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December 13, 2018

The Honourable Sylvia Jones  
Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services  
George Drew Building, 18<sup>th</sup> Floor, 25 Grosvenor Street  
Toronto, ON  
M7A 1Y6

Dear Minister Jones,

We are writing on behalf of the members of the Ontario Retirement Communities Association (ORCA) and the Ontario Long Term Care Association (OLTCA) regarding the wait times for employees and volunteers to receive a vulnerable sector check (VSC) from their local police force. VSCs are required for new employees under the *Retirement Homes Act, 2010* and the *Long-Term Care Homes Act, 2007*.

Both ORCA and OLTCA are voluntary non-profit associations that represent more than 1,200 retirement and long-term care homes. Collectively, our members employ close to 95,000 full-time and part-time staff who help to support more than 126,000 seniors across the province, 24 hours a day, every single day of the year.

Supporting Ontario's seniors is something our members take extremely seriously. We require staff to provide care to our residents, to prepare and serve their meals, to ensure their safety and security and to deliver programming to improve their health and well-being. Unfortunately, this becomes increasingly challenging when new employees are waiting up to twelve weeks to receive their VSC.

We are requesting that the Ontario government take immediate action to ensure timely access to vulnerable sector checks. The issue of delays in receiving a VSC is becoming rampant throughout the province. For example, the Niagara Regional Police Service has a wait time of four weeks for a VSC, while the Halton Regional Police Service has a wait time of between eight and twelve weeks. These wait times are not fair to the seniors who require consistency in the delivery of care, nor are they fair for newly hired staff who may be forced to wait up to three months before starting a new job.

As the number of seniors in the province continues to rise, and as the province faces a health human resources challenge, both retirement and long-term care homes are vying for more staff in order to be able to meet the needs of residents. VSCs are essential to ensure the safety of our seniors, but long wait times are having a detrimental impact, acting as a disincentive to enter the retirement and long-term care workforce in a time of great need.

ORCA and OLTCA are calling on the Government of Ontario to introduce a provincial standard of three business days for access to a completed vulnerable sector check for employees in retirement and long-term care homes. Our associations believe it is imperative to enforce this standard and to ensure that seniors are not left without the supports they need and deserve, just because of red tape and bureaucracy.

We welcome the opportunity for an open dialogue on this issue with you and your staff. Please feel free to contact us at [cathy@orcaretirement.com](mailto:cathy@orcaretirement.com) or [cchartier@oltca.com](mailto:cchartier@oltca.com).

Sincerely,



Cathy Hecimovich  
Chief Executive Officer  
Ontario Retirement Communities Association



Candace Chartier  
Chief Executive Officer  
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cc: The Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario  
The Honourable Christine Elliott, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care  
The Honourable Raymond Cho, Minister for Seniors and Accessibility  
Mario Di Tommaso, Deputy Minister of Community Safety