

Volunteer Background Clearance FAQs

Thank you for your volunteerism and prompt attention to ensuring that you have the proper background clearances required for your volunteer role with Girl Scouts in the Heart of Pennsylvania (GSHPA). Below are answers to commonly asked questions regarding the new Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law requirements and clearance process for GSHPA volunteers.

We are committed to assisting you through this process. Please reach out to us at 800.692.7816 or backgroundchecks@gshpa.org with any questions or for assistance in completing the process. Staff members are also available during GSHPA office hours to receive your clearance paperwork and/or walk-through the process with any volunteer.

What clearances do GSHPA volunteers need to complete and how much do they cost?

Any GSHPA volunteer who acts as a chaperone directly with girls must complete the following *four* requirements every *five* years:

1. GSHPA's Pre-screen Background Check (no cost)
2. PA Child Abuse History Certification (no cost)
3. PA State Criminal Background Clearance (no cost)
4. FBI Clearance (please read which option you need to complete based on years of PA residency)

If you have lived outside of PA within the last 10 years, the FBI fingerprinting clearance application must be completed (Estimated Amount Due: \$21.35)

OR

If you have lived in PA for more than 10 years, complete and sign the FBI Check Disclaimer which is found at www.gshpa.org. Please provide GSHPA with a signed copy with a witness signature. (no cost)

Links to these background clearance applications are available on the GSHPA website in the *Volunteer* section under the *Volunteer Resources* tab: <http://www.gshpa.org/en/for-volunteers/online-support-for-volunteers/background-checks.html>

[Turn over to see more FAQs]

How do volunteers submit their clearances to GSHPA?

Once you have completed your background check clearances, please either scan or email copies to backgroundchecks@gshpa.org or mail hard copies to:

Girl Scouts in the Heart of Pennsylvania
ATTN: J. Mahone
350 Hale Ave.
Harrisburg, PA 17104

NOTE: Clearances are also accepted at any GSHPA office during office hours. Visit www.gshpa.org for a list of office hours.

I already have the clearances required by the Commonwealth for another organization/my job. Will you accept a copy of these clearances?

Yes. A volunteer may submit a copy of their current clearances as long as they are less than five (5) years old.

Is Financial Assistance available to help volunteers with the cost of the FBI Clearance fee?

Yes. GSHPA troop leaders and troop assistants who are required to complete the FBI Clearance may apply for assistance through GSHPA. The Financial Assistance Background Check Reimbursement is available in the forms section on the GSHPA website: www.gshpa.org

How long does it take to obtain my clearances?

The length of time it takes to receive your clearances is contingent upon the method you use to apply for the clearances. Applying online will typically result in a faster turnaround time. We encourage prospective and returning volunteers to begin applying for their clearances as soon as possible as the process typically takes 4-6 weeks.

Will I be notified when my clearances are expiring?

Yes. Volunteers who have clearances on file with GSHPA will be notified 3 months prior to their clearance expiration date.

All of my clearances have different dates. What date(s) will GSHPA use in determining an expiration date?

The expiration date for all clearances will be noted in the GSHPA volunteer database. Each clearance needs to be renewed prior to the expiration date of each individual clearance.