

New Child Safety Regulations and Requirements

"Safe Sanctuary" is the child abuse prevention policy of the First United Methodist Church. It gives guidelines on how to maintain a safe ministry environment for both children and adult ministry volunteers.

New Pennsylvania requirements have recently been signed into law as follows:

All paid church staff members are required to get three clearances:

1. Pennsylvania Criminal History report from the Pennsylvania State Police (\$10);
2. Certification from the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (\$10);
3. Federal Criminal History report from the FBI, which includes submission of fingerprints to the Pennsylvania State Police (\$27.50).

ALL volunteers age 14 and over who deal with children, youth and vulnerable adults will be required to have clearances. ***If they have been a Pennsylvania resident for at least 10 years***, volunteers must have both the State Police criminal background check (Act 34) and the Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance (Childline, Act 33). ***If they have not been a PA resident for at least 10 years***, they will also be required to obtain an FBI clearance.

Beginning in 2015, ***the only valid clearances are the PA State Police check, the PA Childline check (PA Child Abuse History) and the FBI clearance check***

The same certifications are **required every 36 months**. Employees or volunteers whose clearances are more than three years old must get new ones by Dec. 31, 2015. Volunteers who do not have clearances must get them by July 1, 2015.

How to Obtain Clearances:

Beginning December 31, 2014, the Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance can be submitted and paid for online through the Child Welfare Information Solution (CWIS) self-service portal, compass.state.pa.us/cwis. Submitting an application online allows individual applicants to receive their results through an automated system that will notify the applicant once their results have been processed. Applicants will be able to view and print their results online. The self-service portal also provides the ability for organizations to create business accounts to prepay for child abuse clearances and have online access to the results.

For more information about the electronic submission of child abuse clearances or for information on obtaining the Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Record Check or Federal Bureau of Investigation Criminal Background Check, go to: -

dhs.state.pa.us/findaform/childabusehistoryclearanceforms/index.htm.

Those who need fingerprinting for the FBI Clearance may use [this direct link](#).