

Suggestions for Link Registration and Screening:

These suggestions are designed to help Link Advisers, Commissioners, and iMIS entry staff in dealing with registration and screening issues as apply to Link Members. The goal is to make Link registration conform more closely to iMIS and general screening/membership policies, as well as to provide assistance on how to screen Link Members.

Registration:

-As with all adult Guiding members, the "iMIS home" for a Link Member is the lowest level at which they are involved in Guiding, and is where the census/registration /membership fee is paid. For instance, this could be a District if the Link Member is also a Guider, and likely at a Provincial level (Area level in some provinces, e.g., Ontario and B.C.) if only registered as a Link Member. Link Members are definitely allowed and encouraged to hold other positions in Guiding, which does not mean that they are "registered" more than once but that they have several open "activities" or positions listed in their iMIS profile (just as for any other adult Guiding member holding more than one position).

-All Link Members should have an iMIS activity listing membership in one or more Link Units, rather than Link activity in iMIS simply at a Division/Area/Provincial Council level. This should ensure that Link Members are receiving all the proper Link information, as often iMIS listings are run of a specific Link Unit, e.g., "1st Alberta Link Unit" to get all Link Members in Alberta.

-There should be a standardized process within each Council (Area/Province) as to how requests for information on Link membership should be handled – i.e., whether information such as a brochure and/or registration form would be mailed out by an Area or Provincial office, or whether the request would be forwarded on to the appropriate Link Adviser with the expectation that the Link Adviser would contact the potential Link Member. There should be some way of following up on such requests to ensure that everyone enquiring about Link does in fact receive the appropriate information.

-Many Link Members are confused by having to "re-register" (i.e., complete a brand-new Link registration form) for every year they are in Link, as this is not consistent with other areas of Guiding. Generally, once a Guider completes the A1 and A2 forms, she is not required to complete them again and again for each year she is in the same position; yet in many cases we ask Link Members to fill out the same information year after year. Also, specific registration forms for Link may not correlate well with iMIS. It may be possible to streamline Link registration, as well as to better utilize the capabilities of iMIS, as follows:

-Each fall, current Link Members could be sent a copy of their iMIS profile for updating and for confirmation of their continuing Link membership, as well as to ensure the correct contact information (rather than completing a specific Link registration form again). If they are not otherwise registered in Guiding, an invoice for their yearly membership fee could also be sent at this time. A cover

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letter could list all the skills on the A1 form for the Link Member to check off, so that this information about skills they can contribute to Guiding can be added to their iMIS profile.

-Specific Link registration forms could still be used to process new Link memberships, in situations where it is desirable to have something simple and concrete to hand out to potential Link Members but not feasible to hand out the entire screening package (A1/A2, etc.). For example, such Link registration forms could be available at an unmanned display or handed out at a recruitment event. These forms could be thought of simply as a "request to join Link", such that when the completed form is received, the overall Guiding application/screening process is begun by forwarding A1/A2 forms as appropriate to the potential Link Member. If used in this way, such forms should be revised to emphasize that they are only to be used by potential/new Link Members, and that current Link Members should contact their Link Adviser or Provincial/Area office for registration information (i.e., iMIS profile/invoice) if not yet received.

-Where feasible, such Link registration forms could be skipped entirely, such as when a potential Link Member directly contacts a Guiding office for information about joining Link – the A1/A2 forms could then be sent out directly with a cover letter from the Link Adviser for explanation.

-Link Advisers should then receive iMIS printouts listing all Link Members in their jurisdiction. It may be useful for Link Advisers to receive information such as interests/skills, special qualifications, CRC date, and Long Service Award information for the Link Members in their jurisdiction.

Screening:

-The manual "Volunteer Screening: Procedures for Commissioners" (available at <http://www.girlguides.ca/tips/NSP.pdf>) clearly states that screening policies apply to Link Members as adults in Guiding. From page 2 of this manual, "All adults applying for initial membership, including Link and Trefoil Guild Members, in Guiding must be screened through a process", which includes application, personal interview, reference checks, and a Criminal Records Check (CRC).

-Screening of new Link Members would depend on previous involvement in Guiding (see Volunteer Screening manual for full details – these are simply suggestions as to how these procedures could be carried out for Link Members) :

1) Link Members currently registered as an adult in Guiding should already have been screened appropriately (including a CRC), so the Link membership would simply need to be added as an activity to their iMIS profile after confirmation of prior screening (e.g., check that CRC has not expired). Link Members moving to a different District (or Area/Province) would require a personal interview as well.

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- 2) Link Members who have not previously registered as an adult in Guiding, including previous Senior Branches members, could be sent the A1 and later A2 forms as appropriate for their situation (see Volunteer Screening Manual) to be completed and returned, plus detailed information about how to obtain a CRC, specific to location. Reference checks if required (see Volunteer Screening manual) should be completed by a designated person such as the Provincial or Area Link Adviser, or an Area Team or District Commissioner, as appropriate for the situation.
- Existing Link Members should all have a CRC completed as of October 31, 2002 (or an exemption granted). Information about how to obtain a CRC could be included in the information sent out at the start of the year, for those who need a new CRC completed or have previously been granted an exemption.
 - The designated person to carry out screening of Link Members should be clearly outlined so as to avoid the situation where everyone assumes it is someone else's responsibility. For example, if Link Advisers (Area or Provincial) have not received specific training about screening procedures, it may be better for screening to be handled by someone who has. However, where Link Members are registered at a provincial level, the Area/Division/District screening team or Commissioner may not feel it is their responsibility to screen Link Members. In addition, in some cases distance may make it impractical for the Area or Provincial Link Adviser to screen all Link Members.
 - If possible, it is best for detailed information on how to obtain a CRC, or who specifically to contact, to be given to Link Members. Simply telling a Link Member to contact her Area/Division/District for this may not work, as the Link Member may not have any Guiding contacts in a new location and therefore may give up trying to figure out on their own who to contact. Therefore, cooperation is important in both directions: so that the Link Advisers can learn what Guiding resources or people are available to help with screening, and so that specific Screening /Security Advisers or teams will realize some of the circumstances specific to some Link Members (e.g., living in different places for the school year and the summer, not necessarily being directly affiliated with a District or Division or even Area).