

### Volunteer Background Checks

Volunteers serve in many different roles and provide a variety of different services within the District's schools, programs, and operations. A proposed volunteer's specific role and responsibilities generally determine the extent to which the District will evaluate a potential volunteer's background and qualifications.

In some situations, a criminal background check of a proposed volunteer is a prudent measure that serves important safety-related interests. These guidelines specifically address criminal background checks for volunteers.

1. The District reserves the discretion to require a criminal background check in connection with any volunteer role, as well as the discretion to initiate a background check (or a re-check) at any time.
2. Staff members who have any question or uncertainty as to whether a criminal background check should be conducted for a particular volunteer role are expected to either (1) structure the applicable procedures to include the background check, or (2) address and resolve the specific situation with the input and direction of a school principal or another appropriate administrator.
3. Staff members who are seeking and planning to use volunteers are expected, where applicable, to plan in advance for the time it takes to process and evaluate a criminal background check.
4. If the District decides to deny approval for an individual to serve as a volunteer, the individual will be advised of the decision. The individual may seek a review of the decision by the District Administrator or his/her District-level administrative designee. Pending a review of the initial determination, the individual will not be permitted to volunteer in the role for which approval was denied, and the District may also restrict other volunteer roles at its discretion.
5. A criminal background check is not mandatory for a proposed volunteer role (1) that is limited to a one-time or short-term activity, and (2) during which a District employee or another administratively-approved responsible adult will retain primary supervision of the student(s) and be in the presence of the volunteer during the volunteer's interactions with students. To the extent applicable given the time and location of the activity, any such volunteer is expected to follow the District's established procedures for visitors to the schools. Examples of these situations include:
  - a. An approved guest speaker gives a presentation to a class, school, or other District-supervised group of students.
  - b. A parent or guardian who, with teacher approval, participates in a class activity (such as reading a book to a class in an elementary school) while the teacher remains present.
  - c. An approved volunteer assists with an athletic event that is open to the public (such as assisting as a timer at a track meet).
6. A criminal background check is not mandatory when a proposed volunteer role (1) is structured such that there is no intended direct interaction with students or such that any minimal interaction with students is likely to occur in a setting that is under direct District-provided supervision (other than the volunteer), and (2) in the District's judgment, there is no other significant risk to health, safety, or property that a background check would reasonably mitigate. To the extent applicable given the time and location of the activity, any such volunteer is expected to follow the District's established procedures for visitors to the schools. Examples of these situations include:
  - a. A school authorizes a community volunteer to assist with landscaping, outdoor field preparation, etc. (e.g., planting annuals at a school entrance).

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b. An authorized parent or community volunteer assists District staff with tasks such as the set-up for a special event or activity or preparing mailings, take-home information, or back-to-school/registration packets.

**CROSS REFERENCES: BP 353.1 School Volunteers**

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