

**SAFE CHURCH ~ SAFE KIDS**    Matthew 19:14  
**Important information on how we protect our children.**



Here at The Church of The Covenant we take care and pride of our children and youth. The church requires, according to a state law effective back in 2014, background clearances are necessary for anyone who cares for or has direct contact with children under the age of 18. All volunteers as well as staff must have the three required clearances before they can work with our children. Clearances must be updated every five years to remain effective.

Obtaining clearances is a three step process that must be completed by each individual:

- \*Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Check
- \*Child Abuse History Clearance from the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services
- \*FBI fingerprint check (not required for volunteers who have lived in the state for 10 consecutive years> A church waiver can be signed)

**PENNSYLVANIA CRIMINAL HISTORY CHECK**

Go to the PA State Police website: <https://epatch.state.pa.us/Home.jsp>

- \*Select New Record from the Record Check tab and follow the instructions through to the certification page. Volunteer: be sure to click on the yellow box where it says "Volunteers Only."
- \*When the Search Results Table appears, write down the Control Number for future reference or print the page. Click on the Control Number to go to Record Details. **This page is only a receipt, not your official clearance.** Print the receipt, if needed. Note: there is no charge for volunteers.
- \* Click on Certification form to access your official clearance, and print the page.

**DO NOT SKIP THIS STEP!**

**PENNSYLVANIA CHILD ABUSE CLEARANCE**

You may apply for your PA Child Abuse Clearance on line at <http://www.compass.state.pa.us/CWIS>. You must create a long in, and then you will receive an email with your Keystone ID and a temporary password. Return to the website, and scroll through the pages until you get to the log on page. (Note: your keystone ID is your user name.) Enter the information from the email, then you will be prompted to create a password. After that, follow the procedure on screen to complete the application. Church Staff should use either "School Employment" or "Child Care Worker" as the purpose for application. Volunteers can use the "Volunteer" option. You will need all your past addresses since 1975 plus the name, relationship, and age for everyone you have lived with since then. Be sure to print the payment page BEFORE hitting the final submission button; you will not have an option to print a receipt afterwards. Note: there is no charge for volunteers. Once you have submitted all of the information, the clearance papers will be sent by mail if you select that option. You will also receive an email allowing you to log on and print them yourself.

**FBI FINGERPRINT CHECK**

All employees are required to have fingerprints taken. Volunteers are also required to have their prints checked unless they have been continuous residents of PA for the last ten years and have not been convicted of an offense under Section 6344. Those volunteers are exempt if they sign a document attesting to this. Obtain this document from the church.

To begin the process, you must register by going to <https://pa.cogentid.com/index.htm>.

Select the Department of Public Welfare/Department of Human Services for your clearance. DO NOT go under the Department of Education-(Note : if asked for an agency ID number, just leave blank). When finished , print the receipt.

Then take this receipt to Mailboxes & More here in Washington and this is where you will get your fingerprints taken.

Once obtaining all clearances turn them into the church office.