BACKGROUND SCREENING BEST PRACTICES FOR SPORTS TEAMS & YOUTH SPORTS ORGANIZATIONS

1 SCREEN EVERYONE
Screen everyone – coaches, referees, volunteers, and even board members – not screening everyone means you are risking your organization’s assets, reputation and overall safety.

2 THERE IS NO “ONE & DONE”
Require all individuals to be rescreened annually, as well as be monitored on a monthly basis to help identify new crimes.

3 CHECK THE NSOPW SEX OFFENDER REGISTRY
Rely on the Department of Justice National Sex Offender registry (NSOPW). It is the only up-to-date and comprehensive sex offender search available.

4 LOOK TO PRIMARY SOURCES
State and county records databases only identify that criminal records are available. If possible, check “primary sources” directly at the courthouse.

5 MULTIPLE LAYERS OF SCREENING
Multiple background check sources need to be searched to fill in database gaps and to help uncover potential new information. Checking the NSOPW registry, Nationwide and courthouse records is a good place to start.

6 DON’T TRUST “INSTANT” CHECKS
Services that tout near-immediate results are from online or stale aggregated databases and are inaccurate and out of date, sometimes by several years.

7 HAVE A POLICY & PUBLICIZE IT
Organizations should share their background screening policy with the public by posting it online. Parents should always ask to see an organization’s policy.

8 VALIDATE IDENTITIES OF ALL COACHES & OFFICIALS
Most background checks are based on an individual’s name and date of birth, so validating a person’s identity via a government-issued ID is essential.

9 PROMOTE TRANSPARENCY
Ensure all parties—the organization and the individual—receive a copy of the background check report.

10 ENCOURAGE SHARING
Encourage individuals to share their background check with other organizations they volunteer with. Likewise, consider accepting recent background checks that meet your policy’s standards.

KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT BACKGROUND CHECKS
If you’re a parent or an organization assessing background check services, here are key questions to ask:

- Does your background check include a NSOPW Sex Offender Registry search?
- What jurisdictions does your database cover for this state and region?
- Do your searches check primary sources at the courthouse?
- Are your background check results compliant with the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA)?
- What is your average turnaround time for a background check?
- What happens when there is a “hit” for a criminal record?
- What kinds of criminal records are viewed as not applicable? How is that decision made?

For information on how quality volunteer background checks can help your sports team or organization create safer environments, contact Verified Volunteers. We’ll be happy to show you how our self-service platform makes the screening process seamless and efficient for everyone involved.