

Frequently Asked Questions: Records Checks for Regulated Child Care

Q.1 When did the requirements for Criminal Record (CR), Vulnerable Sector (VS) and Child Abuse Register (CAR) checks change?

In December 2014, amendments to the Day Care Regulations were approved by government. At that time, new requirements for Criminal Record (now Vulnerable Sector) and Child Abuse Register checks became effective.

For detailed information on the requirements for CR, VS and CAR Checks, please see Section 43 of the *Day Care Regulations*.

Q.2 Who must have a Vulnerable Sector Check?

VS checks are required in accordance with Regulation 43(2) for:

- Any person who is 18 years old or older and who has or will have contact with children enrolled in a licensed day care program or approved family home day care program (including volunteers).
- Any person who is 18 years old or older and who lives in a home where there is a licensed facility or that is a family day care home.

Q.3 Who must have a Child Abuse Registry Check?

CAR checks are required in accordance with Regulation 43(4) for:

- Any person who is 13 years old or older and who has or will have contact with children enrolled in a licensed day care program or approved family home day care program (including volunteers).
- Any person who is 13 years old or older and who lives in a home where there is a licensed facility or that is a family day care home.

Q.4 What is the definition of 'contact with children'?

A person who is included in the staff-to-child ratio, or who is in the classroom or outdoor play space with the children as a part of program e.g. volunteers, supported child care staff, students, cooks if they are included in ratio, and external consultants.

Q.5 What is the difference between a Criminal Record Check, Vulnerable Sector Check and Child Abuse Register Check?

A Criminal Record Check verifies whether an individual has a criminal record and provides the applicant with the detailed information that can be legally disclosed.

A Vulnerable Sector Check is an enhanced Criminal Record Check that includes the pardoned sex offender database.

A Child Abuse Register Check means a search of the Child Abuse Register conducted in accordance with the Children and Family Services Act.

Q.6 How often do I have to renew my Vulnerable Sector Check and Child Abuse Registry Check?

Child Abuse Register and Vulnerable Sector Checks must be updated on a regular basis as follows:

- Child Abuse Register Checks must be renewed every three years of employment.
- Vulnerable Sector checks must be renewed every five years.
- New employees checks can be no earlier than 2 years of date of hire.

Q.7 Can I work at a child care program or an approved family home day care program without a VS or CAR check on file?

If a person does not have a VS or CAR check on file, they cannot work with children in a child care program or an approved family home day care program until the required checks have been obtained.

A person who will only have contact with children's records does not require a CAR check and can work at a child care program.

Q.8 Can I work at a child care program or an approved family home day care program if I have not renewed my VS or CAR check?

If a VS or CAR check has not been renewed as required, the person must be relieved of their duties immediately and are not permitted to be included in the staff-to children ratio, or be in the classroom or outdoor play space with the children.

Q.9 Where do I obtain a Vulnerable Sector Check and Child Abuse Registry Check?

The VS check can be obtain at the nearest local police department or RCMP detachment.

Visit <http://www.halifax.ca/police/CriminalRecordCheck.php> or <http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/criminal-record-and-vulnerable-sector-checks>

CAR checks can be requested only by an individual for his or her own name. The search results will be provided to the individual in the form of a letter which can then be shared with any organization.

The process and forms are easily accessible, and can be printed from the Department of Community Services website at <http://novascotia.ca/coms/families/abuse/ChildAbuseRegister.html>

Q.10 What is the time frame to receive a Vulnerable Sector Check and Child Abuse Registry Check?

You should allow a minimum of two weeks for processing of a VS check.

The normal processing time for a CAR is ten business days. At times, there may be a delay in the processing of the CAR. If that is the case, please call Child Care Registry, Department of Community Services at (902) 424-6798 to receive more information on the processing time

Q.11 What are the costs for a Vulnerable Sector Check and Child Abuse Registry Check?

There may be a processing fee for the VS check, depending on where the individual lives in the province. Please check with your local authorities (local police station or RCMP) for this information.

There is no fee charge to obtain a CAR.

Q. 12 Are external consultants (e.g., Early Intervention and other agencies) required to have a Vulnerable Sector Check and Child Abuse Registry Check before working directly with children?

The licensee must obtain proof of CAR and VS checks directly from the external consultant or proof from the employer or organization to which the external consultant belongs that confirms the individual has been screened and has provided up-to-date VS and CAR checks to their organization.

Q.13 Can I accept a Vulnerable Sector Check and Child Abuse Registry check from an individual who is from out of province/country?

The licensee can accept a VS check that has been completed out of province.

A person coming from outside of Canada must obtain a VS check in Canada.

The licensee can accept a CAR from other province while the person applies for a CAR check in Nova Scotia as long as the individual has a valid ID that identifies where they have come from.