



July 7 2021

**To: Artists who have been selected to receive a Creative Spark Vancouver (CSV) Grant from ArtStarts in Schools**

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  
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