



## Pennsylvania Child Abuse Prevention Laws

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania strengthened laws designed to protect children and vulnerable adults from abuse in 2014 and 2015. Among other things, the laws expanded the categories of people considered “mandated reporters” of child abuse and provided for direct reporting to PA Childline. Others changed requirements for background checks for both paid employees and volunteers working with children.

The following provisions affect churches:

**All Clergy and paid church staff** members (beginning at age 14) are required to get three clearances:

1. Pennsylvania Criminal History report from the Pennsylvania State Police
2. Certification from the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services
3. Federal Criminal History report from the FBI, which includes submission of fingerprints to the Pennsylvania State Police.

**ALL volunteers age 18 and over** who deal with children and youth are required to have clearances.

- **If a volunteer has been a Pennsylvania resident for at least 10 years**, he or she must have both the State Police criminal background check (Act 34) and the Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance (Childline, Act 33). No fee is charged for volunteers to receive these two clearances.
- **If a volunteer has NOT been a PA resident for at least 10 years**, they will also be required to obtain an FBI clearance.

**There is a cost for the FBI clearance.**

*If you have lived in Pennsylvania for the last 10 years, sign below and return to Angie Cosner, Business Manager.  
If you have not lived in PA for at least 10 years, please see instructions for Fingerprinting.*

### Clearance Affidavit

I, (print name) \_\_\_\_\_, certify that I have lived in the State of Pennsylvania consecutively for the past ten (10) years. I agree to this statement and understand the reasonability of why this is required to be a volunteer serving in the ministries of Charter Oak Church. This cannot be used in place of the state requirements where fingerprinting is required by law.

\_\_\_\_\_ (signature) \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

\_\_\_\_\_ (witness) \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

## Applying for the Pennsylvania Child Abuse Clearance (Childline) - Act 33

### FOR CLERGY AND PAID STAFF

1. Go to <https://www.compass.dhs.pa.gov/cwis/public/home> - This can be completed online.
2. Create Individual Account and get a Keystone ID
3. Continue to do the clearance. Check “Individual 14 years of age or older who is applying for or holding a paid position as an employee with a program, activity or service, as a person responsible for the child’s welfare or having direct contact with children.”
4. You will need your Social Security number, email address, phone number, current address, all previous addresses since 1975, and names of all household members with whom you’ve shared a residence since 1975. At least one parent’s name is needed, even if they are deceased.
5. Pay fee of \$8 on credit or debit card.
6. If clearance is approved during the online process, you will be able to see and print your clearance. Use your Keystone ID to return to the site.
7. Call the helpline at 1-877-343-0494 if assistance is needed.
8. Check that you want a copy mailed to you. Clearance certification will come in the mail to the person requesting the report – Original must be reviewed by church for verification of authenticity, and a copy is made, initialed and dated by person viewing it for the church’s records and give the original back to individual.
9. OPTION – If unable to complete the application online, you can print Form CY113, application for PA Child Abuse History Clearance Application, at <http://www.keepkidssafe.pa.gov/> under Resources, click on Forms. Fill it out and mail it in following instructions on the form, including a MONEY ORDER for \$8.

### FOR VOLUNTEERS

1. Got to <https://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home> - This can be completed online
2. Create Individual Account and get a Keystone ID
3. Continue to do the clearance. Check “Volunteer Having contact with Children.”
4. Volunteer Category is “Other.”
5. For Agency Name, put name of your church.
6. You will need your Social Security number, email address, phone number, current address, all previous a dresses since 1975, and names of all household members with whom you’ve shared a residence since 1975. At least one parent’s name is needed, even if they are deceased.
7. Free of charge once every 57 months if volunteer swears or affirms that:
  1. The background certification is necessary to satisfy the requirements of the Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law;
  2. The volunteer has not received a background certification free of charge within the previous 57 months;

<https://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home>

## Applying for the Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Background Check - Act 34

### FOR CLERGY AND PAID STAFF

1. Go to <https://epatch.pa.gov>
2. Partway down the page, click on “Submit a new record check”.
3. Follow instructions. (Call the Helpdesk at 1-888-783-7772 if assistance is needed.)
4. \$22 Fee. (Effective December 1, 2017)
5. If no criminal record, clearance will be generated immediately, AND THEN PRINT.
6. Original must be reviewed by church for verification of authenticity, and a copy is made, initialed and dated by person viewing it for the church’s records and give the original back to the individual.
7. Clearances are good for 5 years (60 months). *Any change of address necessitates a new clearance.*

### FOR VOLUNTEERS

1. Go to <https://epatch.pa.gov>
2. Part way down click on “New record check (Volunteers Only)”.
3. Follow instructions. (Call the Helpdesk at 1-888-783-7772 if assistance is needed.)
4. Free of charge once every 57 months if volunteer swears or affirms that:
  1. The background certification is necessary to satisfy the requirements of the Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law;
  2. The volunteer has not received a background certification free of charge within the previous 57 months;
  3. The volunteer understands that the certification shall not be valid or used for any other purpose.
  4. If all of this is correct, then check the box.
5. If no criminal record, clearance will be generated immediately, AND THEN PRINT. Original must be reviewed by church for verification of authenticity, and a copy is made, initialed and dated by person viewing it for the church’s records and give the original back to the individual.

<https://epatch.pa.gov/Home.jsp>

## Applying for the FBI Criminal Record Check

### FOR CLERGY AND PAID STAFF

1. Go to <https://www.identogo.com>. This is a new system effective November 30, 2017.
2. Click on “Get fingerprinted.” (*upper right hand of page*) Put in your state.
3. Click on “Digital Fingerprinting.” Enter Service Code: **1KG756** : Employee older than 14 with Contact with Children.
4. Schedule appointment. This will step you through the process to sign up for an appointment at a center of your choice, in your region.
5. Estimated amount due is \$22.60
6. Call the Helpdesk at 844-321-2124 if assistance is needed.

### FOR VOLUNTEERS

1. Go to <https://www.identogo.com>. This is a new system effective November 30, 2017.
2. Click on “Get fingerprinted.” (*upper right hand of page*) Put in your state.
3. Click on “Digital Fingerprinting.” Enter Service Code: **1KG6ZJ** (DHS Volunteer)
4. Schedule appointment. This will step you through the process to sign up for an appointment at a center of your choice, in your region.
5. Estimated amount due is \$21.35
6. Call the Helpdesk at 844-321-2124 if assistance is needed.
7. NOTE: The FBI Criminal History Report is ***not required*** for incumbent or prospective volunteers:
  1. who have resided in Pennsylvania continuously for a period of 10 years prior to becoming a volunteer or applying for volunteer status and who sign a Volunteer Affidavit affirming that they have not committed certain crimes that otherwise would prohibit them from being a volunteer responsible for the welfare of a child or having direct volunteer contact with children;
  2. who have received such Report at any time since establishing residency in Pennsylvania and provide a copy of the Report to the person responsible for the selection of volunteers.

<https://uenroll.identogo.com/>