

Centre Region Parks and Recreation Child Safety Policy

The purpose of the CRPR Child Safety Policy is to ensure the safety of CRPR patrons, under 18 yrs., by stipulating the proper qualifications and training for the staff and volunteers who manage and operate CRPR facilities and programs. This policy also incorporates the Child Safety Guidelines adopted in 2015 by the Centre Region Council of Governments (CRCOG). The CRPR Child Safety Policy applies to the following individuals:

CRPR Employees (ages 14 years and older, FT and PT, year-round and seasonal) responsible for the welfare of children or who come into direct contact with children:

- Director, Managers, Supervisors, Staff Assistants, Park Caretakers, Program Coordinators, All Summer Camp Staff, Aquatics/Community Pool Staff, Program Leaders, and Interns.
- Seasonal Maintenance Staff are required to submit the PA Criminal Background Check and the PA Child Abuse Clearance only. Child safety training is recommended.

CRPR Contracted Vendors and Individuals (ages 14 yrs. and over) who are responsible for the welfare of children or who come into direct contact with children:

- Umpires and Referees (those working with youth activities), Program Instructors (those working with youth activities), and Summer Camp Vendors.

CRPR-Supervised Volunteers (ages 18 yrs. and older) who are volunteering for an agency-organized event that will be responsible for the welfare of children or will have direct contact with children (except as noted below):

The following individuals and groups are exempt from the CRPR Supervised Volunteer policy:

- Community groups who volunteer to perform or assist with park maintenance projects and tasks are exempt from this policy, including Park Partner groups, Spring Spruce-Up Day groups, Day of Caring groups, and other community-based volunteer initiatives.
- Independent organizations and their associates visiting or renting CRPR facilities, not associated with a CRPR-operated program or event (i.e., a public or group event involving youth and conducted in a park by an organization).
- Independent contractors and their associates providing activities or services that are not organized by CRPR (i.e., a youth sports tournament organized and operated by a separate organization).

It is noted that those individuals and groups exempt from this CRPR Policy still have a responsibility for Child Safety as provided in all applicable state and federal laws.

The Two-Adult Protection Rule

At no time shall a child be alone in the presence of only one adult during a CRPR-operated program or special event. Private, one-on-one contact between a staff member or volunteer and a child is prohibited at all times. Two-deep leadership requires two paid staff or a combination of a paid staff member and an approved volunteer. To provide for this process, CRPR is responsible for ensuring that sufficient adult leadership is provided at all times. If personal contact is needed (including first aid procedures) it must be in full view of other adults and/or children. In such cases, documentation is required (i.e., accident/incident reports). Two-Adult Protection for maintenance and custodial tasks is highly recommended but not required.

The CRPR Hiring Process and the Child Safety Policy

Background checks and training will be requested (for qualifying positions) by CRPR when a job offer is made. Please do not submit these documents with the Application for Employment. Once an applicant is offered employment, the following documents are required prior to starting employment:

The applicant must submit all three of the following clearances or proof of application prior to starting work.

- [Child Abuse Clearance, PA Department of Health and Human Services](#)
 - Current Fees: \$8 (employees) \$0 (volunteers)*
- [Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Record Check](#)
 - Current Fees: \$22 (employees) \$0 (volunteers)*
- [FBI Criminal Record Check](#) (requires fingerprints)
 - Current Fee: \$23

* For volunteers, fees may be waived if pending conditions specified by the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services are met. Volunteers are responsible for requesting [free certifications](#).

**Per the PA Department of Human Services, employed minors, ages 14-17 yrs., are exempt from FBI Criminal Record Check if they have been a resident of PA during the entirety of the previous 10-year period, have received an FBI certification at any time since residency in PA, and can provide a copy of said certification to CRPR.

** Per the PA Department of Human Services, volunteers are exempt from FBI Criminal Record Check if they have been a resident of PA during the entirety of the previous 10-year period and swear or affirm in writing that they are not disqualified from services based upon a conviction of an offense under §6344.

Please note that immediate results are available online for the PA Child Abuse Clearance and the PA Criminal Background Check. Applicants are encouraged to apply online (a credit card is required for processing). The FBI Criminal Record Check results can take 4-6 weeks for processing (requires fingerprint records).

All hires are conditional upon the submission of all required clearances.

For Employees: The duration of the conditional employment may not exceed 90 calendar days. After 90 days the employee will be suspended without pay until all documents are presented.

For Volunteers: The duration of the conditional service may not exceed 30 calendar days

Once an employee begins work, all clearance documents must be updated every five (5) years to remain compliant with state regulations. To begin the five-year renewal cycle each current employee and each newly-hired employee must provide updated clearances dated within the last 6 months.

Reimbursement Policy for Clearances

Each staff member and volunteer is required to furnish, at their expense, the required clearance documents at the time of employment. CRPR will provide reimbursement for the fees associated with the clearances in the following situations:

- Year-round staff (full-time and part-time): The costs for the initial certifications, at the time of hire, are the responsibility of the candidate. All clearances must be updated every 36 months; the cost for the renewals will be reimbursed by CRPR upon written request submitted within 30 days of the expired clearances. Current year-round staff will also be reimbursed for the fee to obtain the initial FBI clearance. Each reimbursement request must include copies of the updated clearance(s) and proof of payment(s).

- Seasonal staff and interns involved in programs, parks, and aquatics operations involving children, ages 17 and younger, will be reimbursed by CRPR upon written request submitted within 30 days of the successful completion of their work season or work period. Each reimbursement request must include proof of payment(s).
- Volunteers will be fully reimbursed upon written request after successful completion of their tenure with CRPR upon written request within 30 days of successful completion of service. Each reimbursement request must include proof of payment(s).

Actions Based Upon Clearance Results

- Grounds for denying employment of participation in program, activity, or service include:
- In no case shall an administrator engage or approve an applicant where the Agency has verified that the applicant is named in the statewide database as the perpetrator of a founded report committed within the five-year period immediately preceding verification pursuant to this section.
- In no case shall an administrator engage an applicant if the applicant's criminal history record information indicates the applicant has been convicted of one or more of the following offenses under Title 18 (relating to crimes and offenses) or an equivalent crime under Federal law or the law of another state:
 - 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).
- The attempt, solicitation or conspiracy to commit any of the offenses set forth in this paragraph.
- In no case shall an employer, administrator, supervisor or other person responsible for employment decisions hire or approve an applicant if the applicant's criminal history record information indicates the applicant has been convicted of 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 verification under this section.
- The agency shall notify the applicant in writing if the decision not to employ or engage the applicant is based in whole or in part on any of the Clearances. In this case, the following text shall be included in the letter:
- "We have evaluated your application for employment. As you have been advised during the application process, our policy requires that we review an applicant's PA Criminal Background and Child Abuse Clearances and FBI Criminal Record Check. Your clearance reports show that you were (insert appropriate action & description). Pursuant to the CRPR Child Safety Policy (copy enclosed), you may not be employed for a period of five years after such a conviction. If you believe that the information on

which this decision is based is erroneous, please provide pertinent documentation and we will reconsider this matter."

Child Safety Training & Education

All staff and volunteers subject to the CRPR Child Safety Policy are required to participate in child safety training prior to employment; training is only required once upon employment with the Agency. Recommended training options are listed [here](#). Upon hiring and prior to starting work with CRPR, a Certificate of Completion must be submitted for that employee's personnel file. Failure to submit proof of training may result in an unpaid suspension from work until such proof is submitted.

Mandated Reporters & Reporting

- CRPR staff and volunteers, ages 14 yrs. and older, are Mandated Reporters as defined by PA Act 126. Mandated reporters are required by law to report suspected child abuse if they have reasonable cause to suspect child abuse under any of the following circumstances:
- Individuals who, in the practice of their employment, occupation or practice of a professions, come into contact with children and have reasonable cause to suspect that a child under the care, supervision, guidance, or training of that person or of an agency, institution, organization or other entity with which that person is affiliated is a victim of child abuse.
- A person makes a specific disclosure to the mandated reporter that an identifiable child is the victim of child abuse.
- An individual, 14 years of age or older, makes a specific disclosure to the mandated reporter that the individual has committed child abuse. It is not required that the child come before the mandated reporter in order to make a report of suspected child abuse nor are they required to identify the person responsible for the child abuse to make a report of suspected child abuse.
- Mandated reporters must make an immediate and direct report of suspected child abuse to ChildLine either [electronically](#) or by calling 1-800- 932-0313. If an oral report is made to ChildLine, a report of suspected child abuse form (CY 47) must be completed and forwarded to the county children and youth agency within 48 hours after making the report. This form can be found [here](#). If a report is made electronically, no CY-47 is required.
- CRPR has defined the following steps for staff who suspect child abuse while on duty:
 - Immediately report suspected abuse to ChildLine via the Internet or by calling 1-800-932-0313.
 - If a verbal report is submitted, complete Form CY47 within 48 hours of the verbal report to ChildLine. Form CY47 is available at the CRPR Office as well as [electronically](#).
 - The staff member should notify their supervisor that a report has been submitted.
 - The staff member witnessing the abuse and/or completing the report can seek appropriate counseling if necessary.
- The CRPR Director may amend this policy, subject to the CRPRA endorsement within 45 days of that action, for the following:
- To permit the use of other services which provide authorized Criminal Background Checks and/or Child Abuse Clearances, as those services become available,
- To accommodate applicable revisions to state or federal laws

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