Clearances
In order to work or volunteer with children (defined as an individual under 18 years of age), individuals are required to obtain the following two clearances:

- Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance
- Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Record Check (PSP)

Some individuals may also be required to obtain the following clearance:
- Federal Bureau of Investigation Criminal Background Check (FBI)

All clearances must be submitted by volunteers prior to the commencement of service. Renewal requirements vary. The Child Abuse, PSP, and FBI clearances can all be completed online and paid for electronically. Submitting an application online allows you to receive results through an automated system that will notify you once your results have been processed. You will then be able to view your results online. The FBI clearance requires a fingerprint submission. All necessary instructions and links to apply for these clearances can be found on the PA Department of Human Services website.

How do I obtain my child abuse clearance?
Adults applying for or holding an unpaid position as a volunteer with a child care service, a school, or a program, activity or service responsible for a child’s welfare or having direct volunteer contact with children will need clearances. Check here for more information.

Individuals seeking clearances can go directly to the Pennsylvania Child Welfare Portal to create an individual account and apply for their child abuse clearance electronically.

How do I obtain my state police criminal record check?
Prospective volunteers may have to obtain a Report of Criminal History from the Pennsylvania State Police (PSP). Please visit the Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Record Check website. The department will request the results of the State Police Criminal Record Check. You’ll need to retain and submit these results.

How do I obtain my FBI criminal background check?
A fingerprint-based federal criminal history (through the FBI) submitted through the Pennsylvania State Police or its authorized agent is required if the volunteer has lived outside the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in the last 10 years. Continuous Pennsylvania residents for the past 10 years must swear or affirm in writing that they are not disqualified from service based upon a conviction of an offense.

The digital fingerprinting clearance is completed with IDEMIA. You will need to register with IDEMIA on their website, and be fingerprinted at an IdentoGO site. Appointments to be fingerprinted are not
required, but **pre-registration** is required. Once registered, you may walk-in during a location’s posted hours of operation. IDEMIA uses service codes when identifying the authorized purpose for why an applicant is being fingerprinted. Service codes are a required field for all pre-registrations, and the Department of Human Services’ (DHS) codes are provided [here](#). These codes ensure applicants are processed for the correct purpose and agency.

**How much do clearances cost?**

- The PSP clearance – $0
- The Child Abuse clearance – $0
- The FBI clearance through the Department of Education – $24.45 (for volunteer service in a school or at a school related function)
- The FBI clearance through the Department of Human Services – $23.00 (for volunteer service in a setting *other than a school*)

Background check fees for volunteers are waived one time within a 5-year period. Refunds are not provided for applicants who submit over-payments with their background check paper applications.