

Dear Scouter,

Compliance with the requirements of Act #153 is a legal requirement of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. All agencies and institutions who deal with youth in the Commonwealth are required to comply with these requirements.

It is important to recognize the Youth Protection standards of the Boy Scouts of America have not changed in light of this Pennsylvania legislation. The volunteer background checks that are part of the Adult Volunteer Application process, training requirements, policies, and procedures will continue. For Scouting volunteers throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the clearances and requirements of PA Act #153, the mandatory reporting requirements, and changes to the definitions of abuse are in addition to the safeguards that have been in place by the Boy Scouts of America for many years. For more information on this legislation, go to the “Keep Kids Safe” website (<http://keepkidssafe.pa.gov/>).

Volunteer compliance:

Who needs clearances? Any adult volunteer (18 years of age or older) applying for an unpaid position as a volunteer responsible for the welfare of a child (acting in lieu of or on behalf of the parent) or having direct contact (provide care, supervision, guidance, or control of children) or routine interaction (regular, repeated, or on-going contact) with children will need the three required clearances. This does not apply to registered Venturers and Explorers 18 to 20 years of age. Registered unit volunteers are required to get the three clearances. Unregistered volunteers that provide rides and services to youth more than once or twice a month must also get the three clearances. Remember the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania does not differentiate between registered and unregistered volunteers. Volunteer clearances, provided they have not expired, are transferable to other volunteer positions or organizations.

The following are the three required clearances:

1. Report of criminal history from the Pennsylvania State Police (PSP)
<https://epatch.state.pa.us/>.
Note: Upon completion, in order to print your certificate, click on your control number, then “certification form,” then print.
2. Child Abuse History Clearance from the Department of Human Services (Child Abuse) <http://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis>.

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3. a) For volunteers who **have NOT been** a Pennsylvania resident continuously for the past ten years, a fingerprint based federal criminal history submitted through the Pennsylvania State Police or its authorized agent (FBI) is required. <http://keepkidssafe.pa.gov/>

OR

- b) For volunteers who **have been** a Pennsylvania resident continuously for the past ten years, they must swear or affirm in writing that they are not disqualified from service based on a previous conviction or offense. These volunteers must complete a “Disclosure Statement Application for Volunteers”. <http://keepkidssafe.pa.gov/supportingdocuments/index.htm>.

What do you do after clearances have been obtained?

1. Make two copies of each clearance (there are a total of three).
2. Submit one copy of each clearance to the Council Service and Training Center.
3. Submit one copy of each clearance to your unit.
4. Keep the original clearances for your records.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Scout Office at 570-207-1227.