Penn State Information for Completing Publicly-Available Background Checks: Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Background Check (SP4-164), Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance Form (CY-113), and Cogent Federal (FBI) Fingerprint Background Check (Criminal History Report)

Obtaining publicly available clearances can take several weeks for processing. You will be required to show proof of clearances prior to beginning work or volunteering. Please plan accordingly.

Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Background Check (SP4-164)

The Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Background Check can be completed through online submission OR by mailing in a paper copy.  

**Online submission is a much quicker process and is highly recommended, when possible.**

**NOTE: Paper submission is the only option for international applicants (see directions for paper submission below).**

Directions for on-line submission (employees will be required to pay the $8 fee by credit card; fee is waived for volunteers):

**EMPLOYEES (VOLUNTEER INSTRUCTIONS BELOW):**

Go to:  [https://epatch.state.pa.us](https://epatch.state.pa.us).

Select “Submit a New Record Check (requires a credit card)”

Review and accept the Terms and Conditions.

Under “Reason for Request” select “Employment”

Enter your personal information and the address to which you would like any records sent.

Review and verify that all information was correctly entered.

If you need to make changes, select “Back”; if the information is correct, select “Proceed”

On the next screen, enter all personal information.

Select “Enter This Request” and your request will be sent to a queue.

Select “View Queued Record Requests” and then “Submit” to pay the $8.00 fee.

After processing is complete, select the control # associated with the background check.

Select “Certification Form” and the certificate will appear.

Print the certificate by selecting the “Print” link in the top right corner.

**NOTE: You must print or save the certificate.** Once viewed, you will have no further access to the certificate.

If you receive a “Request under Review” response, check the PATCH website periodically for updates to the request. It can take anywhere from a few days to a few weeks for the “Request under Review” status to be updated. If a record is found, it will be mailed to the address provided.

**VOLUNTEERS:**

Go to:  [https://epatch.state.pa.us/](https://epatch.state.pa.us/)

Select “New Record Check (Volunteers Only)”
Review and accept the Terms and Conditions in the “Volunteer Acknowledgement” section.

Please ensure that the “Reason for Request” indicates “VolunteerFREE”

Enter personal information and the address to which you would like any records sent.

Select “Next” at the bottom of the page.

Review and verify that all information was correctly entered.

If you need to make changes, select “Back”; if the information is correct, select “Proceed”.

On the next screen, enter all personal information.

Select “Enter This Request” and your request will be sent to a queue.

Select “View Queued Record Requests”.

Select “Submit” and wait for the background check to process.

After processing is complete, select the control # associated with the background check.

Select “Certification Form” and the certificate will appear.

Print the certificate by selecting the “Print” link in the top right corner.

**NOTE: You must print or save the certificate.** Once viewed, you will have no further access to the certificate.

If you receive a “Request under Review” response, check the PATCH website periodically for updates to the request. It can take anywhere from a few days to a few weeks for the “Request under Review” status to be updated. If a record is found, it will be mailed to the address provided.

**Directions for paper submission (you will be required to pay the $8 fee by money order):**

Go to: [http://www.dhs.state.pa.us](http://www.dhs.state.pa.us).

Go to left hand column and click on “Find a Form”

Enter the Publication/Form Title:

Select “Find a Form”, then select the link that appears:
Pennsylvania State Police Request for Criminal Record Check Form SP 4-164

Print the form and complete required information.

Note: Check the block for “INDIVIDUAL/NONCRIMINAL JUSTICE AGENCY”
Note: Under Reason for Request select “Employment/Screening” or “Volunteer”, whichever is applicable.

Enclose an $8.00 certified check or money order payable to “Commonwealth of Pennsylvania”

Mail form and payment to address on form.

Note: It can take up to 4 weeks to receive results.

**Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance Form (CY-113)**

The Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance can be completed through online submission OR by mailing in a paper application. **Online submission is a much quicker process and is highly recommended, when possible.**

**Directions for on-line submission (employees will be required to pay the $8 fee by credit card; fee is waived for volunteers):**
EMPLOYEES (VOLUNTEER INSTRUCTIONS BELOW):

Go to:  https://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home

Select “Create Individual Account”

Select “Next” at the bottom right of the page

Complete the Keystone ID Registration

Check your e-mail for Keystone ID and password confirmation (2 separate e-mails)

Return to:  https://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home

Select “Individual Login”

Select “Access My Clearances”

Scroll to the bottom and select “Continue”

Use your Keystone ID and temporary password to login.

Upon initial login, you will be required to change your password.

Select “Close Window” to return to:  https://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home

Login using Keystone ID and new password.

Review and Accept the Terms and Conditions and select “Next”

Select “Continue” at the bottom right of the page.

Select “Create Clearance Application”

Select “Begin” at the bottom right of the page.

Application Purpose: “School Employee not Governed by the Public School Code”; or “Employee of Child Care Services” (if working in a child care center at Penn State)

Select “Next” at the bottom of the page.

Complete application information screens and select “Next” at bottom right of each page.

Review Application Summary and select “Next”

Certify application and provide e-signature (first and last name only, no middle names or suffixes).

Enter credit card payment information for $8.00 and select “Pay Now”

Select “Finalize and Submit Application”

You will see an “Application Confirmation” screen

You will receive an e-mail confirming successful submission of your application.

Notification of clearance results will be e-mailed to you within 14 days, or you may log in at any time to check the status of your application:  https://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home

VOLUNTEERS:

Go to:  https://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home
Select “Create Individual Account”

Select “Next” at the bottom right of the page

Complete the Keystone ID Registration and select “Finish” at the bottom of the page

Check your e-mail for Keystone ID and password confirmation (2 separate e-mails)

Return to:  https://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home

Select “Individual Login”

Select “Access My Clearances”

Scroll to the bottom and select “Continue”

Use your Keystone ID and temporary password to log in.

Upon initial login, you will be required to change your password.

Select “Close Window” to return to:  https://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home

Login using Keystone ID and new password.

Review and Accept the Terms and Conditions and select “Next”

Select “Continue” at the bottom right of the page.

Select “Create Clearance Application”

Select “Begin” at the bottom right of the page

Application Purpose: Select “Volunteer Having Contact with Children”

Under “Volunteer Category: select “Other”

Under “Agency Name” type “Penn State”

Select “Next” at the bottom of the page.

Complete application information screens and select “Next” at bottom right of each page.

Review Application Summary and select “Next”

Certify application and provide e-signature (first and last name only, no middle names or suffixes).

Select “Yes” or “No” dependent on if you were provided a code for application.

Submit your application by clicking the button in the bottom right corner

You will see an “Application Confirmation” screen

You will receive an e-mail confirming successful submission of your application.

Notification of clearance results will be e-mailed to you within 14 days, or you may log in at any time to check the status of your application:  https://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home

Directions for paper submission (EMPLOYEE USE ONLY - you will be required to pay the $8 fee by money order):

Go to:  http://www.dhs.state.pa.us.
Go to the right hand column and click on Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance Form CY-113.

Print the form and complete Section I only. All information must be completed in full and form must be signed. (Note: For Purpose of Clearance select either “Volunteer” or “Employment with a significant likelihood of regular contact with children”, whichever is applicable.)

Enclose an $8.00 money order (only) payable to "Department of Human Services" and mail to the address on form.

Detailed instructions on how to complete the form are also included at the bottom of the CY-113 form.

(Note: Notification of clearance results can take up to 14 days after application is received by the Department of Human Services.

Cogent Federal (FBI) Fingerprint Background Check (Criminal History Report)

NOTE: Fingerprint cards are the only option for out-of-state or international applicants who to are unable to be fingerprinted electronically at a Livescan system in the state of Pennsylvania (See directions for fingerprint cards below).

Directions for out-of-state or international applicants who ARE able to be fingerprinted electronically at a Livescan station in the state of Pennsylvania:

The fingerprint based background check is a multi-step process. The applicant must register prior to going to the fingerprint site. Registration is provided online 24/7 and telephone registration is available at 1-888-439-2486, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. EST.

The fee is $25.75 for the fingerprinting service and to secure the Criminal History Record. Applicants can make their payment during online registration using a credit card. For those applicants who cannot pay electronically, you may select to pay by money order when you go to the fingerprint site. NO CASH TRANSACTIONS OR PERSONAL CHECKS ARE ACCEPTED.

To register online:

Go to: https://www.pa.cogentid.com/index_dpwNew.htm

Select “Register Online” under Registration

Enter all required information on the registration page, please take note of the following:

- Fingerprint Card User: Only check this box if you are not being fingerprinted electronically at a site that uses the Livescan system. Most individuals will not check this box as they will be using the Livescan system. However, the Fingerprint Card is the only option for out-of-state applicants or those who are unable to be printed electronically at a Livescan system within Pennsylvania. Reference “How to Submit a Fingerprint Card to 3M Cogent” should you need to obtain a fingerprint card.

- Payment Type: select “credit card or money order”

- Reason Fingerprinted: select “Employment with a significant likelihood of contact with children”

Make payment by credit card, or obtain money order for $25.75.

Upon completion of registration, please select PRINT, SAVE, or SEND EMAIL for receipt to take to fingerprinting site.
Proceed to the fingerprinting site of your choice. Find sites at https://www.pa.cogentid.com/index_dpwNew.htm. The entire fingerprint scan process takes 3-5 minutes but can take longer depending on wait times at the site, so please plan accordingly.

Applicant must present an approved ID. See https://www.pa.cogentid.com/index_dpwNew.htm for approved list of ID sources. Note: Minors under the age of 18 must be in the presence of a parent or guardian at the time of fingerprinting.

*Note: Complete processing of the FBI Criminal History Record should take no longer than 4-6 weeks. If you do not receive your results within this time frame, contact (717) 783-6211 or (877) 371-5422.*

**Fingerprint Cards:**

Fingerprint cards are the only option for out-of-state or international applicants who are unable to be fingerprinted electronically at a Livescan system in the state of Pennsylvania. Below are the steps to complete the process:

Find someone (local police jurisdiction or State Police) who is able to take ink-based fingerprints and place them on FBI fingerprint cards (Form FD-258): [https://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/identity-history-summary-checks/fd-258-1](https://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/identity-history-summary-checks/fd-258-1)

- Register on-line at [https://www.pa.cogentid.com/index_dpwNew.htm](https://www.pa.cogentid.com/index_dpwNew.htm). Select “register online” under Registration. Complete the online registration process. Note: Please checkbox “Fingerprint Card User” on the registration form. Print the last screen that says you have completed registration. The fee can be paid online with a credit card or you can submit a money order (if using a money order make payable to 3M Cogent).
- Mail in the completed cards, a copy of the registration receipt, and a money order (if applicable) to the address below.
- **Important Note** - The FBI needs two separate sets of ink print cards submitted before they will do a name search. So, if there are any issues with having difficulty obtaining clear prints (medical condition that doesn’t allow you to fully open your hands, worn fingerprints, etc.) you may be required to submit a second set of fingerprints. This isn’t always necessary, but if the first set isn’t clear and the FBI rejects them, this will add a significant delay if you did not get two sets completed initially. Please be sure to obtain two fingerprint cards and send both sets in the event that the FBI rejects the first set.
- **Important Note** - When you register on-line, you will need to enter address information for receiving the results letter. Please note that a US address is required for receiving your results letter. If you are unable to provide a US address, please consult with the hiring department so they can provide a University address for receiving the results.

Mail the completed fingerprint card (and money order if applicable) to:

3M Cogent
Attn: Fingerprint Card Scan PA DPW
5025 Bradenton Ave., Suite A
Dublin, OH 43017

*Note: Complete processing of the FBI Criminal History Record should take no longer than 4-6 weeks. If you do not receive your results within this time frame, contact (717) 783-6211 or (877) 371-5422.*