



PROTECTScreen
Criminal Background Check Pilot Program
(A program for your camp volunteers.)
Manual

Rev. 11/06

american **CAMP** association®

PROTECTScreen Manual
Acknowledgements

October 2006

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I. American Camp Association Public Policy Position on Criminal Background Checks

The American Camp Association (ACA) is committed to the physical and emotional safety of children and youth. This commitment is reflected in the education, training, publications, and camp standards that ACA provides. ACA believes that camps should utilize multifaceted screening and hiring programs and support practices appropriate to the clientele, staffing, supervision and program consideration of each camp.

An important aspect of any screening program is biometric-based* criminal background checks for all staff and volunteers with access to children, youth or vulnerable adults. In order for camps to implement effective biometric-based criminal background checks, a reliable federal program must be in place. ACA supports the establishment of a comprehensive federal biometric-based criminal background checking system that is reasonable in cost, timely in response, uniform in availability to camps across the country regardless of sponsorship, and consistent in the information provided according to identical pre-determined indicators of potentially harmful behavior.

In order for a federal program to be viable, ACA believes that states must mandate timely reporting to the state of information held at the county level, provide both county and state data to the federal program in a timely manner, mandate that checks be done for all staff and volunteers with access to children, youth, and vulnerable adults, and provide assistance to camps in accessing the system in a timely and affordable manner.

Furthermore, ACA advocates for the establishment of a coalition of agencies and associations with similar interests and concerns in order to promote a national response to this critical issue.

* Data gathered from a biological source unique to an individual – possible examples include fingerprints and retinal scans.

II. Criminal Background Checks and Camps - Issue Analysis

A. Definition

A criminal background check is a process of looking into the history of an individual to determine whether they have a criminal record.

B. Rationale for ACA's Position on Criminal Background Checks

Every year, more than 11 million children and adults benefit from the camp experience at approximately 12,000 camps throughout the United States. Those 12,000 camps use almost 2 million individuals as staff or volunteers to serve children, youth, and vulnerable adults. The American Camp Association believes that camps should utilize multifaceted screening and hiring programs and support practices appropriate to the clientele, staffing, supervision and program consideration of each camp.

Currently, the only way to ensure the identity of an individual is through fingerprinting. However, camps may not be able to access a fingerprint-based check, depending on their state's background check laws. Name based checks have inherent weaknesses:

- The individual could provide a false name and Social Security number. In fact, over 1% of the 45 million individuals in the FBI criminal database have used over 100 aliases and false Social Security numbers.
- Females may have two or more different last names if they have been married one or more times.
- Criminal databases can have mistakes in the spelling of an individual's name and other relevant information.
- Due to common names, "false positives" may arise – in other words, a check might come back with criminal records, but they actually belong to another individual with the same or similar name.

An FBI check is the best background check available, but it is not always accessible or feasible for camps. In states that allow access, an FBI check must be obtained through a state's background check agency. But, many states have strict eligibility requirements for FBI checks, and camps often don't qualify. When FBI checks are accessible, they may be very costly and have a lengthy turnaround time.

Under current law, youth-serving organizations in 37 states are prevented from getting nationwide criminal record checks, leaving them the only option of conducting only state and local checks. (For information on your State's laws, visit: www.ACACamps.org/publicpolicy/regulations.)

Additionally, the kind of information that is received from a background check varies widely by state and locality. For example, some states such as Colorado have established guidelines as to what crimes are acceptable in order to hire an individual to work with children. In other states, background checks return vague information about what crimes have been committed, and leave it up to the employer to determine hireability. The American Camp Association believes that it is critical that

background checks become consistent in the information provided according to identical pre-determined indicators of potentially harmful behavior.

C. Other Types of "Background Checks"

There are many different types of background checks an employer can pursue when performing pre-employment (or pre-volunteerism) screening. In addition to criminal background checks, other types of common checks are:

- Driving histories
- Education records/academic degree verification
- Reference checks
- Work history verification
- Credit checks
- Drug tests: (drug tests to check candidates for current substance abuse are legal)
- Worker's compensation reports

D. Types of Criminal Background Checks

There are several different kinds of criminal background checks available today, each with its strengths and weaknesses. There is no single criminal database in this country that includes every criminal record, so there is no one "perfect" background check.

Method of Identifying the Individual:

- Name-based check: A name-based check uses a person's name and Social Security number to match any possible criminal records.
- Fingerprint-based check: A fingerprint-based check uses fingerprints taken from an individual to match any possible criminal records.
- Other biometric-based checks: While the technology is not widely available – there are other ways (besides fingerprints) to determine the identity of an individual in order to match any possible criminal records. These methods will increase in the future and include methods such as retinal scans and DNA extraction.

Records/Databases that are Checked:

- Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI): The FBI maintains the most complete criminal database in the United States. It contains over 200 million arrest and conviction records concerning over 45 million individuals. All records are fingerprint-based. The database is made up of all federal crimes plus approximately 70-90% of each state's criminal databases. Low-level misdemeanors, driving citations and DUI's make up the portion of state records that are generally not present in the FBI database.
- State Background Checks: These checks include only the crimes committed within that state. These background checks are obtained through a state agency (the agency it varies from state to state). Some states do allow fingerprint-based checks, some only allow name-based checks, and some offer both types for different fees. Most state checks also include arrests, but a few include only convictions. (To access information

about what is available in your state, visit:

www.ACAcamps.org/publicpolicy/regulations

- County/Local Checks: These checks include only the crimes committed within a local jurisdiction. Background checks of a county or local jurisdiction are obtained through the local police department.
- Private Vendor Checks/Databases: There are dozens of private vendors that advertise their ability to conduct criminal background checks. Private background checks are generally name-based. There are two basic methods that these private vendors use for providing background checks:
 - Some vendors search county record repositories for the county of residence for the past 3-5 years.
 - Other vendors maintain databases of criminal records, often searchable online. Some of these vendors advertise their background checks as national in scope. But, these databases are actually only really "multi-state." These vendors buy their criminal data from the states. But, many states have strong privacy laws, so they do not sell any criminal data. Other states only sell a portion of their data (for example, parole records – but not the full conviction or arrest files).
 - Vendors use the Fair Credit Reporting statutes to access data.
- Driver's License Check: This would catch any tickets, citations, or convictions related to poor driving, including DUIs.
- State Sex Offender Registries: Most states have sex offender registries available online. However, states do not share the same criteria of what constitutes a "sex offender". (Any crimes that would cause an individual to be on a sex offender registry should show up in a state or FBI criminal background check).
- US Department of Justice, National Sex Offender Public Registry: This web site, (<http://www.nsopr.gov/>) launched in November 2005, provides the public access to each participating state Sex Offender Web Site. In most cases, the database includes individuals who have been convicted of sexually-violent offenses against adults and children and certain sexual contact and other crimes against victims who are minors.
- Child Abuse Registries: A few states will allow organizations that work with children to check an individual against their child abuse registry. These databases often include complaints of abuse that never result in arrest or prosecution and so would not be in a criminal database.

Special Note on the Records/Databases that are Checked:

One of the imperfections with criminal databases is that, often, an arrest will be recorded, but the courts or police do not update that arrest record with the ultimate result. Without that update, it is not known if the individual was convicted, had the charges dropped, or was found not guilty. These incomplete records are often called "open arrests." Some types of background checks only access convictions. When that happens, the check misses any of those open arrests.

E. Accessibility Issues

Currently, each state is the "gatekeeper" for background checks – they decide who can access background check information and for what purpose. Each state sets its own laws on background checks, thus, there is no consistency from state to state on eligibility, process, cost, and turnaround time. In many states, the most thorough types of background checks may not be accessible at all to camps. This includes access to the FBI database. Many states block your access to the FBI – others allow access through the State at a very expensive price. (The PROTECT Act pilot will allow camps access to the FBI without the interference of the State.) For information on the laws in your State, access: www.ACAcamps.org/publicpolicy/regulations.

F. Timeliness Issues

The turn-around time for criminal background checks is widely erratic. It is not uncommon for some checks to take months. When a camp is only open for a few months of the year, this is a very difficult barrier to overcome.

G. Costs for Background Checks

Costs of the various kinds of checks vary enormously – depending on what type of check is done – and in which state. Nationwide checks currently range from about \$36 to \$70 per check for just one individual. And, as described above, there is no one check that is totally complete.

H. Additional Challenges for the Camp Community

- Staff and Volunteers from Different Jurisdictions: Camps do not employ (or accept volunteers) only from the state in which the camp is located. In fact, the majority of camps recruit staff and volunteers from a wide range of locations – including overseas. Since there is no one single database of background information, it becomes very challenging to perform checks in all the jurisdictions for each potential recruit.
- International Staff: Many camps utilize staff and volunteers who are not residents nor citizens of the US. Background checks are not standard across countries. The available information varies widely. Some of the checks that are conducted are extremely comprehensive. Enhanced checks in the United Kingdom, for example, include information on subjects of police reports regardless of whether there is an associated conviction. However, this is not the norm. Many countries, particularly in Eastern Europe, do not run checks on temporary addresses (such as school addresses) but rather all convictions and associated records (if available) would be attached to the primary, or home, address. And some checks, Northern Ireland for example, do not verify addresses at all. Not all international staff get social security cards, nor of course will social security run checks on their addresses abroad. And notably, sexual predator databases are not a norm abroad. Finally, there is the challenge of language. The background check information from other countries will most often only be available in the language of that country – not English.

These challenges make utilizing international staff more complicated. However, the US camp community is committed to the advantages of international exchange and will continue to work with the companies that place internationals in US camps to seek out the best background check information available.

I. Legislative History: (adapted from materials originally published by the National Mentoring Partnership)

The current system of background checks has been shaped by the National Child Protection Act of 1993 (NCPA), the Violent Crime Control Act of 1994, and the Volunteers for Children Act (part of the Crime Identification Act of 1998). Prior to 1993, youth-serving organizations in most states were not legally allowed to obtain national criminal background checks.

- The 1993 NCPA encouraged states to adopt legislation that would allow youth-serving organizations to perform criminal background checks on volunteers or employees.
- The Violent Crime Control Act expanded the scope of this to include organizations serving the elderly and individuals with disabilities. However, most states did not choose to enact the authorizing legislation suggested by NCPA, so again youth-serving organizations in many states were left without the ability to obtain national criminal background checks.
- The Volunteers for Children Act of 1998 provided organizations serving children, the elderly, and individuals with disabilities to request background checks regardless of whether or not the state has passed authorizing legislation. However, it is left to each state's discretion to determine which types of human service organizations should be designated as "qualified entities" able to apply for national background checks through the state agencies.

Various bills have been introduced since 2002 that would have ensured that every youth-serving organization, no matter what state they are located in, would have access to nationwide criminal record checks. None have passed.

III. Overview of the PROTECTScreen Pilot

In 2003, the US Congress passed the "PROTECT Act" which is a multifaceted law that focuses on the prevention of the exploitation of children. Included in the Act was a pilot program to test out a number of different mechanisms to allow organizations that serve children to have access to timely, inexpensive FBI criminal background checks. That original pilot included three organizations: MENTOR – The National Mentoring Partnership, Boys & Girls Clubs of America, and the National Council on Youth Sports. The pilot was scheduled to end in 2005.

In 2005, the pilot was extended through June 2008, and was opened up to additional organizations that serve children. The American Camp Association was accepted as a partner in the program in July 2006. The formal agreement for participation with the FBI was signed October 18, 2006.

A. Type of Background Checks That Will be Performed

The PROTECTScreen pilot allows camps access to a fingerprint-based FBI criminal background check. To obtain a FBI fingerprint background check, a volunteer must complete a "ten-print" fingerprint card in which all ten fingers are inked and rolled onto a special fingerprint card. These fingerprints are then compared with the digitized fingerprints and criminal records in the FBI's master criminal record database (called IAFIS), the National Crime Information Center (NCIC), and the National Sex Offender Registry. Since the system is automated, the criminal background checks can be done very quickly.

IAFIS contains criminal records on over 45 million individuals, with 5,000 to 7,000 new individuals being added every day (after they are arrested for the first time). All federal crimes are included in IAFIS, plus the large majority of non-federal crimes, which are maintained by the states. IAFIS contains both arrest and conviction records. It is the most complete criminal history database in the country, and is continuously updated to ensure data integrity and quality. NCIC includes a Wanted Persons File with 1.2 million records, and the National Sex Offender Registry includes over 300,000 offenders.

B. Weaknesses in the Current System

Even so, there are some weaknesses in the system. States submit the records of crimes committed in their jurisdictions to the FBI. However, the FBI does not require states to submit low-level misdemeanors (i.e. bouncing a check, a DUI that does not result in injury or property damage, etc.) to the FBI master criminal database. This means that some low-level crimes may not be found by doing just an FBI criminal background check. Approximately 70-90% of all state records are in the FBI database. In addition, the FBI's data can lag behind that of the states, since some states first update their own databases before submitting their criminal record data to the FBI.

Another weakness is that approximately 50% of the records in IAFIS do not contain a "disposition". A disposition tells you the result of an arrest, such as: the prosecutor dropped all charges, the individual was found not guilty, the individual was convicted and sentenced to jail time, etc. Without a disposition, you know only that the individual was arrested but not whether that arrest resulted in a

conviction. In the PROTECTScreen pilot program, arrests without a disposition will be examined in addition to convictions.

C. Benefits of the FBI Background Check

Even given these limitations, the FBI criminal background check is by far the most complete background check available. There is simply no single database that contains all criminal record data. To access every criminal record available, an organization would have to require a volunteer submit to 51 fingerprint cards to each state and the FBI, or perform county courthouse checks in every county in the nation. These are simply not feasible options.

The FBI criminal background check is the same type of background check or better than the ones federal law requires of hazardous cargo drivers, nuclear power plant operators, airline employees, and other individuals who have the potential to endanger national security if not properly screened.

By using PROTECTScreen, camps in many states will be able to access nationwide criminal records for the first time. Without access to the FBI background check, organizations would not know that a potential volunteer could have a criminal record in another state.

Another important benefit of the FBI background check is that it is fingerprint-based. Because no two individuals have the same fingerprints, a fingerprint background check is much more reliable than a name-based check in positively identifying an individual. One percent of the individuals in the FBI criminal database have over 100 aliases associated with their criminal record. An FBI check is the only fingerprint-based national check available.

Commercial background screening companies generally only have access to conviction and parole records, since their criminal background checks must be performed in compliance with employment laws. Volunteer background checks are not subject to the same restrictions. Plus, since some states have closed criminal records, a commercial provider may only have access to limited criminal records in those states.

D. Other Background Check Options

Depending on the level of risk in your program and what types of criminal records you wish to access, you may wish to do other types of checks to supplement the FBI fingerprint background check. Some of these options may not be available in your state, depending on state laws and regulations. (To find out about your state, visit: www.ACAcamps.org/publicpolicy/regulations.) Some possible options include:

- A state background check, to access any low-level criminal offenses that are not in the FBI database.
- A state driver's license check to catch any tickets or citations for poor driving. Tickets and citations may not be in the FBI database unless the incident resulted in criminal charges (such as bodily injury or property damage.)

- A check of your state’s abuse registry, as often, abuse complaints do not result in criminal charges, and would not be in a criminal database.
- Although a sex offender check is not necessary as any relevant crimes will be pulled by the FBI background check, you may wish to conduct such a check if your state makes the information readily available.

E. Cost of the Pilot for a Camp

The fee for the PROTECTScreen FBI background check is \$18 per volunteer. This includes the cost of comparing the volunteer’s fingerprint against the FBI’s criminal history database and the processing fee for converting the fingerprint into digital form. This \$18 fee does not include any costs that you may incur in obtaining fingerprints from your volunteers. (Section III G of this manual provides tips on obtaining fingerprints.)

F. Response Time – Volunteer Background Check

The current response time for a background check is 5-7 business days, from the time we receive your fingerprint card in the mail. It does not include the time needed for your organization to fingerprint the volunteer and mail the fingerprint card to ACA. During these 5-7 days, the fingerprints are scanned into digital form, the FBI will search its criminal database for any criminal records associated with that fingerprint, and NCMEC will make a fitness determination.

G. Getting Volunteers Fingerprinted

There are several possible ways to have fingerprints taken. All of these options may not be available in your community. Make sure that you investigate your options before you screen volunteers, so that you can instruct volunteers on how to obtain fingerprints. Notify volunteers about any fingerprinting fees, and any limitations in times or dates at your fingerprinting location. Try to provide your volunteers with as many options as possible. The more dates, times, and locations available to the volunteer, the more likely the volunteer is to get the fingerprint taken quickly.

- Local law enforcement departments will do the traditional “ink” fingerprinting. They may have designated hours and days during which civil fingerprints can be taken – be sure to call ahead. They may also charge a fee, generally around \$3-5 per fingerprint card, but possibly more.
- In some jurisdictions around the country, you may have access to a “Livescan” machine at your local police department, a government agency, or other location. Livescan machines scan and digitize fingerprint. However, you will need to verify that the Livescan machine has a printer attached to it. Because of the limitations of the PROTECT Act, the pilot cannot accept electronically-submitted fingerprints so you will have to ask that the fingerprints be printed out onto your PROTECT Act fingerprint card. (These cards have specially imprinted numbers on them that indicate to the FBI that the fingerprint is part of the PROTECT Act.)
- Depending on your jurisdiction, you may be able to hire an off-duty local law enforcement official to do volunteer fingerprinting for you during certain hours that are more convenient for your

volunteers. If you are having a volunteer recruitment session or orientation when many volunteers will be present, this may be a worthwhile option. Or, perhaps one of your current volunteers is a law enforcement official who would do fingerprinting for you.

- You should also check with any of your partner organizations. Some companies or schools may have a human resources professional who knows how to fingerprint individuals. If so, see if the school or company would be willing to help your program by fingerprinting your volunteers.

H. How the Fitness Determination is Made

The pilot program allows participating organizations to submit fingerprints of their volunteers (volunteers only – not paid staff – eventually – the pilot may be expanded to include staff) to the FBI. The FBI sends the criminal records report to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC). NCMEC reviews the records and makes a determination of whether the volunteer meets the criteria to serve as a volunteer. These criteria were developed by the three original participating organizations, and are accepted by any new participants in the pilot. The camp then receives a determination from NCMEC based on those criteria. The determination will be given in one of the following three formats:

- The volunteer meets the criteria.
- The volunteer may not meet the criteria.
- The volunteer does not meet the criteria.

I. The Criterion Offenses

Consistent with the provisions of the PROTECT Act, the original participants in the pilot determined that convictions for the five following crimes will result in a determination that a volunteer “does not meet” the criteria to serve as a volunteer:

- Any felony conviction (and any crime punishable by confinement greater than 1 year).
- Any lesser crime using force or threat of force against a person.
- Any lesser crime in which sexual relations is an element, including “victimless” crimes of a sexual nature.
- Any lesser crime involving controlled substances (not paraphernalia or alcohol).
- Any lesser crime involving cruelty to animals.

A conviction of any of these categories automatically gives the volunteer a determination of “does not meet the criteria”. These categories are defined as criterion offenses. If the individual is a sex offender registrant, they will automatically be given the determination of “does not meet the criteria.”

A volunteer having an arrest of one or more of the criterion offenses with no disposition noted in the criminal history will be assigned the determination of “may not meet the criteria.” Additionally, any charge involving children resulting in a disposition favorable to the volunteer nonetheless will result in a determination of “may not meet the criteria.”

If a volunteer has no criminal history or the crime in which the volunteer was arrested or convicted for is not a criterion offense, or the crime in which the volunteer was charged was a criterion offense and the volunteer was found not guilty, or the case was dismissed (except as noted in the above paragraph) will receive a determination of "meets the criteria."

Once a camp receives the determination on one of their volunteers, if a volunteer wants to appeal the determination, there is a process for doing so. (See Section VF of this manual.)

J. PROTECT Act Pilot Effectiveness

As of July 2006, over 15,000 background checks had been processed as part of the PROTECT Act pilot. The results show that an FBI criminal background check is indeed a critical part of volunteer screening.

Approximately 6.5% of potential volunteers screened through the pilot had criminal records of concern, resulting in a "may not meet the criteria" or "does not meet the criteria" fitness determination. In addition, even though volunteers knew a background check was being performed, over half (53.4%) of those with criminal records indicated on their application form that they did NOT have a criminal record. Many of the crimes found were alarming and clearly could have resulted in a tragic situation if a background check was not done:

- Applicant was found guilty twice of sexual abuse in the first degree; was originally charged with sodomy deviate intercourse with a person under age and endangering the welfare of a child.
- Applicant, at age 32, was charged with sexual contact with a child under the age of 16.
- Applicant was charged with 31 counts, including multiple rapes and assaults, indecent liberties, eluding and prostitution.
- Applicant was convicted of battery twice and charged with possession of photo sex performance of a child.
- Applicant was charged with willful cruelty to child with possible injury/death.

The findings from the pilot have also demonstrated the importance of performing a nationwide background check. Of the individuals with criminal records, 28% of them had a criminal record in a state other than where they were applying to volunteer. If the local organization had just performed a state background check, these criminal records would not have been found:

- Applicant was found guilty on charges of aggravated criminal sexual assault and domestic battery. Crime committed in Illinois; applying to volunteer in Florida.
- Applicant was found guilty of disorderly conduct with the original charge of promoting/possession obscene material. Applicant also had three drug offenses, including possession of cocaine. Crimes committed in New York, New Jersey and Missouri; applying to volunteer in Missouri.
- Applicant was convicted of multiple crimes including attempted rape and sexual battery. Applicant was further charged with failing to change address as a sex offender. Crimes committed in California, Nevada, and Wisconsin; applying to volunteer in Nevada.
- Applicant was charged with oral copulation without force, rape by force, and oral copulation by force with the victim under 14 years of age and more than 10 years younger than defendant. Crime committed in California; applying to volunteer in Oregon.

- Applicant was convicted of murder in the second degree and sentenced to 24 years in prison. Applicant had criminal records in Alabama, Pennsylvania, New York and Louisiana; applying to volunteer in Alabama.

The findings from the pilot also clearly support the use of fingerprints, instead of just using a name and other personal indicators, when performing the background check. Of the individuals with criminal records, 8.5% of them provided a different name on their application than what appeared on the criminal record, and 6% of these individuals supplied a different date of birth. A name-based search may not have caught these criminal records. Even when correct information is supplied by the volunteer, crimes committed under other names can only be found through a fingerprint search:

- Applicant was convicted of injury to a child; applicant is also on record as giving a false name to police.
- Applicant was convicted on multiple charges of prostitution; had numerous alias names.

[K. What Happens When the Pilot Ends?](#)

The end of the pilot is scheduled for June 2008. As part of the pilot program, the FBI is required to submit to Congress reports on the pilot. These studies will analyze the data collected during the pilot and other information gathered about the criminal history system. They will examine the current procedures, the pilot's various procedures, fees, response times, system capacity, fitness determination criteria, and more. They will also compare the quality and accuracy of criminal history checks that can be accessed through the states, from the FBI directly, and some private background check services. All of this is meant to help Congress and the FBI devise an effective, permanent background check system for all volunteer organizations that work with youth, the elderly, or individuals with disabilities.

This data and these reports will be extremely valuable as we continue our advocacy work with Congress and the FBI for an accessible, affordable, and reliable criminal background check process.





[L. Determining if PROTECTScreen Is Right For Your Camp](#)


PROTECTScreen may not be right for every camp. Each camp should consider all of the information included in this manual before deciding whether or not to participate in PROTECTScreen.


- Your state may have laws or regulations requiring you to perform specific types of background checks. Refer to the state regulations database for details about your state (www.ACAcamps.org/publicpolicy/regulations).
- Your state may already subsidize the cost of the FBI background check so that it is less expensive than the pilot's \$18 charge. One example is Oregon, where FBI checks are available at no cost to some nonprofit 501(c)3 organizations.
- The PROTECTScreen pilot program is temporary, scheduled to end in June 2008. We are hopeful that it will be extended, but there is no guarantee that will happen

IV. STEP BY STEP PROCEDURES FOR SUBMITTING FINGERPRINTS

The PROTECTScreen Pilot is open to all ACA-Accredited camps.

-  **STEP 1:** Sign up your camp as a participant in the PROTECTScreen Pilot. (See Appendix B for the application.)
-  **STEP 2:** ACA will receive and process your application. You will be notified that your camp has been added to the pilot and you will be provided with a unique user name and password to access the online tools.
-  **STEP 3:** You will receive a box of special fingerprint cards identified by the FBI as PROTECTScreen fingerprint cards. (On your application, you will indicate the number of cards you wish to receive in an initial shipment.)
-  **STEP 4:** Collect the items you will need to obtain a fingerprint card from your camp volunteer:


 - The Volunteer Notice and Application Form (print and copy from Appendix C or Manuals and Forms section of the PROTECTScreen Web site);
 - A blank PROTECT Act fingerprint card (ACA will mail these to you);
 - Internet access and your PROTECTScreen log-on name and password;
 - Instructions for your volunteer on how to be fingerprinted (see section III G); and
 - An envelope large enough to hold the fingerprint card without being folded.
-  **STEP 5:** Get Your Volunteer's Permission

 - You should always explain your camp's entire screening process to a prospective volunteer.
 - Make sure the volunteer knows the various screening tools – including the criminal background check – your camp requires and the steps that must be taken to complete each of them.
 - Explain that all new volunteers must be fingerprinted and must fill out an application so that you can request the criminal background check.
 - Provide him or her with the Volunteer Notice and Application Form (see Appendix B for a copy of the notice and form). This notice explains the purpose of the background check, the categories of crimes to be examined, and the volunteer's right to appeal.
-  **STEP 6:** Assign a unique Volunteer ID number to the volunteer. This is called the OCA number.

 - The OCA number follows a standard format. It is 13 digits and has three elements:
 - The first seven digits are your camp's ACA membership number. Add leading zeros if your camp's number is less than 7 digits.
 - The middle is reserved for the initials "AC". This indicates to the FBI that the camp participating is an ACA-Accredited camp.
 - The last part of the OCA number is a four digit number – assigned by you – and sequential. That is, the first volunteer you fingerprint will be "0001" and so forth.

- As an example, the OCA number for Camp #4343, and its first volunteer to be fingerprinted would be: [0004343AC0001](#)
- **STEP 7:** Write the volunteer's OCA number on a fingerprint card and on the volunteer's application form. Complete the rest of the fingerprint card with your camp's information.
- **STEP 8:** Make a photocopy of the volunteer's official government ID (driver's license, passport, etc.) to verify their name. Write the type of ID you photocopied in the box in the upper right-hand corner of the volunteer's application, on the "Type of Government Official ID Examined".
- **STEP 9:** Present the volunteer with:
 - Volunteer Notice and Application Form (with the Volunteer ID and Government ID lines already completed). The volunteer must complete and sign the form to authorize the background check. The volunteer is asked to disclose any crimes they may have been arrested for or convicted of.
 - The fingerprint card, with the Volunteer ID entered in the OCA box.
 - Instructions on where the volunteer can go to be fingerprinted (see Section III G for more information on where to get fingerprints.)
- **STEP 10:** Have the volunteer fill out the rest of the Fingerprint Card. The fields listed below are required for the background check to be completed:
 - Volunteer name – last name, first name, middle name – in the NAME box at the top
 - Volunteer's maiden name or any other names used in the AKA box.
 - Volunteer ID in the OCA box (should have been completed in step 2a above)
 - Camp's name and address in the Employer Name and Address box.
 - Volunteer's Address in the Address of Person Fingerprinted box.
 - Volunteer's Social Security Number in SOC box.
 - Volunteer's personal information (all of these must be completed):
 - DOB – date of birth, day, month, and year
 - SEX – M(ale) or F(emale)
 - RACE – B(lack); W(hite); A(sian/Pacific Islander); N(ative American)
 - HEIGHT – in feet and inches
 - WEIGHT – an estimate in pounds
 - EYES – eye color
 - HAIR – hair color
 - POB – place of birth (state and country)
 - Leave blank the CTZ, FBI, and both MNU fields.
- **STEP 11:** Ask the volunteer to get fingerprinted on the completed card(s). At the time of fingerprinting, the volunteer should sign in the Signature of Person Fingerprinted box.

The individual taking the fingerprints should complete the Date and Signature of Fingerprinting Official boxes.

-  **STEP 12:** When the volunteer has returned the completed application and fingerprint card to you, take a look at the application.
- Make sure it is completely filled out and signed. The signature authorizes the background check, so the signature must be present. ACA cannot perform the check without it.
 - If the volunteer has disclosed a criminal record on their application, you should decide whether or not to proceed with the criminal record check.
 - If the crime is significant to you, you may decide to disqualify them without requesting the fingerprint check.
 - If the crime or crimes are minor to you and you would still consider using the volunteer, you should continue with the criminal record check. After receiving a fitness determination at the end of the process, your volunteer can request that their full criminal record be sent to you. This will help you confirm that the crimes they disclosed are the only ones on their record.
 - Make a copy of the completed application for ACA, and keep the original for your records. Make sure your files are kept in a secure location and out of sight of other individuals.

 **STEP 13:** Mail to ACA the following items:

- The copy of the completed volunteer application;
- The copy of the volunteer's photo ID;
- The completed fingerprint card; and
- The payment (using the submission form found in Appendix F)
 - The fee is \$18 for each volunteer that is being submitted. You may submit prints at any time – that is, you do not have to wait to submit a group of prints.
 - We accept the following forms of payment:
 - A check from your camp's bank account. NOTE: We cannot accept personal checks (i.e. from your personal bank account or a volunteer's personal bank account);
 - Cashier's or certified check;
 - Money order; or
 - Credit Card – Visa, Discover or MasterCard only.

- You may pay for multiple background checks with one payment (i.e., a check for \$180 to cover 10 volunteers).
 - You may submit fingerprints on additional volunteers at any time throughout the year.
 - We cannot accept a purchase order or bill you after the fact – you must provide payment before we can proceed with a background check.
 - For checks or money orders, make payments out to **American Camp Association**.
 - If your payment is returned for insufficient funds, ACA will suspend your ability to submit new volunteer background checks until you make restitution for the amount owed.
- If you are sending multiple background checks in at one time, please paperclip together each volunteer's application, photo ID, and fingerprint card. **Do not use staples or the fingerprint card may not be usable.** (You may submit fingerprints on additional volunteers at any time throughout the year.)
 - Put all items into an envelope. The envelope must be large enough to hold the fingerprint card without being folded. Folding can degrade the quality of the fingerprint, possibly resulting in a rejection for poor quality.
 - Mail to:

ACA PROTECTScreen
5000 N State Road 67
Martinsville, IN 46151

You must mail using a traceable method (e.g., certified mail, UPS, FedEx, etc.)

- ✚ **STEP 14:** ACA will contact you when your mailing has been received. You will be provided information on how to check to the progress of each fingerprint online – including a username and password.

[Using the PROTECTScreen Web Site to Track Progress](#)

We have created a volunteer tracking system so that you are always informed about where your volunteer's fingerprint check is in the process. You can view the current status of all volunteers currently in the pilot program system by accessing your password-protected area of:

- www.ProtectScreen.org

Simply visit the PROTECTScreen Web site, log in. Each of your volunteers will be listed here, by name and Volunteer ID. ACA will log in completion dates for various steps in a volunteer's background check. Please always check this report before contacting ACA to inquire about the status of a fingerprint check request.

V. PROCESSING THE CRIMINAL HISTORY

Each of your PROTECTScreen fingerprint background check requests pass through several steps before the results can be made available to you. Three different organizations – ACA, the FBI, and NCMEC – have a role to play. This entire process takes just 5-7 business days.

[A. Scanning and Submitting Fingerprints](#)

Maintaining the confidentiality of the fingerprint cards you submit to ACA is assured through ACA's internal processing operating procedures. Camps and their volunteers can be assured that the data submitted on the form will remain confidential and available only to staff administering the pilot program.

Once ACA receives your envelope containing the fingerprint card(s), we will enter the volunteer's information into our web site – keyed on the OCA number you have assigned. If your envelope is missing any one of the necessary items – volunteer application, fingerprint card, or payment – we will notify you. You will need to submit the missing item before the background check can proceed. If the packet is complete, we will update your volunteer's status on the PROTECTScreen Web site to show that we have received the fingerprint request.

ACA will then submit your fingerprint card to NCMEC to scan the paper fingerprint card into digital format and submit the fingerprints electronically to the FBI. As soon as we submit the fingerprints to NCMEC, we update the volunteer's status on the ACA Web site.

[B. Performing the Criminal Record Check](#)

Once the FBI receives the PROTECTScreen fingerprint submission, they run the fingerprints through their master criminal file database (called IAFIS) in search of a match. All criminal records are matched using the fingerprints, not the individual's name. Matching based on fingerprints rather than a name ensures that the proper criminal record will be found, even if the individual is using a false name.

If an individual's fingerprints match something in IAFIS, all criminal records associated with those fingerprints will be pulled. Fingerprint examiners verify that the automated system has matched the correct fingerprints. This makes certain that no one will be falsely identified as having a criminal record.

Once verification is complete, the entire criminal history on the matching individual will be forwarded to NCMEC. If no matching fingerprints are found in IAFIS, the FBI will notify NCMEC that no criminal record was found. The FBI does not retain any of the fingerprints submitted during the pilot program.

[C. Making the Fitness Determination](#)

Once NCMEC receives a PROTECTScreen transmission from the FBI, their criminal history examiners will carefully compare the individual's criminal record against the criterion.

The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children will carefully review an individual's criminal history record against the criterion offenses list below to determine if the criminal history record renders him or her unfit to provide care to children.

- Any felony (any crime punishable by confinement greater than one year)
- Any lesser crime involving force or threat of force against a person
- Any lesser crime in which sexual relations, including victimless crimes of a sexual nature is an element
- Any lesser crime involving controlled substances (not paraphernalia or alcohol)
- Any lesser crime involving cruelty to animals

Based on the results of the criminal background check, NCMEC will make a determination whether the individual:

Meets the criteria and is considered not prohibited from volunteering by reason of a criminal record.

May not meet the criteria because the applicant's record is unclear regarding an arrest and/or disposition for a possible criteria offense.

Does not meet the criteria and is considered prohibited from volunteering by reason of a criminal record.

Criminal histories can be difficult to interpret, as the names and sentences for crimes vary from state to state. Two examiners separately determine which designation should be assigned to ensure accuracy. If the FBI found no criminal record, the examiners will assign a "meets the criteria" designation.

The fitness determination made by the NCMEC should be only one part of an organization's screening process. The absence of a criminal history record, in and of itself, does not indicate that a volunteer should be considered acceptable by the organization. Neither NCMEC nor ACA are liable for any screening decisions that a camp makes about a volunteer's status based on information obtained in the PROTECTScreen pilot.

[D. Receiving the Fitness Determination](#)

NCMEC will e-mail the fitness determination to ACA. ACA will contact you to let you know that the fitness determination is available. You will login and download the fitness determination from the web site. (It will be in the form of a .pdf letter from NCMEC). You should print and save the fitness determination in a secure location.

Please note that the fitness determination letter also includes an IAFIS Control Number, which is a unique FBI tracking number that will be used if your volunteer wishes to file an appeal or request the full criminal record.

E. Error Resolution

The FBI estimates that approximately 10% of fingerprints submitted in the pilot program may be rejected for poor quality. If the fingerprint card is smudged or the ridge pattern of the fingerprints cannot be read, the FBI is unable to accurately match it to fingerprints in their system. You should examine the fingerprint card before sending it to ACA to see if the prints are clear.

First Fingerprint Rejection

If the fingerprint card is not legible, the FBI will notify NCMEC – who will notify ACA – that the fingerprint card you submitted has been rejected for poor quality. We will send you a notification e-mail, and update the Volunteer Status report on the PROTECTScreen Web site (text noting that the fingerprint was rejected will appear under the volunteer's ID.) You are allowed to submit a second fingerprint at no additional charge; however, you are only allowed that second attempt.

Have your volunteer complete a new fingerprint card, using the existing Volunteer ID, just as you did when you submitted the first fingerprint. Ask your volunteer to be fingerprinted a second time. If possible, you may wish to have a different individual take the fingerprints to avoid the same problem and get two sets of fingerprints taken. When mailing the second fingerprint to ACA, do not include the volunteer application or payment. Please write clearly on the front of the envelope "RE-SUBMISSION" so we can process it immediately.

Second Fingerprint Rejection

We will promptly submit your second attempt. If this fingerprint is of acceptable quality, your fingerprint check will proceed as normal. If, however, your volunteer's second fingerprint is also rejected for poor quality, there are two possible next steps:

If your volunteer has had two fingerprint cards rejected for poor quality, NCMEC and ACA will automatically request that the FBI perform a name-based check.

The FBI uses the individual's name, Social Security number, and other identifying information on the fingerprint card to search through their criminal records. If a possible candidate is found, the candidate's fingerprints will be checked against the fingerprints you submitted in the first two attempts to verify whether or not the criminal records belong to your volunteer. Name-based checks are less reliable, but for individuals who cannot be easily fingerprinted, it may be your only choice. Any criminal records found are used to make the fitness determination, just like any other background check. The fitness determination will have a notation that it was based on a name-based check.

Because a name-based search is not automated, it takes approximately 1-3 weeks to get results. There is no additional charge for this since it's included in the original \$18 fee you paid.

In very rare cases, the FBI may not be able to perform a name-based search. This occurs only when the name search returns multiple possible candidates, and the fingerprints are of such poor quality that the FBI is unable to use them to verify whether or not the criminal records belong to your volunteer.

Should this happen, you will receive notification that the fingerprint check has been terminated. You will not receive a fitness determination on the individual, nor will you receive a refund. If you wish to

try again, you would need to begin the process anew, including obtaining a new Volunteer ID and submitting a new volunteer application, fingerprint card, and \$18 payment.

[F. Filing an Appeal or Requesting the Full Criminal Record – Your Volunteer’s Rights and Options](#)

Once you have retrieved the fitness determination, your volunteer has the right to obtain a copy of their criminal record and challenge its accuracy or completeness. This process is called an appeal. If your volunteer received a “may not meet the criteria” or “does not meet the criteria” designation, you can ask your volunteer to request that the FBI mail a full copy of their criminal record to you. If you are considering utilizing a volunteer with a criminal record, we strongly recommend that you first obtain a copy of their full criminal history using these procedures.

Both the appeal and the request for the full criminal record must be completed by your volunteer. Both options are included on the same form, which is available for printing in Appendix E. There is no fee for either of these requests. Please note that criminal records can be difficult to interpret.

Appeal

Any time a criminal background check is performed, the person being checked has the right to view the criminal record that resulted. They can then challenge the report’s accuracy and completeness.

If your volunteer wishes to file an appeal, provide them with the Request for Release of Criminal History Information (Appendix E). You will need to fill out two lines of the form: put the Volunteer ID on the Originating Case Agency (OCA) Number line, and complete the IAFIS Control Number line with the number provided on the fitness determination letter. Also fill in your organization’s name, address, and contact person. The volunteer should complete the rest of the form, check box #2, and have the form notarized. The notarized form must then be mailed to ACA at the address provided on the form.

ACA will forward the form to the FBI. They will use the control number and Volunteer ID to pull the criminal records that matched that individual’s fingerprints, and will mail them directly to the volunteer. The volunteer can then work with the FBI and the jurisdiction where the offense took place to have the criminal record corrected if it is indeed inaccurate.

If your prospective volunteer asserts that the criminal record is inaccurate, we recommend that you wait until the volunteer has had the record corrected and then re-run the criminal background check. We also strongly recommend that you do not accept the criminal record printout from the volunteer. The FBI returns the records to the volunteer on a plain sheet of paper without any watermarks or seals that would verify its legitimacy. Instead, ask the volunteer to request that the FBI mail the criminal records directly to you (see below).

Request for Release of Criminal History Information

Depending on your program’s screening procedures, and what you learned in the rest of the screening process, there may be instances in which you consider approving a volunteer who received a negative fitness determination. A few examples follow.

- Volunteer A disclosed a long-ago conviction and says they have never committed any other crime.

- Volunteer B received “may not meet the criteria”. The volunteer explains that they were falsely arrested for a crime, and that all charges were dropped.
- Your camp works with juvenile offenders and some of your best volunteers have been in trouble with the law in the past but have since turned their lives around. Volunteer C appears to be in that category.

In all of these cases, you need a way to confirm the volunteer’s explanation of their criminal history before making your final decision. You need to verify that Volunteer A truly does have a clean record except for one “youthful indiscretion”. You need to know where Volunteer B’s false arrest took place so you can contact an official in that jurisdiction to find out more information. You need to know the details of Volunteer C’s criminal record to make sure they did not commit a serious offense. In other words, you need the volunteer’s full criminal record.

If your volunteer agrees to have their full criminal record released to you, provide them with the Request for Release of Criminal History Information (Appendix E). You should fill out two lines of the form: put the Volunteer ID on the Originating Case Agency (OCA) Number line, and complete the IAFIS Control Number line with the number provided on the fitness determination letter. Also fill in your camp’s name, address, and contact person. The volunteer will need to complete the rest of the form, check box #1, and have the form notarized. The notarized form must then be mailed to ACA at the address provided on the form.

ACA will forward the request to the FBI. They will use the control number and Volunteer ID to pull the criminal records that matched that individual’s fingerprint, and will mail them directly to your organization. Having the full criminal record should help you make a more informed decision.

[G. Making the Final Decision on a Volunteer](#)

Receiving a “meets the criteria” designation does not mean a volunteer will make a good volunteer – it simply means their criminal record was clear of any criterion offense. The criminal background check results are only one part of what should enter into your decision. You need to consider all other factors of your screening process when deciding whether to use a prospective volunteer.

Make sure that you carefully document the reasons for your decision, and that your reasoning conforms with your organization’s written screening policies and guidelines. Keep your documentation in the volunteer’s confidential files along with the results of the criminal background check and your other screening procedures. If you opt to use a volunteer with a criminal record without a logical, documented reason, you could increase your camp’s liability.

You must always keep the fitness determination and any criminal records in a private and secure location. All of the information garnered through the criminal background check must be kept absolutely confidential. Only staff members directly involved in the volunteer screening process should have access to this information. It is solely for your camp’s use. You may never, for any reason, share the information with anyone else outside of your camp’s authorized staff. If you violate this

confidentiality, you could be liable for defamation of character or even prosecuted for violating the privacy of sensitive criminal history information.

A camp ultimately bears full responsibility for the screening of volunteers and the placement of volunteers in the most suitable roles. Neither NCMEC nor ACA is in any way liable for any screening decisions that anyone in the camp makes about a volunteer's status based on information obtained in the PROTECTScreen pilot.

APPENDIX A GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ACA	American Camp Association
CLEARED	(Cleared of a crime.) When an individual's arrest does not result in a conviction. Charges against the individual may have been dropped, or the individual may have been found not guilty
CRITERION OFFENSE	In the PROTECTScreen pilot, an individual's criminal record will be examined for convictions or arrests that fall into several categories of criminal offenses, which might indicate that an individual could endanger a child's welfare. A conviction or arrest that falls into one or more of these categories is called a criterion offense
DISPOSITION	This is the outcome of an arrest. There are many possibilities for outcomes including: conviction, a not guilty verdict, or the dropping of charges.
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigations
FITNESS DETERMINATION	In the PROTECTScreen pilot, the camp receives one of three determinations rather than the individual's full criminal record. The determinations are: Meets the criteria Does not meet the criteria May not meet the criteria
NCMEC	National Center for Missing and Exploited Children

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APPENDIX B: Camp Application for Inclusion in the PROTECTScreen Pilot

All ACA-Accredited Camps are eligible to participate in the PROTECT Act’s PROTECTScreen Pilot Program. The program allows all participants access to the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s (FBI) criminal history records and provides determinations of a potential volunteer’s fitness to serve at your camp. Prior to applying for inclusion in the program, please read and understand the details of the program, your responsibilities, and the rights of those to be fingerprinted. All details of the program can be found in the [ACA PROTECTScreen Manual](#).

Camp Information:

Camp Name: _____

ACA Camp Number: _____

State where the camp is physically located: _____

State where the business office of the camp is located (if different): _____

Camp Contact Information:

(This is the person who is coordinating your background checks, and will receive the determinations.)

Camp Contact Name: _____

Contact Phone Number: _____

Contact Email: _____

Contact Mailing Address (No PO Boxes): _____

Contact’s Position at the Camp: _____

Background Check Information:

Approximate Number of Volunteers working at your camp each year: _____
 Estimated number of background checks on volunteers you will request over the next 12 months through the PROTECTScreen Program: _____

Approximate Number of Paid Staff working at your camp each year: _____

Please detail the staff screening methods currently in place at your camp, including any other types of background checks you perform:

Certifications: By requesting acceptance into the PROTECTScreen Program, you certify that:

- I understand that my camp ultimately bears the full responsibility of screening and placement of volunteers. ACA, NCMEC, and the FBI is in no way liable for any screening decisions made by my camp.
- I understand that participation in the PROTECTScreen Program is only one element of a camp’s volunteer screening program. As an ACA-Accredited Camp, we have a multi-faceted screening program.
- I understand that the PROTECTScreen Program is only available for camp volunteers and that paid camp staff are expressly excluded.
- I understand that, based on criminal history record information held by the FBI, a determination will be rendered exclusively by NCMEC as to a volunteer’s fitness to serve in a volunteer capacity. ACA acts only as the conduit for the fitness determination from NCMEC to the camp. Neither NCMEC, the FBI, nor ACA are liable for any screening decisions your camp makes about a volunteer’s status based on information obtained through the PROTECTScreen Program.
- I understand that applicants that receive a determination other than “meets the criteria” have the right to request a copy of their criminal record from the FBI and challenge the accuracy and completeness of the criminal history record information. I understand that the challenge is between the applicant and the FBI and the camp has no responsibility in the matter.
- I understand that my camp is in no way required to accept any volunteer based on the favorable results of this determination pursuant to the PROTECT Act.
- That I, and my camp understand and accept the terms contained within the ACA PROTECTScreen Handbook, including any disclaimers of liability on the part of ACA, NCMEC and the FBI.

DATE

SIGNATURE

PRINTED NAME

For ACA Use Only:	
Date Received: _____	Accreditation Valid: _____
OCA Assignment: _____	Approval: _____

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APPENDIX C: Notice for Prospective Camp Volunteers Pursuant to the PROTECT Act – PROTECTScreen Pilot

To the potential volunteer regarding fingerprinting and the PROTECT Act:

The PROTECT Act (Public Law 108-21) was signed into law by the US Congress in 2003. A portion of the law authorized a pilot program that would allow selected youth-serving organizations access to the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) criminal history database through fingerprinting of prospective volunteers. The pilot contained a provision for the development of criteria that would be used to determine a volunteer's fitness to serve in a volunteer role in a youth-serving organization. The American Camp Association (ACA) was accepted into this pilot in July 2006. For the American Camp Association (ACA), this pilot is named "PROTECTScreen".

Pursuant to the PROTECT Act, the ACA-Accredited Camp to which you have applied to serve as a volunteer may request an FBI fingerprint background check, and determination of your fitness to serve as a volunteer. This check will access criminal history record information held by the FBI and a determination of your fitness to serve will be rendered by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC). The determination rendered by NCMEC will be communicated to the camp through ACA. Prior to and after the completion of the background check, the camp may choose to deny your services as a volunteer and access to children in their programs.

Consistent with the provisions of the PROTECT Act, NCMEC and the participating youth-serving organizations have established criteria that NCMEC will use in examining criminal histories and making fitness determinations. The five categories of "criterion offenses" that will be examined are:

- Any felony conviction (and any crime punishable by confinement greater than 1 year).
- Any lesser crime using force or threat of force against a person.
- Any lesser crime in which sexual relations is an element, including "victimless" crimes of a sexual nature.
- Any lesser crime involving controlled substances (not paraphernalia or alcohol).
- Any lesser crime involving cruelty to animals.

The determination will be given in one of the following three formats:

- The volunteer meets the criteria.
- The volunteer may not meet the criteria.
- The volunteer does not meet the criteria.

A conviction of any of these categories automatically gives the volunteer a determination of "does not meet the criteria". If the individual is a sex offender registrant, they will automatically be given the determination of "does not meet the criteria" and is prohibited from volunteering by reason of a criminal record.

A volunteer having an arrest of one or more of the criterion offenses with no disposition noted in the criminal history will be assigned the determination of "may not meet the criteria." Additionally, any charge involving children resulting in a disposition favorable to the volunteer nonetheless will result in a determination of "may not meet the criteria."

If a volunteer has no criminal history or the crime in which the volunteer was arrested or convicted for is not a criterion offense, or the crime in which the volunteer was charged was a criterion offense and the volunteer was

found not guilty, or the case was dismissed (except as noted in the above paragraph) will receive a determination of “meets the criteria” and is considered not prohibited from volunteering by reason of a criminal record.

The fitness determination is only one part of the camp’s volunteer screening process, and the absence of a criminal record does not ensure that a volunteer will be considered acceptable by the organization. All ACA-Accredited camps must follow a multi-faceted staff and volunteer screening process. You may ask the camp about their screening processes.

Under the PROTECT Act, to obtain an FBI criminal background check, you must provide the camp with:

1. A set of fingerprints that are rolled or printed on the fingerprint card supplied by the FBI to the camp. (If your fingerprints are scanned electronically, they must be printed onto the fingerprint card by the facility performing the electronic scan.)
2. Complete information required on the FBI-provided fingerprint card including: name, address, date of birth, gender, race, height, weight, eye color, hair color, place of birth.
3. A photocopy of an official government ID – such as a driver’s license or passport.
4. A signed Volunteer Approval Form that authorizes your consent to the FBI fingerprint background check and determination for fitness as a volunteer by NCMEC (this form will be provided to you by the camp).
5. A statement of whether you have a criminal record, and if so, the details of such record (this statement will appear on the Volunteer Approval Form provided to you by the camp).

Once the determination is complete, you have the right to request a copy of your criminal record from the FBI and challenge the accuracy and completeness of the criminal history record information. Such challenge must be made using the appeal form that is available from the camp. If you so choose, you may also use the same form to request that your full criminal history be sent directly to the camp for further discussion of the particulars of your criminal record.

By signing the “Camp Volunteer Approval for FBI Criminal Background Check” Form, you authorize:

1. The camp to obtain a complete set of your fingerprints and descriptive data found on the fingerprint card that is provided to the camp pursuant to the PROTECT Act.
2. The camp to send the fingerprint card, copy of your signed approval form, and photocopy of your government ID to the American Camp Association, Inc. pursuant to the PROTECT Act.
3. The American Camp Association, Inc to forward your fingerprint card to the FBI through NCMEC.
4. The FBI to perform a criminal background check and send your criminal history to NCMEC.
5. NCMEC to examine your criminal history, make a fitness determination, and transmit the determination to the camp through the American Camp Association, Inc.

By signing the “Camp Volunteer Approval for FBI Criminal Background Check” form, you indicate your understanding that:

1. A determination of my fitness to serve as a volunteer based on the criterion offenses will be rendered by NCMEC. ACA acts only as the conduit for fitness determinations from NCMEC to the camp.
2. After the determination, I may request a copy of my criminal record from the FBI and challenge the accuracy and completeness of the criminal history record information.
3. The camp bears full responsibility for the screening and placement of volunteers at their camp. Neither ACA, NCMEC nor the FBI are in any way liable for any screening decisions made by the camp based on the information obtained in the PROTECT Act PROTECTScreen Pilot Program.

rev. 8/06



APPENDIX F: FBI Background Check and Determination Request Pursuant to the PROTECT Act – PROTECTScreen Pilot

Camp Name: _____ ACA Camp Number: _____

Camp Contact Name: _____

(This is the person who is coordinating the background checks, and will receive the determinations.)

Contact Phone Number: _____ Contact Email: _____

Contact Mailing Address (No P.O. Boxes): _____

Background Check and Fitness Determination Requests:

Pursuant to the PROTECT Act, we are submitting the following potential volunteers for FBI fingerprint criminal background checks and determinations for fitness to serve as a volunteer:

- 1. Name: _____ OCA # _____
- 2. Name: _____ OCA # _____
- 3. Name: _____ OCA # _____
- 4. Name: _____ OCA # _____
- 5. Name: _____ OCA # _____
- 6. Name: _____ OCA # _____
- 7. Name: _____ OCA # _____
- 8. Name: _____ OCA # _____
- 9. Name: _____ OCA # _____
- 10. Name: _____ OCA # _____

(If submitting more than 10 at a time, please attach additional sheets listing the names and OCA numbers of each person.)

Payment Information: Payment must be included with the submission.

Number of Background Checks Requested _____ x \$18.00 each = _____

Method of Payment:

- Attached is a check or money order
(Payable to the American Camp Association, Inc.)
- Credit Card Approval; Type of Credit: VISA MasterCard Discover
Account Number: ____/____/____/____
Expiration Date: ____/____
Name as it appears on card: _____
Signature: _____

Authorization:

By submitting fingerprint cards and payment for FBI criminal background checks and fitness determinations, the camp agrees that it has read, understands, and agrees to abide by the PROTECT Screen pilot program procedures and rules as detailed in the ACA PROTECTScreen Manual.

Mail this form, fingerprint cards, signed volunteer approval forms, and photocopies of IDs via a traceable method to: ACA PROTECT Screen 5000 N. State Road 67 Martinsville, IN 46151

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APPENDIX G

Checklist for Submitting a PROTECTScreen Background Check Request

Mail (via a traceable method) ACA the following four items:

- _____ A completed fingerprint card. Ensure that:
 - In the Your OCA field of the fingerprint card, the volunteer’s OCA number is printed legibly. Remember, the camp assigns the OCA number by using the following format: CAMP NUMBER “AC” VOLUNTEER NUMBER.
 - Other required fields of the fingerprint card are filled out: Name, AKA, Address of the person fingerprinted, Camp name and address, SOC, DOB, Sex, Race, Height, Weight, Eyes, Hair, POB.)
 - The volunteer’s fingerprints are on the card.

- _____ A copy of the completed Volunteer Application. Ensure that:
 - You have entered the OCA number and Type of Government ID (the photo ID you photocopied) lines on the application.
 - The volunteer has completely filled out and signed the application.
 - You have kept the original for your own files.

- _____ A copy of the volunteer’s photo ID (e.g., driver’s license, passport, etc.)

- _____ Payment for the background check and determination (Using the form found in Appendix F). Reminders:
 - The fee is \$18 per volunteer.
 - We accept a check from your camp, a cashier’s check, a money order, or credit card. Do not send personal checks as they cannot be accepted.
 - Checks or money orders should be made out to: American Camp Association

Also check the following:

- _____ If you are sending multiple background checks at once, make sure that each matching fingerprint card and volunteer application are paperclipped together. DO NOT USE STAPLES OR TAPE as the integrity of the fingerprint could be compromised.

- _____ You are mailing via a traceable method (e.g., certified mail, UPS, FedEx, etc.)

Mail to:

PROTECTScreen
 American Camp Association
 5000 N State Road 67
 Martinsville, IN 46151