

# FEDERAL CRIMINAL HISTORY BACKGROUND CHECKS PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has changed to a new electronic fingerprinting vendor, IDEMIA, for Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) criminal history background checks. IDEMIA started processing FBI criminal history checks on November 28, 2017.**

**Federal Criminal History Background Checks are required by Act 114 of 2006, 24 PS 1-111 as amended (Act 61 of 2008).**

## **Background**

As of April 1, 2007, Act 114 of 2006 has required that ALL prospective employees of public and private schools, including their independent contractors and their employees, but excluding employees who do not have direct contact with students, undergo background checks. Applicants are required to submit their background check reports to their prospective public and private school employers. The law also requires student teachers to undergo background checks and present their reports to their higher education institution prior to field experience. There are three required background checks for ALL applicants:

- State Police Criminal History Record\*
- Department of Human Services Child Abuse Report
- Federal Criminal History Record Information (CHRI) – FBI Report\*\*

ALL public and private schools are required to review the background check reports, including the federal criminal history record information (CHRI) reports of all prospective employees and independent contractors who will have contact with children. The higher education institution administrator is responsible for reviewing the reports of prospective student teachers. The school/higher education administrator must make a determination regarding the fitness of the individual to work in a position where he or she will have contact with children. The review and fitness determination is required PRIOR to the applicant working in a school.

\*The PA State Police report has been required for applicants for school employment since 1986.

\*\*Prior to April 1, 2007, the Federal Criminal History Report was only required in PA schools for out-of-state applicants. The CHRI is the result of an FBI fingerprint-based background check. Act 114 requires the report to be reviewed in a manner prescribed by PDE.

## **GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

The Act requires that all of the following individuals who will have direct contact with children (as defined in 22 Pa. Code § 8.1) provide to their prospective employer a copy of their Federal Criminal History Record, PA State Police Report, and DPW Child Abuse Report that cannot be more than five (5) years old at the time of hire.

- Student teachers (participating in classroom teaching, internships, clinical or field experience),
- Prospective employees of public and private schools, Intermediate Units and Area Vocational-Technical Schools (including, but not limited to: administrators, teachers, substitutes, custodians, cafeteria workers and office employees), and
- Independent contractors and their employees (including, but not limited to: bus drivers, PIAA Sports Officials, and construction workers).

Prospective employees/student teacher candidates/contractors and their employees, hereafter referred to collectively as applicant, are to submit with their employment application State and Federal criminal history reports (**for the Federal Criminal History Report the applicant is to submit their Universal Enrollment ID - UEID**) or a copy of the completed form/request. Criminal history reports (results of background checks) shall be no more than five years old at the time of hire.

## **APPLICANT PROCEDURES**

Fee: \$23.85 – All applicants will now receive an unofficial copy of their report via email. **Please note the link is available for ONE-TIME access only, and once accessed will no longer be valid. You should only access this link from a device that will allow you to download, print, or save your results at that time.** Fee is payable to IDEMIA.

The fingerprint-based background check is a multiple-step process, as follows:

1. **Registration** - The applicant must register prior to going to the fingerprint site. Walk in service is allowed but all applicants are required to complete pre-enrollment in the new Universal Enrollment system. Pre-enrollment can be completed online or over the phone. The registration website is available online 24 hours/day, seven days per week at <https://uenroll.identogo.com>. Telephonic registration is available at 1-844-321-2101 Monday through Friday, 8am to 6pm EST. During the pre-enrollment process, all demographic data for the applicant is collected (name, address, etc.) along with notices about identification requirements and other important information.

When registering on-line, an applicant must use the appropriate agency specific Service Code to ensure they are processed for the correct agency and/or applicant type. Using the correct service code ensures the background check is submitted for the correct purpose. Fingerprint requests processed through any other agency or purpose cannot be accepted and are not transferrable. If an applicant enters the wrong code by mistake, the incorrect applicant type will appear at the top of the screen. The applicant should select the “Back to Home” button and begin the process again, by reentering the correct Service Code. If the applicant proceeds with the process under the incorrect code, the pre-enrollment and/or results cannot be transferred to another state agency and the applicant will have to start the process over and pay for the background check again.

2. **Payment** - The applicant will pay a fee of \$23.85 for the fingerprint service and to secure an unofficial copy of the Criminal History Record. Major credit cards as well as money orders or cashier’s checks payable to **MorphoTrust** will be accepted on site. No cash transactions or personal checks are allowed.
3. **Fingerprint Locations** – After registration, the applicant proceeds to the fingerprint site of their choice for fingerprinting. The location of the fingerprint sites and days and hours of operation are posted on IDEMIA's website at <https://uenroll.identogo.com>. The location of fingerprint sites may change over time; applicants are encouraged to confirm the site location nearest to their location.
4. **Fingerprinting** – At the fingerprint site the Enrollment Agents (EA) manages the fingerprint collection process. The fingerprint transaction begins when the EA reviews the applicant’s qualified State or Federal photo ID before processing the applicant’s transaction. Applicants will not be processed if they cannot produce an acceptable photo ID. After the identity of the applicant has been established, all ten fingers are scanned to

complete the process. The entire fingerprint capture process should take no more than three to five minutes.

5. **Report Access** – For the public or private school or higher education institution to access the official report via the electronic system, applicants must present their **UEID** to the hiring entity (as shown on the receipt provided after fingerprint capture). This process allows an applicant to provide multiple potential employers with their **UEID**, as the report is linked to the UEID number and not assigned to a specific school. If an applicant has lost their receipt or needs to confirm UEID, the applicant may visit the UEP website (<https://uenroll.identogo.com/>) and simply check status of their file by providing alternate personal information. Applicants will enter their personal information after clicking in the lower portion of that screen to obtain their receipt with the UEID.

Applicants will receive an unofficial copy of their report. However, the school is required to review the official CHRI online and print a file copy of the CHRI if the applicant is hired by the school or their contractor, or if the applicant is approved for student teaching.

## **FINGERPRINT PROCESSING AND STORAGE**

The applicant's scanned fingerprints and registration information will be electronically transmitted by IDEMIA via IDEMIA's approved channeling process directly to the FBI. The fingerprints are run against the FBI database, and the report is sent directly from the FBI back to IDEMIA. Currently, IDEMIA maintains the reports for **five years** from the date of the report on a secure server (accessible by authorized representatives). After five years, the reports are destroyed. Neither PDE or the FBI or IDEMIA stores an applicant's fingerprints. If an applicant is required to obtain a new report, the applicant must be fingerprinted again in order to obtain the report.

## **FINGERPRINT CORRECTIONS AND RESUBMISSIONS**

In some cases, a classifiable fingerprint record cannot be obtained. Immediately upon indication, IDEMIA will take corrective action to notify the applicant of the need to re-print the applicant at no cost to the applicant. This corrective action will be completed at the earliest possible time that is convenient for the applicant. IDEMIA will contact the applicant directly via email should a re-print be necessary. **NOTE: Reprinting can be applied to each applicant one time only.**

If the applicant's fingerprints are unable to be transmitted electronically by IDEMIA to the FBI a second time, the applicant will be notified that a "name check" process will be instituted. The name check is a manual review of records completed by the FBI, with the results being sent to IDEMIA. Upon receipt of name check results from the FBI, IDEMIA will send the results via email to the applicant. **Please note the link is available for ONE-TIME access only and once accessed will no longer be valid. You should only access this link from a device that will allow you to download, print, or save your results at that time.** Administrators will have access to review the results in the PA Safe Check system. This process takes 4–6 weeks; please allow ample time for fingerprinting.

## **INQUIRIES**

More information regarding fingerprinting locations and the process for obtaining an FBI fingerprint based background check report may be found at: <https://uenroll.identogo.com>.  
Fingerprint Services Customer Service Call Center: 1-844-321-2101.  
Frequently Asked Questions: <https://www.identogo.com/locations/pennsylvania>