

Lawrence S. Bloomberg Faculty of Nursing Guidelines Related to Police Record Checks



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LAWRENCE S. BLOOMBERG
FACULTY OF NURSING
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

General Information

The Lawrence S. Bloomberg Faculty of Nursing's divisional position on police record checks is informed by the University of Toronto statement on *Police Record Checks and the Health Sciences* (April 2012). Nursing students at the Lawrence S. Bloomberg Faculty of Nursing often work directly with or in close proximity to children or vulnerable clients/patients during their practicum placements. To protect vulnerable clients/patients, nursing students will be required to obtain and submit a police record check report (vulnerable sector screening) prior to commencing each academic year. Police record check reports involve a more comprehensive background check than "criminal record checks" and "clearance letters". A police record check report (vulnerable sector screening) includes information that would be covered in a criminal record check as well as information from other searches. Specifically, a police record check report (vulnerable sector screening) involves the electronic search of the Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC) Investigative, Intelligence, and Identification databanks and any Service databases. Further details are available on the RCMP website <http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/criminal-record-and-vulnerable-sector-checks>.

It is the student's responsibility as part of their enrollment in an undergraduate or graduate program in the Faculty of Nursing to read this document as it gives notice of the Faculty's position on the requirement for completion of a yearly police record check. The Lawrence S. Bloomberg Faculty of Nursing is responsible to our practicum partners for ensuring that our students meet the necessary requirements for the safe and proper administration of care activities with vulnerable populations. Successful completion of our nursing program is contingent on students' ability to meet all academic and practicum requirements.

Nursing students who have practicum placements as a required component of their program must submit to the Faculty of Nursing a current police record check report (vulnerable sector screening) every 12 months (i.e. prior to the commencement of each academic year). The student is obligated to pay all costs incurred to secure required police record check reports (vulnerable sector screening). Neither the University nor the Faculty of Nursing pays for or reimburses students for costs associated with obtaining police record check reports (vulnerable sector screening). A lag in obtaining results or failure to present an acceptable police record check report (vulnerable sector screening) will jeopardize entry or continuation in the nursing program. Some agencies require current police record check reports (vulnerable sector screening) performed within shorter time frames (e.g. six months) prior to the start date of the practicum experience. In such cases, nursing students must complete the process again to receive a current police record check report (vulnerable sector screening) if the previous report is not within the clinical agency's allowable time frame. Additional instructions for students are provided on the Faculty of Nursing's website at <https://bloomberg.nursing.utoronto.ca/current-students/placements>.

Accommodations will not be made for students who do not have a police record check report (vulnerable sector screening). Students without a completed police record check report (vulnerable sector screening) at the start of their program will not be able to begin their nursing program until the next year when the student has satisfied the Faculty's police record check report (vulnerable sector screening) requirement. Continuing students cannot complete the requirements of their program until they submit a current police record check report (vulnerable sector screening).

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Please note that in the event that a student cannot present a current police record check report (vulnerable sector screening) or when the results of a police record check report do not permit a student to proceed with the practicum requirements for the nursing program, the Faculty of Nursing is not required to seek an alternative practicum experience or accept a student's proposal for one. The student may not be able to meet the requirements to successfully complete the nursing program at the University of Toronto.

Prior to the start of each academic year, all new and returning BScN, MN, and Post-Master's NP nursing students are required to present a current police record check report (vulnerable sector screening) and submit a signed *Annual Police Record Consent Form* as a course registration requirement.

International Students or Canadian Students Who Have Lived Out of Country

A police record check report (vulnerable sector screening) in Canada will be insufficient for students from outside Canada (e.g. international students). Students from outside Canada (e.g. international students) must make arrangements to secure a reliable and valid police record check report from the countries in which they lived prior to their arrival for studies at the University of Toronto. As well, once a student has an established residence in Ontario for one academic cycle, the student will be required to provide a local police record check report (vulnerable sector screening). All documentation must be presented in English, which may entail documents being translated and notarized.

Undergraduate Nursing Students

All new and returning BScN students are required to present a police record check report (vulnerable sector screening) and submit a signed *Annual Police Record Consent Form* to the Faculty of Nursing. Students will be registered into their nursing courses only upon receipt of a police record check report (vulnerable sector screening) that is negative/clear and all other requirements are met. For a student who has not received a negative/clear police record check report (vulnerable sector screening), the named officer in the Faculty will notify the Assistant Dean, Academic Programs, who will inform the Undergraduate Program Director and the Associate Dean Academic. The academic leadership will assess the likelihood of securing practicum placements that allow the student to successfully complete the program. If not likely, the student will be informed of this barrier to entry or progress. For any student who does not have a negative/clear police record check report (vulnerable sector screening), the Faculty will ask the relevant practicum agencies to determine whether or not that student may be engaged in a practicum placement with those organizations. The Lawrence S. Bloomberg Faculty of Nursing provides an educational opportunity for undergraduate students that prepares individuals to become Registered Nurses. However, the registration process for the College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO) is independent from the Faculty of Nursing and as such, the Faculty of Nursing cannot guarantee students' registration with CNO (or equivalent). Further information on registration requirements with CNO can be found on their website at <http://www.cno.org/en/become-a-nurse/registration-requirements/>. A copy of the annual police record check report (vulnerable sector screening) will be retained for each undergraduate student for two years after the completion of their program.

Graduate Nursing Students

Increasingly, agencies where graduate students complete their practicum experiences are requesting graduate students to provide them with a current police record check report (vulnerable sector screening) to ensure they are eligible for the practicum. All new and returning MN and Post-Master's NP nursing students are required to present a police record check report (vulnerable sector screening) and submit a signed *Annual Police Record Consent Form* to the Faculty of Nursing. Students will be registered into their nursing courses only upon receipt of a police record check report (vulnerable sector screening) that

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is negative/clear and all other requirements are met. For a student who has not received a negative/clear police record check report (vulnerable sector screening), the named officer in the Faculty will notify the Assistant Dean, Academic Programs, who will inform the MN Program Director and the Associate Dean Academic. The academic leadership will assess the likelihood of securing practicum placements that allow the student to successfully complete the program. If not likely, the student will be informed of this barrier to entry or progress. For any student who does not have a negative/clear police record check report (vulnerable sector screening), the Faculty will ask the relevant practicum agencies to determine whether or not that student may be engaged in a practicum placement with those organizations. Graduate students who are notified by an institution/agency that they are not able to proceed with practicum work or other engagement have an immediate obligation to notify the Course Instructor and MN Program Director, who will confer to determine whether an alternative placement is feasible. Graduate students must comply with expectations of health care agencies where they are completing their practicum placements, including a current police record check report (vulnerable sector screening). It is the responsibility of the graduate student to meet such health care agency requirements before starting practicum learning experiences. In the event that a graduate student does not receive a negative/clear police record check report (vulnerable sector screening), the graduate student is required to meet all ethical, professional, and other obligations regarding disclosure of this information. Please consult CNO's *Mandatory Reporting: A Process Guide for Employers, Facility, Operators and Nurses* (http://www.cno.org/Global/docs/ih/42006_fsMandReporting.pdf) and Registration Requirements / Past Offences and Findings / Police Criminal Record Check (<http://www.cno.org/en/become-a-nurse/registration-requirements/past-offences-and-findings--health-and-conduct/past-offences-and-findings/>). A copy of a graduate student's police record check report (vulnerable sector screening) is not normally retained within the faculty and students must keep their police record check report in an easily retrievable location.

Please note that PhD students who conduct research in clinical settings may also be required by agencies/institutions to submit a current police record check report (vulnerable sector screening) and show that report to agencies where they are doing their research. In these cases, the clinical agency reviews the report to ensure the student is eligible to conduct research at the setting.

Toronto Police Services and Residents of the City of Toronto

All students who are residents of the City of Toronto must obtain a signed Toronto Police Services *Consent to Disclosure Application* from an authorized Faculty of Nursing officer before requesting a police record check report (vulnerable sector screening). The student signs the application consenting to have the police proceed to prepare a police record check report (vulnerable sector screening) and submits the application to Toronto Police Services with appropriate fee payment. Processing time can take several months and students are advised to initiate their requests during the last week of May or no later than middle of June in order to have a police record check report (vulnerable sector screening) in time for the start of the new academic year. Students who submit their applications for a police record check report (vulnerable sector screening) with Toronto Police Services after the recommended time frame are at risk of not receiving their report by the start of the academic year and this will jeopardize their ability to start or continue in their program. Students who are requesting a police record check report (vulnerable sector screening) after the second week of June are strongly recommended to consider the expedited process with Toronto Police Services to ensure they have their results before the start of the academic year. Applications should be submitted to Records Management Service, Toronto Police Services. Additional details are available at the website for Toronto Police Services at <http://www.torontopolice.on.ca/background-checks/vulnerable-sector-screening-process.php>.