

Verona Area Community Theatre, Inc.

Child Safety Policy

In order to protect the health and safety of all participants **Verona Area Community Theatre Inc. (VACT)** has adopted the following policies:

I. **Definitions**

- a. **“Children”** means any person 17 years of age or younger.
- b. **“Volunteer”** means any person volunteering or working on a VACT production at any time when children are present in the VACT building or performance space. It does not include front of house staff or ushers.
- c. **“Reasonable Cause”** means reliable information implicating an individual subject to a background check in abuse, assault, exploitation of children, or any crime involving possessing child pornography.
- d. **“VACT Volunteer Committee”** means a committee of three VACT Board of Directors members who are appointed by the VACT Board of Directors to review background check information and make decisions about information returned on background checks.

II. **Individuals Subject to Background Checks**

- a. VACT will require the following people to submit to a criminal background check:
 - i. Employees who are 18 years of age and older.
 - ii. Volunteers who are 18 years of age and older.
 - iii. Cast members who are 18 years of age and older.
 - iv. Production staff who are 18 years of age and older.
 - v. Any individual in II.a.i-iv who turns 18 during the pendency of their employment or volunteering, or during the time they are participating as a cast member or production staff in a production.
- b. Where reasonable cause exists, VACT may also require an existing employee, volunteer, cast member, or production staff to submit to a criminal background check.

III. **Frequency of Background Checks**

- a. Background checks will be conducted on the individuals outlined in section II.a every two years.
- b. Where reasonable cause exists, VACT may require an existing employee, volunteer, cast member, or production staff to submit to a criminal background check, even if a check has been conducted in the previous two years.

IV. Background Check Procedure

- a. A vendor approved by the VACT Board will process all criminal background checks for VACT.
- b. All background checks are performed in compliance with the Fair Credit Reporting Act and VACT obtains written authorization from individuals for background checks, in advance of any background check conducted.
- c. The authorization release form for a criminal background check will be provided by the background check vendor to the individual on whom the background check is being made.
- d. The individual on whom the background check is being made shall provide all the information requested by the background check vendor.
- e. Completed background checks conducted by the background check vendor may contain sensitive and personal information about the individuals on whom the criminal background checks have been performed. These results will be kept confidential and viewed only by the VACT Volunteer Committee, unless circumstances warrant further review by the VACT Board of Directors.

V. Results of Criminal Background Check

- a. In the event a background check shows something that would prevent someone from being employed by or volunteering with VACT, or participating as a cast member or production staff in a VACT activity, the VACT Volunteer Committee will notify the individual via a written notice of the reasons for the denial.
- b. Once notified, the individual has 5 days to respond to the notification, in writing.
- c. If the individual does not respond, VACT will proceed with excluding the employee/volunteer/cast member/production staff from working with VACT.
- d. If the individual responds to the notification, the VACT Volunteer Committee will carefully consider the information and then make a decision as to how to proceed.
- e. If an individual is denied or dismissed from employment, a volunteer position, or a production because of information obtained through a background check, the person shall receive written notice of the reasons for denial.