

HUMAN RESOURCES

Recruitment, Selection, and Appointment

Background Checks—Volunteers and Mentors

This regulation supersedes Regulation 4119.1.

I. PURPOSE

To establish procedures for background checks applicable to certain categories of volunteers—and to all mentors—who work with children in school programs and school-sponsored activities.

II. SUMMARY OF CHANGES SINCE LAST PUBLICATION

- A. Section III.D. clarifies the definition of a volunteer.
- B. Sections IV.C.3 and IV.C.4. clarify those who are exempted from volunteer procedures.
- C. Section V.A.3.c. was deleted to remove the TB test requirement for volunteers.

III. DEFINITIONS

A. Background Check

1. Review and verification of accuracy of information on the Volunteer and Mentor Application form. This form is available at the following web site: <http://www.fcps.edu/DIT/kam/docmgmt/forms/hr3.pdf>.
2. A fingerprint-based search for criminal history record information and sex offender record information on file with the Virginia State Police or the FBI.
3. A search of the Child Protective Services Central Registry.

B. Successful Completion of Background Check

1. The application form is complete and it contains accurate information.
2. The applicant is not a convicted felon and has no misdemeanor criminal history that would be incompatible with serving as a volunteer or a mentor. A disqualifying criminal record will be determined by the Department of Human Resources using guidelines applicable to screening new employees. Among the factors taken into consideration are the nature of the offense, the age of the person at the time of the

offense, and the amount of time between the date of the offense and the date of application.

3. The applicant has never been the subject of a founded case of child abuse or neglect.
4. The applicant has not intentionally falsified any information on any documents submitted during the application process.

C. Mentor

A non-Fairfax County Public Schools employee who proposes to serve as a child mentor through Mentorworks or another mentoring program recognized by and affiliated with Fairfax County Public Schools.

D. Volunteer

A person, other than a mentor, who is not a parent or legal guardian of a child in a school or program in which the volunteer activity will take place.

IV. REQUIREMENTS

- A. Principals and program managers must follow the procedures in section V. for all the following individuals before allowing them to work with children:
 1. Mentors.
 2. Volunteers who will have frequent or regular contact with children.
 3. Interns.
- B. Principals and program managers may follow the procedures in section V. for any adult working with children—regardless of parental, employee, mentor, or volunteer status—if the principal determines that such procedures would be in the best interest of the children.
- C. Principals and program managers are not required to follow the procedures in section V. for:
 1. Volunteers who help with occasional events—such as field day, graduation parties, field trips, and similar activities—provided there is direct supervision of the event by regular school employees.
 2. Volunteers working on projects involving no contact or only incidental contact with children, such as fund-raisers and boosters.
 3. Volunteers who are sworn law enforcement personnel.

4. Parents or guardians volunteering who have children currently enrolled in Fairfax County Public Schools; however, parents or guardians who are listed in the Virginia Sex Offender Registry or who have been convicted of any offense relating to children will not be permitted to volunteer.
5. Employees who serve as volunteers and already have successfully completed FCPS background checks.

V. PROCEDURES

A. Principals and Other School Administrators

1. Ensure that the mentor or volunteer completes the application form. Retain a copy for the school or office file.
2. Complete form HR 8, Request to Hire/Transfer/Fingerprint.
3. Instruct the applicant to report to the Department of Human Resources, Office of Employment Services, between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, with the following documentation:
 - a. HR 8 form.
 - b. Photo identification.
4. Notify the applicant, upon receipt of information, that the background check was successfully completed, that there is a hold based on a review of pending records, or that the applicant cannot volunteer.
5. Maintain records of requests for background checks under this regulation and the disposition of those requests.

B. Human Resources

1. Explain the fingerprint process to the applicant, verify proper identification, and inspect the HR 8 form.
2. The applicant must complete the following forms:
 - a. Sex Offender and Criminal History Record Request form.
 - b. Request for Search of the Central Registry and Release of Information form.
 - c. Employment Background Information form (do not answer question #1).
3. Complete the fingerprinting process.

4. In the event of a “hit” message, forward the fingerprint packet to the investigator for further action.
5. Maintain a scanned document file on all volunteers and mentors who have successfully completed the background check.

C. Investigator

1. Review the fingerprint packet information and criminal history records received from the Virginia State Police and the FBI to determine if the applicant falsified any information.
2. Using the screening guidelines, and recommendations from the affected school administrator, determine the status of the volunteer or mentor.
3. Maintain confidential files of criminal history records received from the Virginia State Police or the FBI.

The Department of Human Resources will pay for the cost of background checks and fingerprinting.

Nothing in this regulation will preclude principals and program managers from declining the services of a volunteer or a mentor for any reason.