



**Top Frequently Asked Questions –
Background Checks and School Volunteers**

The following information is provided to address frequently asked questions regarding recent changes to **Administrative Procedure 4215 - Criminal History Checks and 4216.6 – Volunteer Services**

1.	<i>What are the new requirements for parents and other individuals interested in volunteering for school activities and events?</i>	<p>Effective August 18, 2016, parents/guardians and other individuals interested in volunteering for school system activities and events are required to complete: (1) a fingerprint background check <u>and</u> (2) child abuse/neglect clearance from CPS at least <u>14 days</u> in advance of the activity/event.</p> <p><u>Exception:</u> volunteers may complete a commercial background check instead of a fingerprint check if they are escorted and under the supervision of a PGCPS employee at all times while on campus for a <u>one-time event</u>, such as career day, book fairs, school dances, etc.</p>
2.	<i>Why did the requirements change so significantly?</i>	<p>The changes were included in the recommendations from the Student Safety Task Force, which <u>released its report</u> on May 31, 2016. The recommendations are based on best practices, expert and community input on ways to <u>strengthen our student safety protocols</u>.</p>
3.	<i>May parents still request a commercial background check for school field trips?</i>	<p>No. Parents must now obtain a fingerprint background check for school field trips. Once a fingerprint background check is completed, however, it is does not have to be repeated annually, as long as the parent volunteers at least once a year.</p>
4.	<i>Where do I complete the CPS clearance paperwork? Is it in the same place as the fingerprint background check?</i>	<p>Both the fingerprint background check and the CPS clearance may be completed in the following offices at the PGCPS Sasscer Administration Building, 14201 School Lane, Upper Marlboro, MD 20772:</p> <p>Fingerprint background check - Background Unit, Room 128 Hours: M-F, 8:00 a.m. - 3:45 p.m. Ph.: 301.952.6775</p> <p>CPS clearance – Employee Services Center, Room 124 Hours: M-F, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Ph.: 301.780.2191</p> <p>In addition, several volunteer processing sessions have</p>

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		<p>been planned throughout the county. Please visit the Department of Family & Community Engagement webpage for locations, dates and times: www1.pgcps.org/familyandcommunity/.</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p><i>How much do the background checks cost?</i></p>	<p>Online commercial background checks cost \$7.26 and may be accessed online: http://www1.pgcps.org/fingerprinting/. The cost is \$7.00 if the request is submitted on-site at the Sasser Administration Building.</p> <p>Fingerprint background checks cost \$56.57. (<i>Costs may be reduced or waived for parents/guardians who qualify for Free and Reduced Meals (FARMs). Please bring a copy of your FARMs eligibility letter from the Department of Food and Nutrition Services.</i>)</p> <p>CPS clearances are free, but the paperwork must be notarized. PGCPS staff provides notarization on site free of charge.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p><i>What "proof" will I receive from PGCPS that I met the background check requirements?</i></p> <p><i>How will the school know if I've been "cleared" to volunteer?</i></p>	<p>Fingerprint background check - You will receive a receipt confirming the date that you applied for the fingerprint background check.</p> <p>CPS clearance – Upon completion of the fingerprint background check, take your receipt to the Employee Services Center and complete the required documents for CPS clearance. After you have completed the documents, a representative in the Employee Services Center will stamp or initial the fingerprint background check receipt, validating that you have applied for the CPS clearance check.</p> <p>Please provide a copy of your receipt to the school office for their records at least 14 days before the activity/event. This gives our staff enough time to receive results and notify you and the school principal if there are any adverse findings on your record that may prevent your participation in the event/activity.</p>

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7.	<i>Once I complete the background check and CPS clearance, how long does it last? Do I have to do it every year?</i>	Once the fingerprint background check and CPS clearance are completed, they do <u>not</u> have to be repeated annually, as long as you volunteer at least once a year with PGCPS.
8.	<i>I'm currently a PGCPS employee who received a background check prior to starting work here. Do I have to get an additional clearance to volunteer at my child's school?</i>	No, your background check as a PGCPS employee will cover your participation as a school volunteer. Please provide a copy of your PGCPS-issued identification to the school office for their records.
9.	<i>Who do I contact for more information?</i>	<p>The following offices are in the PGCPS Sasscer Administration Building, 14201 School Lane, Upper Marlboro, MD 20772:</p> <p>Fingerprint background check - Background Unit, Room 128 Hours: M-F, 8:00 a.m. - 3:45 p.m. Ph.: 301.952.6775 Email: alessandro.ciccione@pgcps.org</p> <p>CPS clearance – Employee Services Center, Room 124 Hours: M-F, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Ph.: 301.780.2191 Email: hr.employeesupportcenter@pgcps.org</p> <p>Office of Monitoring, Accountability and Compliance – Room 202B Ph.: 301.952 6774 Email: robin.welsh@pgcps.org</p>

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