

Best practices for club policies

Before you implement background checks, we recommend a first step: develop a club policy. Here are best practices for developing a policy.

The basics

Here's what you need when developing a policy:

- The name and contact information of the screening vendor
- Information to be collected in the background check
- How information would be collected (e.g., by government source or commercial screening vendor such as the one Kiwanis provides through [Safe Hiring Solutions](#))
- Period of time the screening would cover
- Clarity about how results would be communicated and to whom
- Consequences for members who decline a background check

Information security

Here's how to keep your club's background check information safe and secure:

- Never email screening reports without using encrypted technology. Normal email is highly insecure.
- Store authorizations and printed reports in a locked filing cabinet with controlled access.
- Limit access to screening reports exclusively to people who would make a decision on a volunteer candidate. Safe Hiring Solutions provides three levels of access to help maintain privacy:
 - **Level I:** Can only order reports but not view completed reports
 - **Level II:** Can order and view only reports ordered by the user
 - **Level III:** Can view everything in the account

Record retention

Maintain screening reports as part of your club records for at least seven years. Safe Hiring Solutions allows reports to be archived online indefinitely.

Criminal record policy

Provide club leaders with direction for action when a criminal record is found. The security of children, volunteers and Kiwanis members should be paramount. Many organizations, such as school districts, have policies that define the impact of offenses on membership or employment. The following categories may serve as a model for your club's policy for members and for any paid employees:

- **Definitely exclude:** Decision-makers will likely want to exclude those who have been convicted of crimes such as sexual violence, violent crimes, felony theft, child abuse, child exploitation, child molestation, child seduction, dealing in drugs, possession of child pornography or Internet child crimes.
- **Exclude for a period of time:** Crimes such as DUI, theft, simple possession of narcotics and illegal consumption may not be disqualifying after a period of time, such as 5–10 years, has passed.
- **Don't necessarily exclude:** Offenses such as minor moving violations don't necessarily have an impact on volunteering.