to us?"

## **REFERENCE No. 1: Name:**

**Checked by:**

1	How long have you known the applicant?	
2	What is your relationship?	
3	Do they interact well with children	
4	Would you place your child in his/her care?	
5.		

## **REFERENCE No. 2: Name:**

**Checked by:**

1	How long have you known the applicant?	
2	What is your relationship?	
3	Do they interact well with children	
4	Would you place your child in his/her care?	
5.		

## **REFERENCE No. 1: Name:**

**Checked by:**

1	How long have you known the applicant?	
2	What is your relationship?	
3	Do they interact well with children	
4	Would you place your child in his/her care?	
5.		