

Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect Volunteer Frequently Asked Questions

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) values the volunteers who work in our schools to enrich our students' experiences. As a community, we are mindful of our shared responsibility to create safe, nurturing environments for our students. These answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs) serve to clarify volunteer training and background check requirements.

Visitor Management System:

Q1: What should visitors, including volunteers, do when they arrive at schools?

A1: During designated school hours, all visitors, including volunteers, must continue to sign into schools using the MCPS Visitor Management System (VMS).

Q2: What is the Visitor Management System (VMS)?

A2: The VMS scans the visitor's driver's license or state-issued identification card against the state sex offender registry. The VMS also produces a nametag that should be worn at all times while in the school building.

Volunteer Training Requirements:

Q3: Do volunteers need to be trained in *Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect for Volunteers and Contractors*?

A3: Yes. All volunteers who *regularly* support schools and students and those who attend field trips must complete the Child Abuse and Neglect volunteer training. This training requirement also applies to volunteers who regularly support school-sponsored activities (Montgomery County Board of Education Policy JHC, *Child Abuse and Neglect*, and Montgomery County Public Schools Regulation IRB-RA, *Volunteers in Schools*).

Q4: How do I access this training?

A4: The training is available online on the Child Abuse and Neglect webpage (www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/childabuseandneglect). Supported browsers include Internet Explorer and Google Chrome.

Q5: Does everyone who provides support for schools need to complete the training requirement?

A5: While we encourage all community members to engage in this important, informative training, currently we only require individuals who *regularly* support schools to complete the Child Abuse and Neglect training. However, this requirement does not apply to individuals who support at large events or those who assist at one-time events under supervision of school staff members. Following are examples of the types of activities that do not require completion of the volunteer training (not an exhaustive list):

- Guest readers and speakers in classrooms where they will be supervised by a MCPS employee,
- High school/college recruiters and volunteers at job and college fairs,
- Parents/guardians or other relatives who are observing or supporting a celebration (e.g., a parade) or helping with a class party, and
- Parents/guardians staffing concessions and ticket booths at large events.

How will Volunteers Receive Training?

Q6: When will the volunteer training be available online?

A6: The volunteer training is online at www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/childabuseandneglect.

Q7: If I already completed MCPS training in the 2016–2017 school year, do I have to do so again in the 2017–2018 school year?

A7: No. If MCPS records reflect that an individual completed MCPS training offered last year, the individual does not have to undergo additional training in the 2017 – 2018 school year. The training is required every three years. If volunteer training was taken in:
2016-2017 renew in 2020-2021
2017-2018 renew in 2020-2021
2018-2019 renew in 2021-2022

Q8: Do all volunteers have to complete the training module online?

A8: All volunteers are encouraged to complete the online training module that is available on the Child Abuse and Neglect website (www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/childabuseandneglect) in order to receive electronic confirmation that this requirement has been completed.

Schools have the option of using the online module as a resource to provide individual or small group training sessions for their volunteers, especially if accommodations, such as language interpretation, are needed. Parents/guardians will not be barred from participation in their schools due to the need for accommodations. If schools provide trainings, the school is responsible for collecting a list of participant names and contact information and e-mailing the list to the Office of Student and Family Support and Engagement (OSFSE) at OSFSE@mcpsmd.org for input into the volunteer training database.

Q9: What if I require accommodations for disabilities to complete the training?

A9: Principals and school staff should accommodate individuals within their schools as appropriate, in consultation with OSFSE, if needed.

Q10: Will the online volunteer training be provided in multiple languages?

A10: Yes. The online training is currently available in Spanish, Chinese, French, Korean, Amharic and Vietnamese.

Q11: How will we know that volunteers have completed the training?

A11: As volunteers complete the training, participation is recorded and tracked by MCPS.

Q12: Once volunteers have been trained, may they work with students?

A12: Yes, volunteers may support the school in the various ways the school has established.

Q13: Do parents/guardians who are eating lunch with their child need to complete the Child Abuse Neglect training?

A13: No. Parents/guardians eating lunch in the cafeteria with their children are not considered regular volunteers.

Q14: Do parents/guardians need training if they are helping at dismissal or at recess?

A14: Yes. Parents/guardians who regularly work with students in school or during school-sponsored activities should complete the online training prior to volunteering at school.

Q15: Do MCPS student volunteers who are helping in schools have to complete Child Abuse and Neglect training?

A15: No. MCPS student volunteers who are helping in schools must be supervised at all times by an MCPS employee.

Q16: Do student teachers and interns have to complete Child Abuse and Neglect training?

A16: Yes. Student teachers and interns are required to complete mandatory Child Abuse and Neglect training.

Fingerprinting and Background Check Requirements:

Q17: What are the background check requirements for volunteers?

A17: The following categories of volunteers are required to complete fingerprinting and background checks:

- Volunteer coaches,
- Grade 6 Outdoor Environmental Education Programs (Outdoor Education) overnight chaperones,
- Volunteers on overnight field trips, and
- Volunteers on extended day trip that require Office of School Support and Improvement approval. (e.g., if departure time is not within the MCPS operations start time and/or return time is later than 7:00 p.m.)

Active federal, state, and local law enforcement personnel who have completed a criminal background check as a requirement of employment are exempt from the MCPS background check requirement. However, they are required to provide a copy of their official law enforcement agency issued policy identification to verify exemption from fingerprinting requirement. For all others who have been fingerprinted for their work (White House, a government agency, etc.), they must be fingerprinted through MCPS or American Identity Solutions (AIS) in order for MCPS to receive the reports from the authorities (past and future criminal activities).

Q18: Where do volunteers go for background checks and how long does it take to be cleared?

A18: Fingerprinting and background checks may be obtained at the following location(s) **by appointment**:

- The Office of Human Resources Development (OHRD), located at 45 West Gude Drive, Rockville, Maryland 20850, 301-279-3276.
- American Identity Solutions (AIS), located at:
 - 6701 Democracy Boulevard, Suite 110, Bethesda, Maryland 20817, 301-571-9479
 - 12501 Prosperity Drive, Suite 200, Silver Spring, Maryland 20904, 240-670-7952
 - 7361 Calhoun Place, Rockville, Maryland 20855, 301-296-4499
- It takes approximately four weeks to complete the background check process.

Q19: Who pays for volunteers to complete their background check?

- A19:**
- The volunteer is responsible for the cost of the background check. The cost is \$54 at OHRD and \$59 at AIS. On a case-by-case basis, schools may work with volunteers to make alternative arrangements to cover the cost.
 - Outdoor Education overnight chaperones will have no cost for background checks if fingerprinting is completed through OHRD. However, chaperones who use AIS will pay \$20.00.
 - Volunteer coaches will continue to pay for their background checks, as arranged through the Athletic Department.

Q20: Do I need to undergo another background check if I completed a MCPS background check last year?

A20: If a parent/guardian/community member has previously completed the MCPS background check process during the 2016–2017 school year, that person will not have to complete the process again during the 2017–2018 school year.

Q21: If a school's Parent Teacher (Student) Association (PTA/PTSA) sponsors an after-school activity, enrichment program, or other program, are the providers subject to the requirements applicable to MCPS contractors regarding fingerprinting/background checks?

- A21:** Fingerprinting and background checks are required for school-sponsored events only.
- If the after-school program is funded or sponsored by MCPS, or MCPS is part of the contract (i.e., *the principal's signature is on the contract*), training is required and if the after-school program providers will have direct, unsupervised, and uncontrolled access to students in an MCPS facility, background checks are required.
 - If the contract is not school-sponsored and sponsored solely by the PTA/PTSA or other organization, or arranged solely through the Interagency Coordinating Board (ICB), MCPS does not require background checks or training. However, the PTA/PTSA or ICB may have additional requirements for their contractors.

Q22: Who informs potential volunteers that they have been approved or not approved?

A22: Potential volunteers will receive notification by mail of the background check results. MCPS OHRD will conduct a case-by-case analysis and promptly follow up with the potential volunteer regarding information about sexual offenses, child sexual abuse offenses, and crimes of violence, as well as any offenses involving distribution of drugs or other controlled substances, or any other criminal information that may significantly affect the safety and security of MCPS students. OHRD will not share any details regarding a potential volunteer's criminal background check with school-based staff members.

Q23: Who should I contact if I have questions about volunteer training and background checks?

A23: If you have any questions or concerns about volunteer requirements, please contact your school. In addition, concerns not addressed at the school level may be directed to Dr. Jonathan T. Brice, associate superintendent, OSFSE, at 240-453-2426.

Q24: How do these requirements apply to Montgomery College staff working at MCPS sites?

A24: Montgomery College employees working with the dual enrollment program undergo a criminal background check, including fingerprinting, at the time of hire. They must have their Montgomery College-issued identification badge visible or on their person while in the schools.

Q25: How do these requirements apply to Montgomery County Government (MCG) employees?

A25: MCG employees, such as nurses and health room technicians, undergo a criminal background check, including fingerprinting, at the time of hire. They must have their MCG-issued identification badge visible or on their person while in the schools. MCPS issues identification badges for county staff in the Linkages to Learning program who have completed the criminal background check screening requirements.