



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: \$25.25).

OR

If you have lived in PA for more than 10 consecutive 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 Essentials section: <https://www.gshpa.org/content/dam/gshpa-redesign/documents/current-volunteer/volunteer-resources/GSHPA%20Background%20Checks.pdf>.

How do volunteer 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: Background Checks
- 4640 Trindle Road
- Camp Hill PA 17011

Do my clearances go directly to GSHPA after I apply?

Only the pre-screen. All other clearances go to the individual and must be provided to GSHPA upon receipt.

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. If you would like background check reimbursement, reach out to memberservices@gshpa.org or call 800.692.7816.

Does GSHPA accept unofficial FBI Clearances?

No. GSHPA does not accept unofficial copies for FBI clearance. They must either be the official copies, fingerprint results from IdentoGo or, if you have lived in PA for 10 consecutive years, the signed disclaimer.

Is GSHPA able to look up FBI Clearance results with UE ID numbers?

No, GSHPA cannot look up your clearance with the UE ID number.

Does the FBI disclaimer need to be notarized?

No, but a witness aged 18 or older must sign in addition to the volunteer's signature.

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 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.