

PA Clearances

Updated August 2019

All Pennsylvania school districts now require that any visitors to their schools – including teacher candidates completing field experience assignments, pre-student teaching, or student teaching – obtain three clearances. The clearances are explained and can be obtained using the information provided below:

1. PA Access to Criminal History (PATCH)– (must be renewed annually, and must always be less than one year old);
2. Dept. of Human Services (DHS) Child Abuse History (must be renewed annually, and must always be less than one year old).
3. Federal Criminal History Record Information (CHRI)(FBI)* (Beginning with the Fall 2017 semester, must be renewed annually, and must always be less than one year old).

Students are responsible for keeping a personal copy of all of their own clearances, preferably digitally. Students are also responsible for monitoring the expiration dates of their own clearances and for renewing clearances prior to the expiration date.

All incoming undergraduate students must apply for FBI clearance in the fall of freshman year (even if he or she has had an FBI clearance in the past.). All transfer applicants and post-baccalaureate candidates must submit all 3 **newly obtained clearances with their application.*

You are required to provide a copy of each clearance (PA Criminal, PA Child Abuse, and FBI) to Ms. Mary Poehlmann, Assistant to the Dean for Teacher Education, BEFORE you complete any field experience. The RMU Education Office must have copies of your valid clearances on file during your tenure with RMU as a teacher candidate student. After all clearances have been checked and processed by Ms. Poehlmann, you will be permitted to participate in the field experience assignments associated with required education courses.

For all questions concerning clearances, please contact Ms. Mary Poehlmann, Assistant to the Dean for Teacher Education (SNEHS, 434A Nicholson), at 412-397-6027 or at poehlmann@rmu.edu.

PA Access to Criminal History (PATCH) Clearance is required of all students seeking teacher certification. This clearance must be obtained prior to scheduling your first RMU course that requires field experiences, and then **must be renewed annually** to remain current. The PA Criminal History clearance is valid for one year from issuance date.

You can obtain the PA Criminal History Clearance electronically at <https://epatch.state.pa.us/> by clicking on the *Submit a New Record Check* link. **DO NOT** apply by selecting **New Record Check (Volunteers only)**. The cost is \$22, to be paid online by credit card. Make sure to record the Control Number and the exact name and the date that you used to register.

In 24-48 hours, you should be able to access the results of the record check. Log into <https://epatch.state.pa.us/>. Click on “Check the status of a Record Check”, input the required information, and click *Search*. On the *Search Results page*, click on the hyperlink with your **Control Number**. On the next screen, click on **Certification Form**. Print the summary of the criminal record check and provide a copy to Ms. Poehlmann.

Dept. of Human Services (DHS) Child Abuse History Clearance is required of all students seeking teacher certification. This clearance must be obtained prior to scheduling your first RMU course that requires field experiences, and then **must be updated annually** to remain current. The Child Abuse History Clearance is only valid for one year from issuance date. **There is \$13 application fee. Do not register as a “VOLUNTEER”.** Register as **“School Employee Governed by Public School Code”**.

Effective 12/31/14, the Child Abuse History Clearance **can be submitted online** by using the following link: <https://www.compass.state.pa.us/CWIS>. The \$13 application fee must be paid with a debit/credit card. Creating an account and submitting your clearance application online will give you immediate access to your results or the status of your results if your results cannot be processed immediately. You will receive an email confirming submission of your application with a link to the website to check the status of your application.

Paper submissions of the Dept. of Human Services (DHS) Child Abuse History Clearance application **will still be accepted** for anyone who may not have access to the internet. The hardcopy version of the application may be found at:

<http://www.dhs.pa.gov/provider/childwelfareservices/childabusehistoryclearanceforms/>

Submit paper applications to:

ChildLine and Abuse Registry

Pennsylvania Department of Human Services

PO Box 8170

Harrisburg, PA 17105-8170

The instructions for how to complete the Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance application are now included on the last page of the application and can be printed for easy reference when completing the application.

For questions related to the Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance, please contact the ChildLine Verification Unit at 717-783-6211 or toll free at 1-877-371-5422.

PLEASE NOTE: Although the online option for application is expected to reduce processing time to 14 days or less, it may take up to 4 to 6 weeks for Pennsylvania agencies to return clearances that are processed from mailed, hard-copy applications. This process can sometimes be expedited by submitting your application and money order to the local office of an elected representative to the Pennsylvania state legislature.

Federal Criminal History Record Information (CHRI) (FBI) Clearance

This is required of all students seeking teacher certification. *All incoming undergraduate students must apply for FBI clearance in the fall of freshman year (even if he or she has had an FBI clearance in the past.). All transfer applicants and post-baccalaureate candidates must submit all 3 **newly obtained** clearances with their application.* Beginning with the Fall 2017 semester, it must be renewed annually, and it must always be less than one year old.

The Federal criminal history record clearance is a fingerprint–based background check, and is a multiple-step process. Beginning on Nov. 28, 2017, **IDEMIA (MorphoTrust)** began processing FBI criminal background checks for the Commonwealth of PA, replacing Cogent.

Applicants **must register** prior to going to the fingerprint site at <https://uenroll.identogo.com>. You can also register by phone at 1-844-321-2101, Monday thru Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. EST. Walk-in service at the fingerprint site without registration is not available. Applicants will be required to enter a **Service Code (1KG6RT)**, as well as demographic data (name, address, etc.) when registering. Then click on “Schedule or Manage Appointment” and finish the registration process.

Applicants must pay a \$23.85 fee **at the fingerprinting site** for the fingerprinting service and to secure an unofficial copy of their report. Major credit cards, money orders or cashier’s checks payable to MorphoTrust are accepted at the fingerprint site. Cash or personal checks are NOT accepted.

After registration, the applicant proceeds to the fingerprinting site of their choice for fingerprinting. The locations and days/hours of operation for each site are posted on IDEMIA’s website at <https://uenroll.identogo.com>. The locations of the fingerprinting sites may change over time, so please confirm the site location you plan to visit.

Enrollment Agents (EA) manage the fingerprint collection process. The fingerprint transaction begins when the EA reviews your qualified State or Federal photo ID before processing your transaction. A list of approved ID types is available at <https://uenroll.identogo.com>. **You cannot be processed without an acceptable photo ID.**

After your identity is established, all ten fingers are scanned to complete the process. The entire fingerprint capture should take no more than 5-10 minutes. An Identogo receipt will be provided after fingerprint capture that includes the **UEID** required for access by the university or school district to the **official report**.

All applicants will receive an unofficial copy of their report via email (**Please note the link is available only for ONE-TIME access only, and once accessed will no longer be valid. You should only access this link from a device that will allow you to download, print, or save your results at that time**).

E-mail a copy of the Identogo receipt to Ms. Mary Poehlmann, Assistant to the Dean for Teacher Certification (SNEHS, 434A Nicholson), at poehlmann@rmu.edu.