



Fact Sheet

I'd like to become a PSW.

What are the application requirements?

In order to enroll in a PSW program, you must meet certain criteria. Some types of schools have slightly different requirements; this fact sheet provides information on the most common requirements.

Competence in English or French

Almost all schools require applicants to pass a language comprehension test. Depending on the school, this test is in the same language as the teaching and may be in French or English, depending on the language in which the PSW program is held.

Vulnerable Sector Screening

In order to complete the practical component of the PSW program, you must obtain a special type of criminal record check designed for people who work with vulnerable people. This is often called a *Vulnerable Sector Screening*, but may be called something slightly different by your local police service. This screening is more in-depth than a standard record check.

Most placement agencies require a screening that shows no relevant convictions, although some agencies will not allow a student with any convictions to attend their site. Agencies usually require a screening that is recent – e.g. done within 60-90 days of starting a placement. This screening will list any criminal convictions you have had for which you have not received a pardon. As well, your local police service may list other contacts that you've had with them

If you have a criminal record or other types of information that may be reported on a vulnerable sector screening you may not be able to attend practicum. You should discuss this with the school to which you are applying *before you enter the program*. Bear in mind that a conviction usually remains on your record until you apply for and receive a pardon – it doesn't just disappear after a period of time. .



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If you have a conviction, you can apply to the federal government for a pardon. Be aware that a pardon usually is not granted for convictions less than five years old, and can take one year or more to obtain. If you do receive a pardon, the offence(s) for which you receive the pardon will not appear on your Vulnerable Sector Screening. If you think that you may have a criminal record, discuss this with the school and consider applying for the screening before you apply to the PSW program.

Health Status

In order to attend practicum, you will usually need proof that you do not have active tuberculosis (TB). You usually do this by taking a Mantoux test. If your Mantoux test is positive, your doctor will usually do more tests to determine whether the positive test is due to an infection or some other reason. You may have to have a chest x-ray to make certain you do not have TB.

You may have to provide a doctor's notes stating that you are able to perform the duties of a PSW student without restrictions.

Flu Shot

Most practicum agencies require you to have a current flu shot if you are in placement during flu season.

Requirements of Some Schools

Some, but not all, schools require the following in order to be admitted to the PSW program. Check with the school to which you are applying to see if one or more of the following will apply to you:

- **Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) or Equivalent** – Required by all Ontario Community Colleges. Some Community Colleges may allow a non-graduate who is over 19 years of age to apply, however
- **First Aid & CPR Training** – Some schools require this on admission; other schools require it in order to graduate.
- **Up to date immunizations or Hepatitis B Vaccinations**