

(This FAQ contains changes that were made to Act 153 on July 10, 2015)

VOLUNTEER INFORMATION FAQ

What defines a Volunteer?

A Volunteer is a person providing unpaid service to the District or to its students and who is not a contractor, student teacher, observer, employee, or visitor. Any Volunteer who may have “direct volunteer contact” with students must submit clearances to the District by law; “direct volunteer contact” is defined as the possibility of providing care, guidance, supervision or control of children, or the possibility of having routine interaction with children.

Visitors are those who are not contractors, student teachers, observers, or employees and who have no possibility of direct volunteer contact as described above; visitors must be escorted or attended by District employees at all times.

Contact the Human Resources Administrator for answers to questions concerning these definitions.

Volunteers must be approved by the Principal of the Building they’re volunteering in. If you’ve not yet been approved by the Principal to volunteer, you must ask for a Principal’s permission to do so. You may want to do that first before going through the process of acquiring clearances. Buildings keep a list of those who have been approved as Volunteers by the Principal for that building.

Which Clearances do Volunteers need?

All volunteers must submit:

- A PA State Police criminal history check (free for volunteers)
- A Child Abuse Clearance (also free for volunteers)
- An FBI criminal history* fingerprint clearance
- A signed Form PDE-6004 Arrest and Conviction Form

*If you have lived in Pennsylvania for ten consecutive years, you may substitute a Residency Certification Form for the FBI criminal history fingerprint clearance.

Clearances must be one year old or less when originally submitted to the District, and are considered current for 60 months. .

How do I get these clearances?

All may be had online. You will need a credit card for the FBI criminal history fingerprint clearance.

- FBI criminal history fingerprint clearance— go to https://www.pa.cogentid.com/index_pde.htm

Only the PA Dept. of Education version will be accepted. To receive your clearance and/or a receipt indicating registration #, go to the Cogent website using the link above. Register online and make payment. Print out your receipt, then the receipt to an approved Cogent Systems fingerprint site (these are listed on the Cogent website). After you are fingerprinted, you will receive a sheet upon which is printed a registration number. That is the sheet you will submit to the Office Secretary. When Human Resources receives the sheet they'll go online and check your record.

- Act 34: PA State Police Request for Criminal History Check- go to

<http://epatch.state.pa.us>

Select “volunteer” as the reason for the request. The clearance is free. Print out the acknowledgement form so that the Human Resources Department may go online and check your record.

- Act 151: PA Child Abuse History Clearance- go to

<https://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home>

You'll be asked to create an account with a password. You will create your own Keystone ID #(keep this number and password with your clearances for next time). This clearance is free. Print out the acknowledgement form and submit to the District. Later, your certificate will be emailed to you.

- PDE Form PDE-6004 may be found on the Volunteer page near this FAQ.

I have the documents and acknowledgements- how do I submit them?

Take the original documents in person to either

- The Human Resources Office, or
- The Main Office of the Building you're volunteering in.

The Office Secretary will make copies of your clearances/acknowledgements and

have an administrator sign the copies, then return all original paperwork to you. Please note that clearances are to be presented in person, and not mailed or emailed.

PLEASE PLACE THE ORIGINAL PAPERWORK IN A SAFE AND SECURE LOCATION. You may need/want it later. You may be asked to resubmit your clearances at any time if there are any questions about them.

When do I have to renew my clearances?

Clearances become invalid after 5 calendar years. Any Office Secretary, Building Principal or the Human Resources Administrator has the ability to check the dates of your clearances.

How about Volunteer Coaches?

Volunteer Coaches are under very different requirements. Volunteer Coaching candidates must provide all clearances (they are not able to make use of the Residency Certification Form), the results of a tuberculosis test, and they must be approved by the Athletic Coordinator and the School Board before beginning as Volunteer Coaches.

Who pays for clearances?

The Volunteer pays the cost of any clearances.

What if a clearance shows a past arrest or conviction?

This does not automatically mean you may not be employed or be a volunteer, although you can not move forward as an Employee, Volunteer or Volunteer Coach until cleared by the Board. Call the Human Resources Administrator and inform him/her of the content of your clearance.

Reporting of Arrests and Convictions?

By law and District Policy, Employees and Volunteers must report any arrest or conviction to the Human Resource Administrator within seventy-two (72) hours. Arrest or conviction does not always mean that employment or volunteer status will be suspended or revoked.