

### **CRIMINAL HISTORY CHECKS**

#### **Why do I need to have a criminal records check done?**

One of the main roles of the College of Occupational Therapists of Manitoba is to protect the public. The Occupational Therapists Regulation states that a criminal records check must be performed for all persons wishing to register to practise occupational therapy in Manitoba.

#### **How do I arrange to have this check done?**

The criminal records check is done by local police agencies. Each agency sets its own fee for this service. Winnipeg residents need to go to the Public Safety Building at 151 Princess Street. Brandon residents need to go to the Brandon Police Service at 1340 - 10th Street. All other Manitoba applicants need to go to their nearest Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) detachment. Applicants residing in other parts of Canada can contact their nearest police agency or the RCMP.

Once the criminal records check has been performed, you will need to send the College of Occupational Therapists of Manitoba (COTM) an original report of the results. If you wish, you can sign a waiver to have the police agency send a report directly to COTM. They will only do this if you do not have any convictions.

#### **What happens if I am emigrating to Canada?**

COTM recognizes that a criminal records check will be done as part of the immigration process if you complete the registration process within 6 months of immigrating, no other criminal record check is required. If you have lived in Canada for longer than 6 months when you complete the registration process, a current criminal records check will be required. You should have this done by the local police agencies. See above.

#### **What happens if I am a Canadian citizen, but am applying from, or have recently lived in a country other than Canada?**

You must have the criminal records check done by the police agency in that country. This process may include submitting fingerprints. The police agency in your country can provide you with more information on the process and any fees that must be paid. Note: A criminal records check may be called something different, such as a Police Clearance Certificate, in other countries.

Once the criminal records check has been performed, you will need to send the COTM an original report (not a photocopy) of the results. COTM will copy the original report for our records and return the original to you if you need it for other reasons.

## **What information is released in the criminal record report?**

The report will indicate that:

- no record exists on local index
- a record exists on local index
- charges are pending before the Courts
- a record may exist in the National Repository in Ottawa requiring further action

If a record exists in the National Repository, it cannot be disclosed unless verified by fingerprint comparison. The police agency will advise you of the steps you must take to obtain this record. This process may take up to eight weeks.

Fingerprint matching takes several weeks. If you are unable to obtain a criminal history report in a timely manner because you are waiting for fingerprint matching, you should contact COTM to discuss your options.

## **Is there a cost for having this done?**

The fee for performing a criminal records check varies depending on where you live. The local police agency will be able to tell you what the current fee is.

## **Are there any other checks that need to be performed?**

Yes, you must also have a Vulnerable Sector Search conducted. This search will report on any convictions for which a pardon has been granted. This search is required because many OT's work with clients who are vulnerable. The police agency will be able to tell you if additional fees are required for this search. You will need to send an original report of the results (not a photocopy) to the College of Occupational Therapists of Manitoba.

COTM does not require a Child Abuse Registry check, but your employer may.

## **Can I submit a criminal record report obtained for another reason?**

COTM considers criminal record reports to be valid for 6 months from the time of issue. If you have an original Criminal Record Report issued within this time frame it can be used. For a small fee, the police agency will issue multiple original reports so that they can be used for multiple purposes.

## **What happens if I do not agree to have the criminal records check done?**

If you do not agree to have the criminal records check performed, we will not be able to process your registration and you will not be able to work in Manitoba as an occupational therapist.

## **What should I do if I know I have a criminal record?**

You should contact COTM to discuss the issue. A criminal record does not automatically mean you cannot be registered with the College of Occupational Therapists of Manitoba.

For more information, please contact COTM at (204) 957-1214 or by email at [OTinfo@cotm.ca](mailto:OTinfo@cotm.ca)

This publication is provided for general information. For more specific information see  
*The Essential Competencies of Practice for Occupational Therapists in Canada*,  
The COTM *Code of Ethics* for Occupational Therapists and

*The Occupational Therapists Act and Regulation.*  
COTM publications are available on our website at [www.cotm.ca](http://www.cotm.ca)