

FBI Clearance Information.

[Note that the new FBI fingerprint requirement is in addition to the current Act 34 and Act 151 criminal history clearances]

Details on the FBI clearance process are available at: <http://www.pa.cogentid.com>

Act 114 of the amended Pennsylvania Public School Code requires a **fingerprint-based background check** for public school employees and all students participating in any practicum including early and middle experiences in the schools, as well as student teaching.

Please check with your adviser to determine when you should complete this FBI clearance, as well as the clearance for Act 34 and Act 151, which are valid for one year from the processing dates.

Online Registration is available 24 hours/day, seven days per week at www.pa.cogentid.com. During the registration process, all demographic data for the applicant is collected (name, address, SSN, etc.), so there is no data entry required at the fingerprint collection site.

The applicant must register prior to going to any authorized Cogent Systems fingerprint site located only in Pennsylvania. "Walk-in" service without prior registration will not be provided at any fingerprinting station.

The applicant must pay a **fee of \$40.00** for the fingerprint service and to secure the Criminal History Record. Applicants may make their payment online at www.pa.cogentid.com using a credit card to debit card. Arrangements may be made to use money orders or cashier's checks payable to Cogent Systems at designated sites for those applicants without the means to pay electronically.

No cash transaction or personal checks will be accepted at the print locations

The **Location and Operating Schedules** of the fingerprint sites are posted on Cogent Systems' website at www.pa.cogentid.com. The location of fingerprint sites may change over time, to applicants are encouraged to confirm details for the site location nearest to them. Although Cogent Systems fingerprinting sites are located in many states, PDE requires that students must use sites located only in Pennsylvania.

Applicants may select a Cogent Systems fingerprint site of their choice where an Applicant Livescan Operator (ALO) will conduct the fingerprint collection process. The fingerprint transaction begins when the ALO reviews the applicant's qualified state or federal **photo ID** before processing the applicant's transaction. A list of approved ID types may be found on the Cogent Systems' website at www.pa.cogentid.com.

Applicants will not be processed if they cannot produce an acceptable photo ID.

After the identity of the applicant has been established, all ten fingers are scanned to complete the process. The entire fingerprint capture process should take no more than three to five minutes. The applicant's scanned fingerprint will be electronically transmitted to the Pennsylvania State Police, who in turn submit the fingerprints and demographic information to the FBI as required by federal statute.

A **receipt** confirming that the background check was completed can be obtained at the Cogent website. An applicant's social security number and birth date are required to access a printable receipt.

This receipt does not count as an official record

PDE will receive the Federal Criminal History Record from the FBI. PDE's School Services Unit will return the Federal Criminal History Record to the applicant. The record will be printed on standard 8.5 x 11 paper with the Commonwealth Seal embedded in the paper. **This document constitutes an official record.**

If an applicant present their Federal Criminal History Record and the Commonwealth Seal is not embedded in the paper, it will be considered as invalid and not an official record.

If the applicant does not receive the Criminal History Record from PDE within eight weeks after being fingerprinted, **contact PDE** at: (717) 783-3750 or Denise Wolfgang (dwolfgang@state.pa.us)

The applicant will **provide the Federal Criminal History Record to Penn State** to allow supervisors of the field experiences to share the clearance with the public school administrators.

A Cogent fingerprinting site is located at **The Bair Foundation** on Howard Avenue, in Altoona -

The Bair Foundation
615 Howard Avenue,
Executive House, Suite 102
Altoona, PA 16601

Additional information, and hours of operation, available at:

http://www.pa.cogentid.com/PA_Sites_html/Bair_08_Blair_Altoona.htm

Inquiries or Questions:

All information regarding process, policy, and fingerprinting locations may be found at www.pa.cogentid.com

All other inquiries should be directed to PDE at:
(717) 783-3750 or dwolfgang@state.pa.us