

SUBJECT: SAFE MENTORING

In accordance with the Safe Mentoring Act, to ensure the safety of students involved in the District's mentoring program, the District will obtain a criminal history record check from the Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) for each prospective employee as well as prospective volunteer mentors who are involved in any district mentoring program and who may engage in unsupervised activities with youth or in activities with youth in a setting without constant oversight.

Definitions

- a) "Prospective employee" means a person being considered for employment by a mentoring program.
- b) "Prospective mentor" means an individual who is currently applying to volunteer to help a child or a group of children in a mentoring program for a period of time. This help will include, but not be limited to, being a positive role model for youth, building relationships with youth, and providing youth with academic assistance and exposure to new experiences and examples of opportunity that enhance the ability of children to become responsible adults.
- c) A "criminal history record" means a record of all convictions of crimes and any pending criminal charges maintained on an individual by the DCJS and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).
- d) "Mentoring program" means a formalized program operated by an educational institution or school district that matches youth with adult volunteers with the purpose of providing youth with positive role models to enhance their development.

Prospective School Employees

All prospective school employees must receive clearance from the State Education Department in accordance with existing procedures. However, all other requirements of the Safe Mentoring Act apply to prospective school employees who are being considered for employment by a mentoring program.

The District requires that a criminal history record check be conducted for any "prospective employee" not otherwise defined as a "prospective school employee" per Commissioner's Regulations and in accordance with Social Services Law Section 390-e and district procedures.

Prospective Volunteer Mentors

Volunteers, however, are not covered by these regulations, and "prospective mentors" (i.e., defined as applicants for volunteer work in a mentoring role or program) will be subject to the requirements of Social Services Law Section 390-e and district procedures.

(Continued)

SUBJECT: SAFE MENTORING (Cont'd.)**Fees for Fingerprinting**

Both the DCJS and the FBI impose a processing fee. The fees for the criminal history record search will be an amount equal to the fees established by DCJS and the FBI for processing the criminal history information request. In addition, the entity that actually takes the fingerprints may impose a fee. The fees will be payable to Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) and paid by money order, check, or certified check, by the District.

Unless otherwise authorized by the Board, the prospective employee or prospective volunteer mentor will pay those fees.

Waiver by Custodial Parent or Guardian

A custodial parent or guardian may sign a waiver authorizing a mentor to work with his or her child regardless of a criminal charge or crime related to a mentor, unless the crime is a sex offense or a crime against a child. No waiver is permitted in the case of a sex offense or a crime against a child. This waiver process may only be initiated upon the consent of the prospective mentor, and be on a form developed by the OCFS. Where applicable, the District may notify a custodial parent or guardian of his or her waiver right, but a waiver will only be authorized by a custodial parent or guardian.

Confidentiality

The criminal history record will be confidential in accordance with applicable federal and state laws, rules, and regulations, and will not be published or in any way disclosed to persons other than authorized personnel, unless otherwise authorized by law.

Parental Disclosure

The District will provide each custodial parent or guardian of every child participating in its mentoring program a description of the kind of criminal background checks conducted on prospective employees and prospective volunteer mentors in accordance with law.

Correction Law Sections 752 and 755
Executive Law Section 837(8-a)
Social Services Law Section 390-e
8 NYCRR Section 80-1.11 and Part 87

Adopted: 8/12/25