



# POTTSTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT

www.pottstownschoools.org

ADMINISTRATION BUILDING • 230 Beech Street • Pottstown PA 19464  
(610)323-8200 • FAX (610)326-6540

***Our Mission: Prepare each student, by name, for success at every level.***

February 11, 2021

Dear Volunteer,

The Child Protective Services Law (CPSL) and Act 15 of 2015, detail the requirements for individuals permitted to serve as a school volunteer. A Pottstown School District Volunteer is defined as an individual who has direct contact and routine interaction with students and/or provides care, supervision, guidance, or control of children within the school/district operations without compensation. Please note that Pottstown School District distinguishes between volunteers and visitors in that visitors are viewed as individuals who are 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: Back to School Nights, Parent/Teacher Conferences, School Assemblies, American Education Week, Band Concerts, etc. In this capacity, school visitors do not need the clearances as described below. See Policy 907 for more information on volunteering and visiting.

Volunteering at a single event with no direct contact with children may not require clearances, depending on the level of interaction (as noted in paragraph 1). Please speak with an administrator if needed. All other Pottstown School District volunteers require background clearances. This includes, but is not limited to, chaperoning field trips, assisting at classroom or school events, shelving books in the library, office support with photocopying, etc.

All Pottstown School District volunteers must obtain the following clearances:

- PA State Police Criminal Background Check: [Act 34 Clearance](#)
  - You can apply online and you will receive results immediately
  - Print and retain the receipt containing the control number
  - There is no cost for this clearance for volunteers
  - This clearance needs to be dated within sixty (60) months of start date
  
- PA Child Abuse History: [Act 151 Clearance](#)
  - Create an account on the Child Welfare Portal or login if you have already done so.
  - Read all information, create a Keystone ID (unless you already have one assigned) and complete all requested information.
  - There is no cost for this clearance for volunteers
  - You will receive an email confirmation and you are able to view the status at anytime by logging in.
  - This clearance needs to be dated within sixty (60) months of proposed start date

- FBI Report of Federal Criminal History Record (fingerprints *may* be required):  
[Act 114 Clearance](#)

Volunteers are exempt from this requirement if they have resided within PA consecutively for the past 10 years AND swear or affirm in writing that they are not disqualified from serving as a volunteer under the CPSL and that if the Federal Criminal History Record were completed, it would not reveal anything that would prohibit them from providing services.

- Volunteers who have **not** resided within PA for the past 10 years **must** complete.
- Enter your service code (1KG6XN for District Employment, 1KG6Y3 for Volunteering)
- Complete registration process Select a location and appointment time
- Print the pre-enrollment form to take to your appointment with a check, money order or credit card.
- Present the District with your paid receipt containing a UEID#

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:**

### ***If I intend to volunteer, when do I need to submit clearances to the school district?***

- After July 1, 2015, all Pottstown School District volunteers will need to submit completed clearances/certifications prior to serving as a volunteer two weeks in advance, which will apply to all volunteers at all levels (pre-k to high school) **All clearances must be delivered directly to the Human Resources Office a full 2 weeks before any event or activity.**
- Please keep the originals and forward a copy for our records. *We reserve the right to examine the originals as requested.*

### ***How do I obtain my clearances?***

- Information regarding how to obtain clearances is hyperlinked on page one of this document. The information may also be found on the Pottstown School District website on the Human Resources Tab.

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

- This clearance needs to be dated within one year of proposed start date.

### ***Is there a cost associated with obtaining clearances?***

- No for most volunteers. If you choose the “volunteer” option, rather than the “employment” option, the PA State Police and PA Child Abuse clearances are free of charge.
  - PA Child Abuse History Clearance – **FREE** to state residents
  - PA State Police Criminal Background Check – **FREE** to state residents
  - Report of Federal Criminal History Record - A fee is charged for this background check. Fingerprinting must be obtained at an approved location- see [website](#) for more information.
    - *Remember, the Federal Criminal History Record is not required if the volunteer has resided in Pennsylvania consecutively for the prior ten years and swear/affirm in writing that he/she meets the requirements for volunteering. The Volunteer Affirmation may be found as the last page of this document.*

***What if I can't afford to obtain the FBI clearance 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 Pottstown School District.

***Once I receive clearances, to whom do I submit them?***

- Original documents should be submitted to the Human Resources Office. Copies of the original may also be sent, but we reserve the right to inspect the original at any time. Failure to produce the original document would necessitate removal of any volunteer privileges immediately.
- Please submit the required copies or original documents and a self-addressed stamped envelope in one packet to the address as listed below. Original documents will be returned to individuals via the self-addressed stamped envelope.

Human Resources Department- Volunteer List  
Pottstown School District  
230 Beech Street  
Pottstown, PA 19464

***How often must I update my clearances?***

- Clearances must be updated within 60 months of the date on the document. When updating clearances, the District requests that all clearances and the Volunteer Affirmation be completed and submitted at the same time.

***Are volunteers required to report suspected child abuse?***

- Changes in the law suggest that parent volunteers may now be considered “mandated reporters” who are required to report suspicion of child abuse to the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services.

***What does the term “mandated reporter” mean?***

- A mandated reporter is someone who is required by law to make a report of child abuse if they have “reasonable cause to suspect a child is a victim of abuse.”
- All school district employees are mandatory reporters.
- Volunteers, including parent volunteers, are now likely also considered mandatory reporters based upon recent changes to the law.

***What do I do if I suspect child abuse while in my volunteer capacity?***

- Legislative changes require that the individual who suspects abuse, must directly and immediately report the abuse.
- The following steps should be followed if you suspect abuse while in your volunteer capacity:
  - o Mandated reporters must **immediately** either (1) make an oral report to the state-wide child abuse phone hotline when they have reasonable cause to suspect a child is the victim of child abuse at **1-800-932-0313** or (2) **file an electronic report with the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services at:** <http://www.pa-fsa.org/Mandated-Reporters/Recognizing-Child-Abuse-Neglect/Reporting-Abuse-ChildLine>
  - o If the report is made verbally over the phone, within 48 hours of the oral report, a written report must be submitted to Children and Youth. Written report forms

may be found in each school building or accessed electronically at:

<http://www.pa-fsa.org/Mandated-Reporters/Recognizing-Child-Abuse-Neglect/Reporting-Abuse-ChildLine>

- Parent volunteers who report suspected child abuse must also immediately report that suspected abuse to their student's building principal or assistant principal and provide her/him with a copy of any written reports that are filed.

Is training for mandatory reporting available?

- Yes. A free three-hour training is available online at [www.reportabusepa.pitt.edu](http://www.reportabusepa.pitt.edu).

***Pottstown School District remains committed to the health, well-being, and safety of our students. We thank you for your cooperation with us in implementing requirements resulting from changes to the Child Protective Services Law.***

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Deena Cellini". The signature is written in a dark ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Deena Cellini, Ed.D.  
Director of Human Resources  
Pottstown School District



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## ***Act 24: Volunteer Affirmation***

I, (print name) \_\_\_\_\_, would like to serve in the position of an unpaid volunteer for the Pottstown School District. Under penalty of law, I affirm that I have been a Pennsylvania resident during the entirety of the ten-year period prior to my signing this Volunteer Affirmation. I am aware that the Pottstown School District will be relying upon this Volunteer Affirmation for the purpose of complying with Pennsylvania's Child Protective Services Law ("CPSL"). I further affirm that I am not disqualified from service as a school volunteer by reason of having been convicted of any of the following offenses under Title 18 of the Pennsylvania Crimes Code or of an offense similar in nature under the laws or former laws of the United States or one of its territories or possessions, another state, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico or a foreign nation, or under a former law of Pennsylvania:

- Chapter 25 (relating to criminal homicide)
- Section 2702 (relating to aggravated assault)
- Section 2709.1 (relating to stalking)
- Section 2901 (relating to kidnapping)
- Section 2902 (relating to unlawful restraint)
- Section 3121 (relating to rape)
- Section 3122.1 (relating to statutory sexual assault)
- Section 3123 (relating to involuntary deviate sexual intercourse)
- Section 3124.1 (relating to sexual assault)
- Section 3125 (relating to aggravated indecent assault)
- Section 3126 (relating to indecent assault)
- Section 3127 (relating to indecent exposure)
- Section 4302 (relating to incest)
- Section 4303 (relating to concealing death of child)
- Section 4304 (relating to endangering welfare of children)
- Section 4305 (relating to dealing in infant children)
- A felony offense under section 5902(b) (relating to prostitution and related offenses)
- Section 5903(c) or (d) (relating to obscene and other sexual materials and performances)
- Section 6301 (relating to corruption of minors)
- Section 6312 (relating to sexual abuse of children)
- A felony offense under the act of April 14, 1972 (P.L. 233, No. 64), known as The Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act, committed within the five-year period immediately preceding today's date
- The attempt, solicitation or conspiracy to commit any of the above offenses

A Pottstown School District volunteer who has been a resident of Pennsylvania during the entirety of the previous ten-year period does not need to submit an FBI Report of Federal Criminal History Record (fingerprinting) if this Volunteer Affirmation is completed.

I hereby affirm that the information contained in this Volunteer Affirmation is correct. I further affirm that in the event that I am arrested for, or convicted of, an offense that would constitute grounds for denying my further participation as a school volunteer, or if I am named as a perpetrator of child abuse, I will provide the Pottstown School District with written notice not later than 72 hours after the arrest, conviction or notification that I have been listed as a perpetrator of child abuse in the statewide database.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Volunteer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name (if applicable)

\_\_\_\_\_  
2<sup>nd</sup> Student Name (if applicable)