

## **FAQ's for Cheltenham Township School District Volunteer Program**

### **1. Who needs to register?**

Any individual who plans to volunteer his/her services to the district must first register. This includes reoccurring volunteer positions like assisting in the classroom, as well as one-time events such as field trips. For more information, review our district policy on volunteering, #916.

### **2. Why do I need to register?**

First and foremost, the safety and security of students and the school community is our highest priority. The School District of Cheltenham Township Volunteer Program complies with the new provisions of the PA Child Protective Services Act 153 of 2014. This ensures that all volunteers who may interact with students and who spend time in our schools are approved to do so.

### **3. What is the difference between a visitor and a volunteer?**

A visitor is someone attending a school event such as a concert, or to observe in his/her child's classroom. A visitor cannot be responsible for children(s) welfare or provide direct contact to students. A volunteer is an individual in an unpaid position with a program, activity or service who is individually responsible for the welfare of one or more children or has direct unsupervised contact with children.

### **4. How do I register to volunteer?**

Visit our website at [www.cheltenham.org](http://www.cheltenham.org) and click on the *Parent Link*, to retrieve a volunteer application packet which includes instructions for securing necessary clearance forms. Packets are also available at each principal's office. Your application to volunteer, once completed, should be returned to the school office.

### **5. Are criminal background checks completed on all volunteers?**

Any individual in an unpaid position with a program, activity or service who is individually responsible for the welfare of one or more children or has direct unsupervised contact with children is considered a "Covered" volunteer who must provide clearances and a TB test result..

### **6. What paperwork is required to serve as a volunteer with Cheltenham Township School District?**

ACT 34 – PA Criminal Background Check  
ACT 151 – Child Abuse History Clearance Form  
ACT 114 - FBI Fingerprint Background Check (NOT required if volunteer has lived in Pennsylvania for ten (10) years)  
Negative TB Test  
Signed Volunteer Affirmation

### **7. Who pays for this? What is the cost of all clearances?**

Volunteers pay for the cost of the clearances and testing. There is no cost for the PA Criminal Background Check and Child Abuse History Clearance are free; the FBI report is \$28.75.

### **8. What if my TB test was positive?**

Cheltenham Township School District must see proof that you do not have an active case of tuberculosis. This can be in the form of a skin test, blood test, or chest x-ray. If your skin test is positive, but you do not have active TB, then you will need to show negative results from a blood test or chest x-ray taken in the last 12 months. If you received a vaccination for TB then you will need to show proof of the vaccination.

### **9. Do I have to do this immediately? When do my volunteer clearances expire?**

A volunteer must submit an approved and completed packet before volunteering can occur. For current volunteers, those who submitted required forms prior to December 31, 2014, must complete the new process with new clearances and TB test results by no later than July 1, 2015. Once on file, clearances and TB testing will need to be renewed every 60 months.

**10. How long does the registration process take?**

The application process takes about 5 minutes. If the FBI report is being secured, the volunteer will need to go to an approved site for fingerprinting. The Child Abuse Clearance may take up to 7-10 days to be returned by the issuing agency

**11. What information is used to run the background check?**

The agencies run background check using the volunteer's name, current and prior address information, birthdate and social security number information.

**12. What happens if arrest/charges/conviction information is shown on the issued reports?**

Any report with arrest/charges/conviction information will be reviewed by the Director of Human Resources for approval or denial as a volunteer, consistent with the legal requirements of Act 158 of 2014. If denied volunteer status, the individual will be informed in writing

**13. If I am denied as a volunteer, is there an appeal process?**

The volunteer position is not a right, but rather a privilege that is conferred by the Board and the administration. As such, any volunteer position or volunteer may be eliminated at any time for any reason or no reason (Please refer to Policy #916. Volunteers for further information).

**14. Do I need to designate the name of the school where I am volunteering?**

Yes; multiple schools may be designated.

**15. Do student teachers go through the volunteer process?**

No, student teachers follow a separate process for submission and approval of clearances.

**16. Whom can I speak with if I have questions?**

Your first point of contact is the principal's secretary. If you need further assistance please contact the district volunteer coordinator at 215-886-9500 or email [khoward@cheltenham.org](mailto:khoward@cheltenham.org).