



Office of the Provost  
Provost Administrative Affairs

**MEMO**

TO: Provost Centers

FROM: Susan Curran

DATE: February 10, 2016

RE: Background Checks 2016

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In preparation for summer camps and programs, we would like to inform you about recent amendments made to PA State legislation, ACT 153 regarding background checks for individuals working with minors in the State of Pennsylvania. According to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, all applicants for employment in Higher Education, including employees of independent contractors, but excluding employees who do not have direct contact with students, must undergo background checks. The following three background checks are required:

1. Pennsylvania State Police Request for Criminal Records Check (Act 34).
2. Department of Public Welfare Child Abuse History Clearance (Act 151).
3. Federal Criminal History Record Information (CHRI) in a manner prescribed by the Department of Human Services.

All clearances must be submitted prior to the commencement of employment or service. In addition, clearances must be obtained every **60 months** (5 years) after employment commences. All employees who do not have a current certification, including those who were not previously required to have one, must obtain the required certification. Any employee with a certification issued prior to Dec. 31, 2014 shall be required to obtain the current certification within 60 months from the date of the person's oldest certification. If there is a break in employment, then certification is required if the individual returns to work again this year.

The University of Pennsylvania issues the PA Criminal and PA Child Abuse Checks through HireRight. It does not except background checks from any other organization. This is a PA State law. The only exception is for volunteers who are not being paid by the University for their services. For those volunteers, we can accept documentation issued by another organization. The Federal Criminal History Record (FBI Finger Prints) is conducted by Cogent, which runs all FBI Finger Print Checks for the State of PA. Registration with Cogent can be done at: <https://www.pa.cogentid.com/index.htm>

Assisting you with this process is Jessica Lesovitz, [Lesovitz@upenn.edu](mailto:Lesovitz@upenn.edu). Please submit to Jessica the full name and current email address for all employees you wish to hire. It can take up to six weeks for all PA Background Checks to be processed, so please make sure you submit the required information to Jessica six weeks prior to the start of camp/summer sessions. Please reach out to us with any questions; we are here to help you with this process.

Thank you for your cooperation and support.

Susan Curran

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