

Revised: November 16, 2021

## Dear Artist,

ArtStarts has been working through the changes we have recently learned about the Criminal Records Check (CRC) process. We are required by law to use the Criminal Records Review Process (CRRP) to do a Criminal Record Check for the purposes of working with children for all people who may come into contact with young people through their work with ArtStarts. That includes artists who receive grants through the Creative Spark Vancouver grant.

Previously that process was very well documented and explained on their website. The check was done only on offences that someone was charged with or convicted of and there was a set list of offences that included things like assault, abuse of a minor, and other violent crimes against a person. Now, they have changed the process to have much less strict rules and more RCMP freedom to make choices about when the check would be denied. For instance, the RCMP can now also look at arrests and accusations when making the decision about whether someone is allowed to work with youth. There also is no clear list of what kinds of arrests and accusations would be considered disqualifying. While we do not know how bad this is - the lack of transparency is troubling to say the least. The worst case scenario could be that someone who was arrested for protesting or using drugs or in a random police stop could be denied the opportunity to work with youth. Again, that is the worst case scenario but it is something we don't have any clarity or transparency on.

This change in process was communicated to ArtStarts on May 27th 2021 via email and we were told those changes were retroactive to April 1 2021. We asked for clarification on what kinds of offences would result in a check being disqualified and received unsatisfactory responses. We also asked why we weren't notified before the change and were told it was "Due to the rapid implementation of the PIC Guidelines for CRRU on April 1, 2021, it was not possible for the CRRP to amend and distribute the consent form in advance of the implementation."

ArtStarts does not want to work with this version of the check - it is not transparent and could harm the most vulnerable members of our community. We are unfortunately required to continue using this service for now. We are now in the process of connecting with other organizations and individuals and getting legal advice for what we can do to push back against these changes.

We understand that you may not want to complete a CRC under these conditions. You may of course still complete your CRC and do your project. If you already have a CRC on file with ArtStarts this does not apply to you. If you do not want to complete a CRC at this time, we can delay your project until we have more clarity and transparency from the RCMP to be able to fully endorse this process. We do not have a timeline right now of when we will have more information.

Please call me (Lily) at 604-336-0626 ext 111 or email me at [lily@artstarts.com](mailto:lily@artstarts.com) to share your feedback or concerns. I really appreciate your patience and understanding and want to hear your thoughts about this change and process. We can all work together to push back against unrestrained RCMP power and keep each other safe.

Thank you for your time  
Lily Cryan  
Program Manager - ArtStarts in Schools



*ArtStarts in Schools provides innovative arts programs for young people, practical resources for teachers and artists, and leadership in advocacy for arts in education.*

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ArtStarts requires artists follow this procedure in order to adhere to the requirement of having a criminal record check through the British Columbia Ministry of Justice’s Criminal Records Review Program (CRRP) and have no criminal record found for the purpose of working with children. We cannot disburse the grant funds until a Clearance Letter has been received.

**How to access the Criminal Records Review Program (CRRP):**

Visit the BC Ministry of Justice website at: <https://justice.gov.bc.ca/criminalrecordcheck>

On this website, you may either complete a new criminal record check or share the results of your previously completed criminal record check (if completed within the past 5 years). You will be asked to enter an access code unique to ArtStarts: **UQWSM8ZBQC**

**Key information:**

- Who?**
  - You, as the Creative Spark Vancouver applicant and emerging artist
  
- When?**
  - The sooner the better. It takes approximately 1-3 weeks for ArtStarts to receive your clearance letter after you have completed the online process or paid for the CRC after the paper process. You can expect to receive the grant funds within 2-3 weeks of when we receive the letter.
  - Criminal record checks through the CRRP are **valid for 5 years**, with the expiration date indicated on the clearance letter.
  
- How much?**
  - If you are completing a new criminal record check through the CRRP, **the cost per person is \$28, to be paid by the project** during the online application process.  
*or*
  - If you are sharing results of your criminal record check through the CRRP (completed within the past 5 years), there is no cost.

**FAQ:**

**Why do I have to follow this process?**

- The Criminal Records Review Act states that all individuals who work with children or have potentially unsupervised access to children in the ordinary course of their employment, or in the practice of an occupation, or receive regular ongoing operating funds for core programs from the provincial government are covered under the Criminal Records Review Act. ArtStarts uses the Criminal Records Review Program to manage criminal record checks in a fair and confidential manner.



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### How much does it cost? Who is responsible for paying this fee?

- The cost to complete a criminal record check through the CRRP is \$28, to be paid during the online application process.
- This fee is an eligible expense and can be deducted from funds received for the project.
- In some instances people are asked by the CRRP to provide further proof of their identification, usually by getting fingerprinted at a local police station. This will require an additional fee which can also be deducted from the grant funds.

### I've completed a criminal record check in the past, do I still have to take part in this process?

- The only criminal record check process that ArtStarts can accept is through the BC Ministry of Justice's Criminal Records Review Program (CRRP).
- If you have completed a criminal record check through the CRRP within the past 5 years, you do not need to complete a new one—you will simply need to share your results with ArtStarts via the CRRP website.
- If you have completed a criminal record check through the CRRP more than 5 years ago, it has expired and you will need to complete a new one.
- If you have already done a Creative Spark Vancouver Project and submitted a CRC for a previous project, you do not need to re-share your clearance letter with ArtStarts.

### What happens if I don't complete this criminal record check process?

- If you do not complete the criminal record check process by the specified deadline, you will not receive the Creative Spark Vancouver grant funds.

### How long does it take to complete the online CRRP check?

- Completing the online criminal record check through the CRRP check should take approximately 20 minutes. This time may vary.
- It takes approximately 1-3 weeks for ArtStarts to receive your clearance letter after you have completed the online process.

### What happens to my results after I complete this process?

- Once you have completed the online process, the BC Ministry of Justice will share your clearance letter with an authorized staff member at ArtStarts. ArtStarts will not receive the details of your criminal record check, simply if you have or have not been successfully cleared to work with children. If you have not been cleared or further action is required, you will be contacted directly by the BC Ministry of Justice. ArtStarts will keep all personal information confidential and we will not share the results of your criminal record check with individuals or organizations.



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### What happens if the results of my criminal record check indicate that I am not cleared to work with children?

- If the results of your criminal record check indicate that you are not cleared to work with children, you will not receive the Creative Spark Vancouver grant funds. You will be notified directly by someone from the Criminal Records Review Program. You are responsible for letting your group representative know.
- The BC Ministry of Justice has processes in place if you wish to request a reconsideration or appeal of CRRP results. Learn more about this process at <http://www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/criminal-records-review/results/index.htm>

### I experienced an error message while on the BC Ministry of Justice's CRRP website. What do I do?

- If you experience an error message while on the BC Ministry of Justice's CRRP website, please call the phone number displayed on the screen to speak to a support person.
- If they are not helpful, contact an ArtStarts staff for a paper version of the check.

### I am unable to complete the CRRP online. What do I do?

- In order to complete the CRRP online you need a BC Services Card and to have lived in BC for more than 6<sup>th</sup> months. Any BC Resident can get a BC Services card online, you can sign up through the CRRP website.
- If you are unable to complete a criminal record check through the CRRP and the BC Services Card Sign up, you will need to ask ArtStarts Staff for the paper option. Fill out the paper form provided to you by ArtStarts Staff. Bring this form, along with valid ID (e.g. driver's license) to ArtStarts or another location listed below to verify your ID in person and submit your printed form.
  - If you are located in the Lower Mainland, please call ahead to make an appointment to meet with a staff member at ArtStarts in Schools, 808 Richards Street, Vancouver.
  - If you cannot meet in person, we will set up a Google Meet call to verify your ID. Please do NOT send a photo of your ID via email.
  - ArtStarts will then submit your form on your behalf to the CRRP and cc you in the email.
  - The CRRP will email you with a payment link within 1 day-2 weeks of receiving your form. You must pay within 30 days of receiving their email or you will need to start the CRC process over again.

### Where can I learn more about the CRRP?

- For more information about the BC Ministry of Justice's Criminal Records Review Program, please visit <https://justice.gov.bc.ca/eCRC/>



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