



## EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA YOUTH SOCCER NEWS RELEASE

### MEMORANDUM

TO: All Member Leagues and Affiliate Clubs

From: Chris Branscome, CEO

RE: PA Child Protection Safety Laws

Date: July 22, 2015

CC: Board of Directors

Rick Tompkins, Risk Manager

First, thank you all for your patience and efforts to comply with the changes to Pennsylvania's Child Protection Safety Laws. Simply, the road to understanding the new laws and the transition to compliance has been a bit bumpy. There has been some conflicting or confusing interpretations coming from the various, but appropriate, sources. This led to an effort of legislators and the Governor to address the new laws and propose amendments directed at easing the many concerns.

The directions we were given on the new laws, and what we subsequently passed on to you have been changed through policy decisions as well as legislation. First, on June 10<sup>th</sup>, Governor Wolf announced that volunteer clearances would become free of charge. Second, in late June, The Department of Humans Services through an internal policy decision, emphasized a change in the activation date for volunteers (it was altered again after July 1). Some of you may have learned of this, most did not. On July 1, the Governor signed amendments that attempt to redefine, or further clarify the clearance process and requirements. These changes were not reported by any major news outlet, nor were they widely communicated via press release or other means, but simply appeared as changes to the FAQ's on the [Keepkidssafe.pa.gov](http://Keepkidssafe.pa.gov) website, on or about July 15.

Before I address relevant highlights of the amendments, I must re-emphasize that as a member state association, we abide by the US Youth soccer Risk Management policies. We have and will continue to enforce these policies which automatically disqualifies anyone convicted of a crime of violence or a crime against a person. The shift in compliance is that now this must be dealt with at the local level, where previously it was handled from the state office. \*Furthermore, it is required for any adult (18 and up) who will be placed on a travel roster, to complete our on-line disclosure form ("risk management") and to comply with the CPSL clearances. However, it is the responsibility of the member league or affiliate club to ensure compliance on each individual before placing them on a roster. This was stated in the March 23<sup>rd</sup> memo to the membership and that

will not change.

Notable changes/interpretations to the law:

- New deadline for **new** adult volunteers (having never volunteered before) to obtain the required clearances is August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015.
- **Existing** volunteers who volunteered at any time prior to August 25, 2015 and do not have clearances because you were previously not required, have until July 1, **2016** to obtain the required clearances \*see above
- Clearances are now good for **five (5)** years instead of three
- Volunteer clearances are not accepted for employment, however an employee clearance can also be used to volunteer
- The standard for what volunteers require clearances is defined as someone who provides “care, supervision, guidance or control” AND have “routine interaction” with the children. “Routine interaction” is defined as regular and repeated contact that is integral to the person’s employment or volunteer responsibilities.”
- Minor employees (14-17) are now exempt from the FBI check if they have been a resident of the Commonwealth for the previous 10 years.

We suspect additional changes/clarifications to these laws will continue to develop. We will continue to monitor the situation and work with legislators the appropriate government departments. We will continue to encourage diligence on everyone’s part to ensure the safety of the players to the best of our abilities. We encourage you to stay in contact with your local legislators. We strongly encourage you to further educate yourself and regularly review the documents on the [keepkidssafe.pa.gov](http://keepkidssafe.pa.gov) website.

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