

Cheersport Netherlands Background Screening and VOG Requirements

Cheersport Netherlands (CSN) is committed to maintaining the highest standards of safety and professionalism within the Dutch cheersport community. To achieve this, all active coaches and national team staff members will be required to undergo comprehensive background checks. This vetting process will assess each individual's criminal history and other relevant factors to ensure they are suitable for working with vulnerable groups, including young athletes.

The background checks will be conducted through the Verklaring Omtrent het Gedrag (VOG) process, a criminal record declaration issued by the Dutch Ministry of Justice and Security. This process is well-established and trusted for verifying the conduct of individuals in positions of responsibility.

For individuals in key roles within the Dutch cheersport landscape (such as coaches, board members, and committee members) who are unable to obtain a VOG due to nationality or other international constraints, an equivalent certificate from their home country or a letter of recommendation from their national federation/governing body will be required.

Implementation and Use of the Regeling Gratis VOG

To support this initiative, CSN will make use of the Regeling Gratis VOG, a national program facilitated by NOC*NSF and the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport. This program allows sports organizations to request VOGs free of charge for volunteers and staff who work with minors or vulnerable groups.

All coaches, national team staff members, and others in key roles will be required to apply for their VOG through this arrangement whenever possible. Where the Regeling Gratis VOG does not apply (for example, for international staff), individuals will be expected to obtain a VOG independently, provide an equivalent certificate from their home country or a letter of recommendation from their national federation/governing body.

This requirement will apply to all new applicants as well as those renewing their involvement with CSN. Importantly, VOG checks will not be a one-time procedure. In line with preventive policy guidance for sports organizations, VOGs will be renewed every 3 years to ensure ongoing compliance with safety and ethical standards.

Compliance and Enforcement

To support a safe and professional cheersport environment, compliance with the VOG requirement is expected from all individuals in roles covered by this policy. At the same time, CSN recognizes that our community is still growing and that some clubs and individuals may need time to adjust to these new processes.

- A VOG (or equivalent certificate) should be provided as early as possible, ideally before starting a role. If this is not immediately possible, individuals may begin provisionally as long as they can show proof that the VOG application has been submitted, and the certificate must then be provided within 6 weeks of starting the position.

- If obtaining a VOG is delayed due to administrative or international circumstances, temporary participation may be permitted during this period.
- Where a VOG or equivalent cannot be obtained immediately, CSN may request additional assurances (such as references or declarations from a home federation) until the required documentation is in place.
- Individuals who refuse to apply for a VOG or equivalent without valid reason will not be permitted to continue in positions that involve direct responsibility for athletes.

This approach ensures that the policy is enforced consistently while still allowing flexibility during the early stages of implementation. CSN is committed to supporting clubs and individuals throughout the process, with the goal of achieving broad integration of the VOG requirement across the community in the coming seasons.

Ongoing Commitment

CSN is dedicated to maintaining open and transparent communication throughout the implementation of this process. We will provide regular updates, guidance, and support to ensure a smooth and efficient transition to this new system for all coaches and staff members.

VOG Objectives

CSN's primary objective is to significantly increase the number of individuals within the Dutch cheersport community who have obtained a VOG. This initiative is part of our broader strategy to ensure a safe environment for all athletes by requiring all individuals in positions of power (including coaches, judges, and volunteers) to demonstrate proof of their conduct.

For the 2024/2025 season, our goal is to secure VOGs for all CSN board members, the confidential advisor, TCNL board members and staff, as well as national team coaches. In subsequent seasons, we aim to extend this requirement to include all coaches and possibly the board members of member clubs, as well as all CSN committee members.

This growth strategy is aligned with our partnership with NOC*NSF, which offers a free VOG program for sports clubs. Specifically, our targets are as follows:

- 2025/2026 Season: Achieve VOGs for at least 40% of coaches from member clubs. At least 50% of coaches from clubs who have members who are not legally adult yet.
- 2026/2027 Season: Increase this number to 60%. Begin phased inclusion of club board members, with at least 50% of each club's board holding a valid VOG.
- 2027/2028 Season: Ensure at least 80% of coaches and 80% of club board members have obtained a VOG. Begin phased introduction for volunteers, event staff, and judges, with a target of at least 40% compliance in this season.
- 2028/2029 Season: Maintain at least 80% coverage for coaches and club board members. Increase coverage of volunteers, judges, and event staff to at least 60%.
- 2029/2030 Season: Maintain 80% coverage for coaches and club board members. Increase coverage of volunteers, judges, and event staff to at least 75%.

Through these initiatives, Cheersport Netherlands reaffirms its commitment to fostering a safe, ethical, and professional environment for all athletes and stakeholders within the cheersport

community. By working closely with NOC*NSF and implementing rigorous background checks via the VOG process, we are taking essential steps to uphold the highest standards of conduct. As we progress towards our goals, we will continue to provide clear communication and support, ensuring that our community remains a secure and positive space for everyone involved.

CSN acknowledges that implementing these requirements is an ongoing process that will require commitment and flexibility from clubs, volunteers, and staff. After the 2029/2030 season, the progress of this policy will be evaluated to assess its effectiveness and practicality. Based on this review, future targets may be adjusted to ensure the policy remains both ambitious and achievable, while staying aligned with national safeguarding standards.



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