



Pop Warner Little Scholars, Inc.

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Pop Warner Little Scholars, Inc. Youth Protection Program

Questions and Answers

1. What do we, as a league, have to do to comply so that we can be chartered for the next season?

The local league is required to have all board members, managers, coaches, and other volunteers or hired workers who provide regular service to the league or/and who have repetitive access to or contact with players or teams fill out the new volunteer application. Additionally, the league will be required to conduct a background check on each of these individuals. Pop Warner Football & Cheerleading will require each league to sign an agreement on the Charter application that they will comply with these regulations. Failure to sign the agreement on the charter application will result in the league not being chartered and failure to fulfill the requirements of the regulations will result in the league's status being referred to the Charter/Tournament committee for action to revoke the league's charter and all privileges.

2. What type of background check is required by the new regulations?

The new Pop Warner Football & Cheerleading regulations require each local league to check the Sexual Offender Registry (SOR) in the state where the applicant resides. Where the Sexual Offender Registry is not available, then these leagues must do a criminal background check. However, local leagues may elect to conduct a criminal background check, which exceeds the minimum requirement by the new regulations. For example, a background screening through the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

3. What type of offenses are we screening for when we conduct a background check?

Local leagues are conducting a search of the government state-wide Sexual Offender Registry for anyone who has committed sexual offenses involving minors. An individual who has been convicted or plead guilty to charges involving or against a minor, no matter when the offense occurred, must not be permitted to work with children.

4. Who in the local league should be responsible to process the background check information?

Pop Warner Football & Cheerleading recommends the board of directors appoint the local league president and two other individuals to handle the background checks. These individuals may be from the board or individuals outside the board. For instance, the board of directors may appoint individuals who have significant professional background in this area, such as law enforcement officers or individuals with a legal background.

5. What if an individual has previously had a background check?

Each league must conduct their own background check on the appropriate individuals annually.

6. If our volunteer base comes from multiple states, in what state do we do the background checks?

Many leagues are located close to the boundaries of other states; these leagues must conduct the background check where the individual resides. The league must attach a copy of a government-issued photo identification to the volunteer application. The residence on the government document will determine where the check must be conducted.

7. What will result in termination of a volunteer under the new regulations?

Any background check that reveals a conviction of any crime involving or against a minor must result in immediate termination from the league. Additionally, volunteers who refuse to submit a fully completed Pop Warner Volunteer Application must be immediately terminated or eliminated from consideration for any position. This includes individuals with many years of service to your league.

8. What if offenses involving or against minors are pending prior to or after appointment to a position in the local league?

We suggest the individual not be appointed or should be suspended from his/her current position pending the outcome of the charges.

9. What if there are convictions or other offenses NOT involving or against minors?

A local league may prohibit any individual from participating as a volunteer or hired worker, if the local league board of directors deems the individual unfit to work with minors.

10. Who is to be made aware of the information found on the background check?

The local league president shall only share personal information contained in the volunteer application, background check or other information obtained through the screening process with other members of the board of directors in order to make personnel decisions. If the information obtained through the background check is public record and causes an individual to not be appointed or to be terminated, Pop Warner recommends this information be shared with the parents/guardians of the children who have had contact with the individual previously.

11. Where should these records be maintained and for how long?

The local league president shall retain each volunteer application, background check information, and any other documents obtained on file for the current year of service of that individual. After the local league has completed operation for the current season, the league president shall dispose of the records unless the league has taken action or made a decision based upon the information contained in the records.

12. What is the timetable for completing the screening of each individual?

The local league must complete the annual screening process prior to the individual assuming his/her duties for the current season. This would include the individual submitting a completed volunteer application and the league completing an appropriate background check.

13. What resources are available through Pop Warner to assist in this process?

Leagues can obtain the new volunteer application and background check information for each state through the Pop Warner website at www.popwarner.com. The information on the Pop Warner website contains links directly to state government resources on conducting background checks. Pop Warner leagues are also encouraged to use whatever local resources are available in their communities.

14. What will it cost my league to implement this new initiative ?

Thirty-five states provide a free background online check for sex offenders who have committed violent sex crimes or sex crimes involving children. Eight additional states provide free background checks through an offline process administered by the state. The remaining seven states have a fee requirement that ranges from \$5 to \$18. For more detailed information on costs, visit the Pop Warner website at www.popwarner.com.

15. Where can I find funding assistance to pay for the background checks if necessary?

In the seven states where a fee is required, Pop Warner suggests that the individual pay for their background check as a condition of service. The league may elect to seek other funding sources from local businesses, sponsors, civic organizations and service clubs.

16. When should local leagues begin the implementation process of this new initiative?

Immediately, so volunteer applications and background checks are completed prior to individuals assuming their duties for the current season.

17. Does this new initiative also apply to those individuals that assist the manager and coaches at practices or games?

Yes. Any individual who provides regular service to the league or/and who has repetitive access to or contact with players or teams must fill out the Volunteer Application and go through the background check process.

18. Who is going to coach the team if a screened manager or coach is no longer able to fulfill his/her duties?

Any permanent replacement can not assume their duties until the volunteer application and background check has been completed. The league may temporarily assign a board member or another screened individual to fill the vacancy until the proper process and appointment has been made.

19. Should our league wait until the entire screening process has been completed to submit our Charter Application and Insurance Enrollment Form?

No. The appropriate league officers must sign the statement on the form agreeing to adhere to the new regulations requiring the use of the new volunteer application and background screening process. Once this section is completed the balance of the charter application can be completed and submitted to Pop Warner Little Scholars.

20. As the league president or an official of the local league, how do I explain the need for this new initiative?

These new requirements are being implemented by Pop Warner and your local league to:

- 1) protect our children and maintain Pop Warner as a hostile environment for those who would seek to do them harm.
- 2) protect individuals and leagues from possible loss of personal or league assets because of litigation.
- 3) take advantage of current technology and laws that have made background check information accessible to your local league.