

## City of Ashford Recreation Department

### Background Check Exception Review Policy

#### 1. Purpose

The City of Ashford Recreation Department is committed to ensuring a safe and supportive environment for all youth, staff, and volunteers. To maintain this commitment, all volunteer applicants are required to undergo a background check. This policy establishes a formal process for reviewing exception requests from individuals whose background check results include disqualifying factors but who wish to be reconsidered for a volunteer position.

#### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all individuals seeking volunteer opportunities within the City of Ashford Recreation Department who have been denied eligibility due to findings in their background check.

#### 3. Eligibility for Exception Review

An applicant may request an exception if:

- The offense does not involve violence, abuse, sexual misconduct, or harm to minors or vulnerable populations.
- A significant period has passed since the offense, demonstrating rehabilitation.
- The offense is unrelated to the responsibilities of the volunteer role.
- The applicant provides evidence of rehabilitation, such as character references, employment history, or community service.

#### 4. Exception Review Process

##### A. Submission of Exception Request

The applicant must submit a formal written request to the City of Ashford Recreation Department. The request must include:

1. A written explanation of the offense(s) and circumstances.
2. The reason they believe they should be reconsidered.

3. Any supporting documentation (e.g., letters of recommendation, proof of rehabilitation efforts, employment history).

#### B. Initial Review by Recreation Department

- The Recreation Department will conduct an initial review to determine if the request meets eligibility criteria.
- If eligible, the request will be forwarded to the Background Check Review Committee.

#### C. Background Check Review Committee Evaluation

The Background Check Review Committee will review the applicant's request on a case-by-case basis. This committee will consist of:

- The Recreation Department Director or designee.
- A representative from the City of Ashford legal or compliance office.
- A City Council-appointed representative.

The committee may request an interview with the applicant or additional documentation if needed.

#### D. Review Criteria

The committee will consider:

- The nature, severity, and relevance of the offense.
- The time elapsed since the offense.
- Any evidence of rehabilitation or character references.
- The specific volunteer role and its responsibilities.
- Compliance with local, state, and federal laws regarding volunteer eligibility.

#### E. Council Review and Final Decision

- The committee's recommendation will be submitted to the Ashford City Council for final review.
- The City Council will vote on whether to grant the exception.
- A written decision will be provided to the applicant within 30 days of the review.

## 5. Confidentiality

- All background checks and exception review details will remain confidential.

## 6. Alternative Volunteer Opportunities

If an exception is denied, the applicant may be considered for alternative volunteer positions that do not involve direct interaction with youth or vulnerable populations, if appropriate.

## 7. Compliance & Policy Review

This policy complies with all applicable City of Ashford ordinances, state laws, and federal regulations regarding background checks and volunteer eligibility. The Recreation Department will review and update this policy annually or as needed.