

EDEN CHRISTIAN ACADEMY NEW VOLUNTEER POLICY

Volunteers are integral to the success of Eden Christian Academy. We deeply respect and encourage the many efforts of our exceptional volunteers who give so willingly of their time to the students and staff of Eden. Eden encourages and promotes school volunteering in order to expand and enhance partnership with our parents and community involvement within our school while maintaining safety and security for students and staff.

Under Act 15 of 2015, which amends the provisions of the PA Child Protective Services Law, certain clearances are required for ALL volunteers that provide care, supervision, guidance or control of a child or children. In compliance with the law, any Eden volunteer will be required to obtain and submit to the applicable Volunteer Coordinator all required clearances along with the signed Volunteer Registration Form **prior to the first day that volunteer services are provided.**

Some examples of volunteers requiring clearances include: field trip or school event chaperones, classroom volunteer assistants, recess, lunchroom and library volunteers, and volunteer coaches/club advisors.

Note: Parents and others merely visiting schools are not normally required to obtain background checks to the extent that such visitors are visiting the school irregularly and without providing for the care, supervision, guidance, or control of children. Some examples include Back-to-School nights, parent/teacher conferences, attending school assemblies or concerts, assisting with school birthday parties, parent guest readers, collecting tickets to sporting events, working concession stands or participating in "Career Day" as supervised presenters. In this capacity, school visitors do not need the clearances.

The following clearances are required:



If you *have been* a continuous resident of Pennsylvania for the past 10 years, you are required to submit each of the following:

1. **Pennsylvania State Police Clearance** (free for Volunteers)
2. **Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance** (free for Volunteers)
3. **Signed "Volunteer Clearance Exception" statement**
4. **Signed Eden Volunteer Registration Form**



If you *have NOT been* a continuous resident of Pennsylvania for the past 10 years, you are required to submit each of the following:

1. **Pennsylvania State Police Clearance** (free for Volunteers)
2. **Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance** (free for Volunteers)
3. **Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Clearance** (\$22.60 – volunteer responsible for this cost)
4. **Signed Eden Volunteer Registration Form**

Go to www.EdenChristianAcademy.org and refer to **Volunteer Clearance Instructions & Links** to obtain required clearances.

Under no circumstances shall a volunteer be considered an employee of Eden. A volunteer shall receive no wages or other consideration which has a monetary value for the performance of volunteer services. The volunteer position is not a right, but rather a privilege. As such, any volunteer position may be eliminated and/or the services of any volunteer may be terminated at any time at the sole discretion of the responsible Administrator.

The applicable Administrator and/or Volunteer Coordinator shall assume general authority and responsibility over all volunteers serving/working with the students in the building or in school-related activities for which he/she is responsible.

Eden will maintain a school-wide database of all approved Eden volunteers that can be accessed by the applicable Volunteer Coordinator for each campus. The database will include the names of approved volunteers as well as the expiration dates for each individual clearance. The date of the oldest clearance will be noted as the official approval date. The clearances will expire five years from the official approval date. A copy of the clearances/exception forms will be maintained in Eden files until their expiration dates at which point they will be destroyed. The Volunteer Coordinators will send an email reminder to individuals when their clearances are 90 days from expiring.

All volunteers must sign in at the school office before proceeding to their volunteer site.

Volunteers must wear a visitor's tag while in the building.

Volunteers should be punctual and prepared. If something arises, and you cannot meet your volunteer responsibilities, please try to find another parent to take your place or let the teacher or Volunteer Coordinator know.

Volunteers are expected to manifest by daily example the highest Christian virtue, serving as a Christian role models (1 Timothy 4:12) both in and out of school to students (Luke 6:40) and to others. Christian influence is demonstrated by word, deed, example, and shared experience. Therefore, the volunteer is expected to be a role model in judgment, dignity, respect and Christian living and therefore should use appropriate language, be encouraging and dress modestly.

Volunteers will work within the rules of the school, as determined by the teachers and the administration.

When working with students the volunteer should not:

- Leave a student unsupervised;
- Take students off the school property without permission from the school staff;
- Give food, drink or candy to any student unless authorized by school personnel; or
- Physically, verbally or emotionally abuse or mistreat a child.

Volunteers shall meet any standards that may be established by federal, state, or local government, or by the Eden Board or Administration.

No volunteer shall be permitted to access, review, disclose, or use confidential student information, or participate in conversations in which confidential student information is discussed. Examples of such information include, but are not limited to, the following: grades or other measures of academic performance, class standing, standardized or other test scores, attendance records, disciplinary history, intelligence test scores, personality and interest test scores, individualized education plans, health data, family background information, teacher or counselor ratings and observations, and any other verified or unverified information contained in a student's file maintained by Eden staff. If volunteers have questions about the confidentiality of student information, they should consult with the building principal.

Volunteers shall not be asked to assume the professional responsibilities of Eden employees.

Volunteers may provide assistance that is supportive, when under the direction of an Eden employee.

Volunteers should expect obedience and respect from students. Volunteers will not be permitted to directly administer student discipline, but should relate any discipline issues to the student's teacher to handle.

Volunteers will not be permitted to administer first aid, except in the case of an emergency. If there is a safety concern or an emergency issue, it must immediately be communicated to someone in authority.

