

# Volunteer Clearance Instructions

To be a member of the Penn Hills Charter PTA and volunteer for various events the school you must have copies of your clearances. Clearances are good for (3) years at which time they must be resubmitted.

## Instructions for Volunteer Background Clearances

PA law now requires prospective employees and volunteers to obtain the following background checks:

1. **Criminal History Record** Information obtained from the PA State Police (\$10 fee – waived as of July 25, 2015)
2. **Child Abuse Clearance** obtained through the PA Department of Public Welfare (now known as the Department of Human Services) certifying if the applicant is named in the statewide database “as the alleged perpetrator in a pending child abuse investigation or as the perpetrator of a founded report or indicated report” of child abuse. (\$10 fee – waived after July 25, 2015)
3. **Federal Criminal History Record** Information obtained by submitting a full set of fingerprints to the PA State Police or its authorized agent for submission to the Federal Bureau of Investigation “for the purpose of verifying the identity of the applicant and obtaining a current record of any criminal arrests and convictions.” (\$27.50 fee)

These applications are not complicated to complete. If you have already gotten the required clearances for a job and/or another volunteer capacity within one year - you don't need to apply again - just send us all the final paperwork for each of the clearances.

1. **For the Criminal Background Check**

You MUST do this application FIRST. Go to <https://epatch.state.pa.us/Home.jsp> and you will get the on-line application. Once you get it confirmed you just need to send that confirmation to us for our records. *Be sure to keep going all the way to the end in order to receive the official certificate of clearance!* A copy of this clearance certificate must be included with your child abuse application below. (It can all be done very quickly by email. If you mail in the Criminal Background Records Check Policy, it may take 2-3 weeks to receive the certificate.) The fee for this application which has been waived as of July 25, 2015.

2. **Child Abuse Application**

Once you have the criminal background check certificate, then go to <http://www.dhs.state.pa.us/findaform/childabusehistoryclearanceforms/index.htm> This application can NOT be done online - you MUST mail it in. It usually takes 2-3 weeks to receive your clearances. There is another \$10 fee for this application which will be waived starting in July 2015.

3. **For the FBI Clearances :**

Volunteers must obtain an FBI Federal Criminal History Clearance which also requires fingerprint submission. The steps to get this clearance include:

- Go to [www.pa.cogentid.com](http://www.pa.cogentid.com) to register.
- Go to the "Pennsylvania Department of Education"
- Then "register online"
- Go through the online registration process - it could take 10-15 minutes to complete the form.

- Once you have completed the form, print out the last screen where it says you have completed registration.
- The clearance costs \$27.50 (as of May 2015). The fee can be paid online with a credit card.
- Once you have your registration ID number - then you need to take that number (as well as a passport or driver's license) to a fingerprint agency. Most UPS stores have a fingerprinting agency. Call your local store to confirm hours.
- In 48 hours you can see your results online. A written receipt will come in the mail in 2 weeks.
- Penn Hills Charter School must have a copy of the written receipt before you can do any volunteering with children.
- For questions about the FBI clearance - go to [https://www.pa.cogentid.com/index\\_dpwnNew.htm](https://www.pa.cogentid.com/index_dpwnNew.htm)

When you get all the final clearances - please mail a copy to:

Penn Hills Charter School  
2501 Main Street  
Penn Hills, PA 15235

If you have any questions please e-mail the PTA at [PennHillsCharterPTA@gmail.com](mailto:PennHillsCharterPTA@gmail.com).