BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®
CRADLE OF LIBERTY COUNCIL

1485 Valley Forge Road
Wayne, PA 19087
(610) 688-6900 • (610) 788-3338 fax
colbsa.org • BeAScout.org

To: Volunteers of the Cradle of Liberty Council, BSA
From: Chuck Bolger, Council Commissioner and Michael Oehmke, Director of Support Services
Date: May 6, 2015

Re: Child Protective Services Law and its Impact on Volunteers in the Cradle of Liberty Council

Recently the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania passed a new law known as the Child Protective Services Law. The intent of this law is to protect the youth of Pennsylvania. All youth serving organizations within the Commonwealth are covered under this new law. Volunteers, registered and unregistered, in the Cradle of Liberty Council are affected in two ways; we are mandated child abuse reporters and required to provide background check clearances. Please review this information and take the required action.

MANDATED REPORTER OF CHILD ABUSE

The first is that all volunteers, registered and unregistered, over the age of 18 are now mandated reporters of child abuse. The law requires direct reporting from the individual suspecting or witnessing child abuse immediately. After reporting the suspected abuse to the state the individual shall contact the Scout executive. The Commonwealth has created a portal for reporting purposes.

www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis or 800-932-0313

BACKGROUND CHECK CLEARANCES

The second is that all volunteers, registered and unregistered, in the Cradle of Liberty Council are required to submit background check clearances and renew these clearances every three years.

Who is required to comply with the new Pennsylvania law?

All registered unit, district, and council Scouters regardless of their position responsibilities must have proper clearances including Tiger parents.

All non-registered adults who may have care, supervision, guidance or control of children, or routine interaction with children must have proper clearances and should be encouraged to become registered Scouters. The following serve as examples of adults in this category:

- Parent or any other adult, who stays for a meeting and ends up assisting with projects being worked on, serving snacks, or monitoring restroom breaks.
- Parent or any other adult that lends a helping hand at a meeting or activity (such as Pinewood Derby, Day Camp, field trip, camping weekend, etc.).
- Parent or any other adult that acts as a driver for Scouts other than his/her own child.

These examples are not inclusive of all possibilities, but are examples to help you begin to think about the way your unit uses non-registered adults where they are given responsibility for the care, supervision, guidance, or control of children or routine interaction with children.

Whose responsibility is it to ensure background check clearances are obtained?

It is the responsibility of the unit committee chair and chartered organization representative to ensure that compliance is handled before the volunteer service begins. At the district level it is the responsibility of the district chair and district executive. At the council level it is the responsibility of the council president and the Scout executive. Moreover, a new volunteer will not be registered until the council has evidence of compliance.



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Volunteers must provide the following clearances

1. Report of Criminal History from the Pennsylvania State Police (PSP), $10, 10-15 minutes
   epatch.state.pa.us/Home.jsp
2. Child Abuse History Clearance from the Department of Human Services, $10, 20-30 minutes
   www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home
3. Fingerprint based FBI criminal history clearance submitted through the Department of Human Services, $27.50, 5-10 minutes online and 10-15 minutes at the fingerprinting location
   www.pa.cogentid.com/index_dpwNew.htm
4. Volunteers who have resided in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for the past 10 years can submit a Disclosure Statement for Volunteers in lieu of the Fingerprint based FBI Clearance.
   keepkidssafe.pa.gov/cs/groups/webcontent/documents/document/c_160267.pdf

How long does it take the Commonwealth to process the clearances?
Some of the clearances come back within a few minutes, however, some may take as long as 4-6 weeks.

Timeline to provide the clearances

- All new volunteers who begin their volunteer service on or after July 1, 2015 must comply prior to the volunteer participating in any activity where he or she will provide care, supervision, guidance or control of children, or routine interaction with children.
- Council and district leadership, commissioners and merit badge counselors will need to be in compliance prior to September 30, 2015.
- Current volunteers, except those above, must comply prior to rechartering in December 2015.

How to Submit Clearances to the Cradle of Liberty Council
Volunteers must upload copies of their required documents to the Background Check System. In order to ensure that your files are properly received and recorded, please secure all your documentation before visiting this link and upload all of your files at the same time. Clearances obtained for other volunteer or employment organizations may be submitted if they are current and meet the guidelines.
http://ow.ly/MBGOE

It is recommended you install a .pdf converter to allow you to print the reports and upload them to the Background Check System. Free .pdf converters are available from CutePDF and PrimoPDF.
www.cutepdf.com/Products/CutePDF/writer.asp or www.primopdf.com

RESOURCES FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
Pennsylvania Website on Child Protection
www.keepkidssafe.pa.gov
Pennsylvania Volunteer FAQ
keepkidssafe.pa.gov/cs/groups/webcontent/documents/document/c_135249.pdf
Pennsylvania Mandated Reporter FAQ
keepkidssafe.pa.gov/cs/groups/webcontent/documents/document/c_137646.pdf

We understand there may be a number of challenges in the first year of complying with this new law. Together, we can achieve a smooth transition. We appreciate your diligence in completing these checks in a timely fashion. If you need assistance or have questions, please contact: Chuck Bolger, Council Commissioner at ChuckBolger@aol.com or on (215) 704-2787 or contact Michael Oehmke, Director of Support Services, at Michael.Oehmke@Scouting.org or on (484) 654-9226.

