

Frequently Asked Questions Background Checks for Programs Involving Minors

Why must we complete these checks?

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania enacted the Pennsylvania's Child Protective Services Act, also known as Act 73, which requires employers to conduct background checks on all employees with "a significant likelihood of regular contact with children, in the form of care, guidance, supervision or training." At Penn, this will include all individuals who participate in programs involving minors.

Who is responsible for conducting appropriate background checks?

The Recruitment Administrator for the PSOM is responsible for conducting the background checks, but the department and the employee/prospective employee is responsible for the cost of the checks.

What checks are required?

There are three required background checks:

- a. Pennsylvania criminal background check
- b. Child abuse history clearance from the Department of Public Welfare (DPW)
- c. Criminal history report from the FBI verified by a fingerprint check

Participants in programs involving minors are personally responsible for obtaining the third check, the fingerprint-based FBI criminal history record check. This check can take up to sixty days. If the participant has not gotten the results by the first day of the activity, they must present a copy of the receipt that they have submitted for this review. As soon as they get the results back, they must submit a copy to their supervisor.

Where can the fingerprinting process be started?

The closest location to campus for electronic fingerprint submission is the UPS Store #2473, 3720 Spruce Street. Hours are Monday thru Friday 10:00am to 4:00pm. The cost to the participant for electronic fingerprint submission is currently \$27.50. The participant should register before arriving for fingerprinting. Registration is available online 24 hours a day, seven days per week at www.pa.cogentid.com. Telephonic registration is available at 1-888-439-2486 Monday through Friday 8:00am to 6:00pm. More information on the fingerprint process is available at the following web site: https://www.pa.cogentid.com/index_dpw.htm.

What if all of the background checks have not been completed?

Penn is permitted to allow the individual to participate on a provisional basis provided that the individual provides proof of application for a Federal background check. Provisional hiring periods for in-state individuals cannot exceed 30 days. The period is 90 days for out of state individuals. Given the lead time, you should begin the fingerprint process as soon as participants in a program have been identified.

What if previous background checks have been completed?

Individuals who have obtained the three-part background check with another employer within one year of the date their program begins may submit complete copies of the results to the responsible School or Center individual in lieu of undergoing another round of background checks. The School or Center is responsible for determining whether the records submitted are complete and authentic. Questions regarding such records may be addressed to Division of Human Resources (Donna Showell) or the Office of the General Counsel (Sean Burke).

Who is HireRight?

Penn is contracting with HireRight to conduct the state criminal history report and DPW child abuse history. If a program involving minors has conducted background checks and fingerprinting in the past year, this documentation can be presented to the school or center administrator to comply. Future background checks should be conducted by HireRight.

What if adverse information is discovered?

Individuals with founded reports of child abuse during the five-year period preceding their application are ineligible.

Applicants with any state or Federal convictions related to certain crimes (e.g. homicide, rape, indecent exposure and corruption of minors) are also ineligible to be hired.

Any items found through the check for non-University affiliates will be addressed by the Division of Human Resources or the Office of the General Counsel.

If no minors participate in our Camp/Program, do we still need to do the checks?

If no minors will participate in the Camp/Program, no checks are required.

Are some employees Grandfathered under the law?

Yes, anyone who has been employed continuously (or has a continuous relationship such as a student) by Penn with a start date before July 2008 is Grandfathered and will not require these Background checks.