

Troop 20 Leaders and Parents:

As many of you know, as of January 1, 2015, PA has a new state law requiring more background checks for adult volunteers in youth programs.

The new law affects Troop 20 operations.

Attached is a February 10, 2015 memo from BSA, and I strongly encourage you to read it, especially regarding the compliance dates.

More information was also made available recently at Districtwide Roundtable. Specifically, in April, some BSA executive staff met with the state policymakers in Harrisburg to discuss, among other things:

- 1) Concerns that the new law may dissuade adults from volunteering to help the Boy Scouts.
- 2) Clarification whether Boy Scout leaders are exempt from needing any clearances, since the BSA does background checks and a very strict Youth Protection Guideline Training Program.
- 3) Which adult volunteers need clearances: for example, fundraiser helpers, campout participants, etc.

While the details of the Harrisburg meeting have not been broadcast, our understanding is that not much has changed from the information shared in the attached memo.

Bottom line is that the Troop 20 adult leaders will need to obtain the required clearances. There are 3 separate clearances, and those who have lived in PA consistently for the past 10 years can be exempted from the 3rd clearance (Fingerprint-Based FBI Criminal History Record Check).

The first two clearances cost \$10 each, and the following link will direct you how to submit your forms.

<http://www.dhs.state.pa.us/findaform/childabusehistoryclearanceforms/index.htm>

There is a state-level FAQ sheet online here regarding the program:

http://www.psp.pa.gov/Documents/Public%20Documents/fingerprint_info/Fact%20Sheet%20for%20Volunteers%20Final%20.pdf

Here are some Troop 20 specific FAQ that I'll attempt to answer to the best of my ability:

-Q: Do all adult volunteers, such as work day helpers need clearances? A: Yes, If the adult is responsible for the welfare of a child or having direct contact with children, specifically if they provide care, supervision, guidance, control or routine interaction with children. If you need help making that judgment call, ask me.

-Q: Is it transferrable from other organization, such as my church? A: Yes. Just make sure the clearances are current. Clearances are valid for 36 months.

-Q: Will Troop 20 pay for the clearances? A: No. Few volunteer organizations are paying for the clearances, due to concerns with adults using those organizations to avoid having others pay.

-Q: To whom should I give my clearances? A: You may give them to me. I will keep them confidential and will share them with our BSA Council as required for our policy compliance.

-Q: I'm volunteering for the 5th Grade Campout. What do I do? A: Submit a copy of your clearance forms directly to the ELCO Intermediate School Office.

If I hear more information from BSA Council, I will let you know.

While I understand this is a new process and a bit of a hassle, I appreciate all your patience and understanding. Troop 20 is committed to comply with this new law that's committed to provide youth safety.

Sorry for the long email. This is a bit of a complicated issue.

Any questions for now, let me know.

YIS,

---Jason

[717-933-5260](tel:717-933-5260)