



BENTWORTH SCHOOL DISTRICT

**150 Bearcat Drive
Bentleyville, Pennsylvania 15314**

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Dear Volunteer,

The Bentworth School District welcomes and values visitor and volunteer participation in our schools. The following information will help you determine the type of clearances, if any, that you will need to visit and/or volunteer in the Bentworth School District. Please know the goal of Act 153 is to further ensure student safety.

Changes to the Child Protective Services Law (CPSL) impact the requirements for individuals permitted to serve as a school **volunteer**. Effective August 25, 2015, all Bentworth volunteers must comply with the following. Under Act 153, volunteers must obtain clearances if they are likely to have direct volunteer contact, meaning that they have care, supervision, guidance or control and routine interaction with children. This is the minimum standard that will apply to determining whether an adult volunteer must get the background checks. Also, all employees and adult volunteers subject to the background check clearances will be required to recertify all of those clearances every five years.

Please note that Bentworth School District distinguishes between volunteers and visitors in that a visitor is an individual who is attending and/or observing an event or activity without providing a service to the students, staff, or school/district operations. Some examples of these events would include but are not limited to: Parent/Teacher Conferences, School Assemblies, Open House, Band Concerts, etc. In this capacity, **school visitors do not need** the clearances as described below.

Whether you are interested in volunteering at a single event or over a period of time, all Bentworth School District volunteers require background clearances. This includes, but is not limited to, Chaperoning Field Trips, PTO Events/Participation, Classroom Parties, Office Support with Photocopying, etc.

The three following clearances are required to volunteer in the Bentworth School District:

- Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance ([Act 151](#))
- Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Record Check ([Act 34](#))
- FBI Federal Criminal History Record (Act 114): Visit www.pa.cogentid.com for information and locations of fingerprint sites.

Governor Wolf Announces Fee Waivers for Volunteers Seeking Background Checks

Governor Tom Wolf announced on June 10, 2015, that fees for child abuse clearances and criminal background checks required by the Child Protective Services Law will be waived for volunteers working with children. Additionally, the Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Pennsylvania State Police (PSP) will be reducing the cost of both the child abuse and criminal history record checks from \$10 to \$8 for all other applicants. These changes will take effect July 25, 2015.

FBI clearances are also required for all employees and for volunteers. However, because these are administered by the federal government current costs will continue to apply.

Under the new law, volunteer clearances cannot be used for employment.

How often must I update my clearances?

Clearances must be updated every five years from the date on the document. When updating clearances, the District requests that all clearances be completed and submitted at the same time.

How recent do the clearances that I submit need to be?

Clearances obtained within the calendar year to the date of submission will be considered valid.

What if I can't afford to obtain clearances but still want to volunteer?

The CPSL makes it a criminal offense to knowingly allow any adult to volunteer without proper clearances. Therefore no exceptions can be made for those who wish to volunteer in the Bentworth School District.

Is there any other screening necessary for school volunteers?

A discussion with the TB Program at PA Dept. of Health has determined volunteers requiring TB Testing are those who provide 10 hours or more per week in direct contact with children.

TB test must be administered within 3 months of employment or volunteer activity or a note (on the physician's letterhead) stating that the person is free of communicable tuberculosis would meet the TB test requirement. This must also be dated within 3 months of employment or volunteer activity.

A copy of the TB test results will be made from the original and kept on file in the school office.

The Department of Human Services website lists additional information about Act 153 at <http://keepkidssafe.pa.gov/>.

If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact your building principal or me at ext. 3268.

Sincerely,



Scott S. Martin
Superintendent of Schools
Bentworth School District

| Required Clearance | Instructions | Link to Apply & Contact Information (Please contact specific phone number(s) with any clearance questions) |
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| Act 114 FBI Criminal History Report \$27.00 | <p>Volunteer Requirements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant MUST register PRIOR to going to the fingerprint site. Registration is completed online or over the phone. Registration is available online 24 hours/day, seven days per week at www.pa.cogentid.com. Telephone registration is available at 1-888-439-2486 Monday through Friday, 8 am to 6 pm EST. Make sure you register for the Department of Education FBI clearance. The applicant MUST make their payment online at www.pa.cogentid.com using a credit card or debit card PRIOR to going to the fingerprint site. On the day of the scheduled fingerprinting, all applicants must have: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A valid driver's license or other approved photo ID. The confirmation number received upon registration. <p>Please retain a copy for your records and provide your building principal with a copy.</p> <p>This is an online procedure.</p> | <p>https://www.pa.cogentid.com/index_pde.htm</p> <p>1-888-439-2486</p> |
| Act 34 Pennsylvania Criminal History Check \$8.00 (waived for volunteers) | <p>Click on the following link and go to "Submit a New Record Check." Follow the instructions through to the Certification Page. Once the Search results Table appears, click on the Control Number. Please be sure to retain the control number for your records. Click on the Certification Page to access your official Clearance. The Record Check Details page is only a receipt and not acceptable as a "clearance." You can complete everything online and receive your results immediately.</p> <p>Please retain a copy for your records and provide your building principal with a copy.</p> <p>This is an online procedure.</p> | <p>https://epatch.state.pa.us/Home.jsp</p> <p>1-888-783-7972</p> |
| Act 151 Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Check \$8.00 (waived for volunteers) | <p>Once you click on the link you will be directed to the Child Welfare Portal where you must create an account or log in if you already have an account. Note: you will need an email address to create an account. Creating an account and submitting your clearance application online will give you immediate access to your results or the status of your results if your results cannot be processed immediately.</p> <p>Please retain a copy for your records and provide your building principal with a copy.</p> <p>This is an online procedure.</p> | <p>https://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home</p> <p>1-877-371-5422</p> |