

STAFF SECURITY CLEARANCES

To ensure the safety of students and staff, all staff must receive the appropriate security clearance.

What You Need to Know

SECURITY CLEARANCE OVERVIEW

All staff members and volunteers who have contact with pre-K students, or who have access to confidential information about these students, must complete required eligibility clearance procedures prior to having any unsupervised contact with children. Depending on your site setting and funding, staff are required to be cleared through the applicable procedures outlined in the chart below.

There are multiple city and state agencies that administer security clearance procedures:

- **NYC Department of Education (DOE):** Fingerprinting and security clearance for NYCEEC staff members using the Personnel Eligibility Tracking System (PETS)
- **NYC Department of Investigation (DOI):** Fingerprinting for certain NYCEEC staff members
- **New York State Education Department (NYSED):** Fingerprinting for staff in district schools and charter schools through the TEACH system
- **New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS):** Administers the NY Statewide Central Register (SCR), which is a required additional security clearance procedure for all NYCEEC staff members

You may not retain as an employee any person who refuses to participate in these procedures, who has not completely and truthfully reported information concerning his or her criminal convictions.

Security Clearance Procedures by Provider Type

	PROVIDER TYPE	DOE FINGERPRINTING REQUIRED?	DOI FINGERPRINTING REQUIRED?	TRACKING SYSTEM	SCR CLEARANCE REQUIRED?
Funded by DOE only	Article 47 and Group Family Day Care providers with DOE contracts (no ACS contract)	YES	See additional guidance on following page	PETS	YES
	Article 43 school-based providers (not including charter schools)	YES	NO	PETS	YES
	Pre-K programs offered by charter schools	NO	NO	TEACH	YES
Funded by DOE and ACS	Article 47 child-care providers with DOE and ACS contracts	See additional guidance on following page			YES

Funded by ACS only	Article 47 child-care providers with ACS contracts (no DOE contract)	NO	YES	N/A	YES
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Additional Guidance for Article 47 providers with DOE contracts

Employees and volunteers in pre-K programs offered through a DOE contract must be fingerprinted by the DOE.

- Use PETS to track information about these employees and volunteers.
- In certain cases where a DOE investigation shows a need for additional screening of a candidate, the candidate will also be required to be fingerprinted by the DOI. If a candidate in your pre-K program requires DOI fingerprinting, the DOE will start the process of obtaining additional fingerprints and the NYC DOHMH Bureau of Child Care will contact you with information about the steps you must complete before allowing the person to begin work in your program.

Additional Guidance for Article 47 Providers with ACS EarlyLearn NYC (ELNYC) and DOE Contracts:

If you have **both** an ACS ELNYC contract and a direct pre-K contract with the DOE, you must follow the instructions below.

- All employees or volunteers who have contact with DOE-funded pre-K students, or who have access to information about these students, must be fingerprinted by the DOE. Use PETS to track information about these employees and volunteers.
- In certain cases where a DOE investigation shows a need for additional screening of a candidate, the candidate will also be required to be fingerprinted by the DOI. If a candidate in your pre-K program requires DOI fingerprinting, the DOE will start the process of obtaining additional fingerprints and the NYC DOHMH Bureau of Child Care will contact you with information about the steps you must complete before allowing the person to begin work in your program.
- All other employees and volunteers must be fingerprinted by the DOI.

DOE FINGERPRINTING PROCEDURES AND THE PERSONNEL ELIGIBILITY TRACKING SYSTEM (PETS)

DOE Fingerprinting

The DOE HR Connect Walk-In Center and the Office of Personnel Investigation (OPI) conduct background investigations for all staff hired by the DOE and DOE vendors. OPI will review fingerprint results, work history, military history and other background issues that may affect clearance. Applicants with a criminal record may require additional screening. Additional information regarding arrest and conviction information for both applicants and current employees can be found in [Chancellor’s Regulation C-105](#).

For more information on how staff may obtain DOE clearances and fingerprinting, please review the [HR Connect Walk-In Center webpage](#).

Candidates must be listed on your program’s PETS roster before you send them for fingerprinting.

Personnel Eligibility Tracking System (PETS)

PETS is a DOE web-based application that tracks and shares real-time information regarding the eligibility status of employees working in pre-K programs. If your Pre-K for All program receives direct funding from the DOE, your program is responsible for using PETS on an ongoing basis to track background security information about your staff members and the status of their security clearance.

You must maintain up-to-date information about all of your staff members in PETS at all times. Conditionally hired staff may NOT start working at your Pre-K for All program until their security clearance is marked “Satisfactory and Eligible” in PETS. If an employee is terminated or resigns, you must immediately mark them as “Inactive” in PETS.

You must immediately remove staff from contact with students, access to student information and/or, if appropriate, access to PETS, if the staff member is deemed ineligible based upon any notification generated by PETS, screen-shot displayed in the PETS application or as otherwise directed by the DECE field office, NYCDOE Office of Personnel Investigation, or other designated office.

Note: If you are an ACS ELNYC provider without a direct pre-K contract with the DOE, use the procedures described in the chart at the beginning of this section to track clearance information about your program employees and volunteers. You are not required to use PETS.

DOI FINGERPRINTING

The Department of Investigations conducts fingerprinting and subsequent background checks on individuals who work at child care, home care, and family care facilities, including those that are under contract with the City of New York. Staff are screened for criminal convictions and/or pending criminal actions against the New York State and Federal criminal record databases.

For more information on how staff may obtain DOI Fingerprinting please review the [DOI Fingerprinting Unit](#) webpage.

NYSED FINGERPRINTING AND THE TEACH SYSTEM

The New York State Education Department conducts fingerprinting on individuals with a NYS teacher certification. Candidates and school employers can use the TEACH system to track information about an individual’s fingerprint and certification information.

For more information on how staff may obtain NYSED fingerprinting please review the [NYSED fingerprinting](#) webpage.

STATEWIDE CENTRAL REGISTRY (SCR)

The New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) maintains the New York State Statewide Central Register for Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR), which contains information on the existence of any indicated reports of child abuse and maltreatment.

The NYC Health Code sections 47.19 and 43.13 requires that all persons associated with center-based or school-based child care services to undergo a check with SCR prior to having any unsupervised contact with children.* If you are an Article 47 provider, you must repeat these checks every two years for each current employee.

*Note: If your Pre-K for All program is also funded through Head Start, you must complete SCR checks and confirm SCR clearance for all prospective employees before they begin work or have any contact with your students.

Additional Guidance for Article 47 Providers

If you are an Article 47 provider, you must submit an electronic request to the SCR about each of your prospective employees using the [Online Clearance System](#). SCR will issue response letters directly to you confirming if they either do or do not find a person to be the subject of an indicated case of child abuse and maltreatment. If you receive a letter stating that one of your prospective employees is the subject of an indicated case of child abuse and maltreatment, you should inform the prospective employee of the results of the SCR clearance and notify DOHMH. Refer to the NYC Health Code [47.19](#) for more information.

Additional Guidance for Article 43 Providers

Currently, the SCR does not recognize school-based childcare services operating pursuant to Article 43 of the NYC Health Code as legal recipients of SCR inquiry results. However, individuals are entitled to copies of information concerning themselves. The DOHMH recommends that Article 43 providers require as a term of employment or volunteer status that persons associated with a school-based program inquire into their own SCR background reports and submit the results of the clearance inquiry to the pre-K program administrator. The school-based Article 43 provider should retain a copy of the inquiry request results for their records as proof of compliance.

SPECIAL EDUCATION ITINERANT TEACHERS (SEITs) AND RELATED SERVICES PROVIDERS

Some pre-K students in your Pre-K for All program may have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) developed by the NYCDOE to support an identified learning disability. These students may receive services from a SEIT or a therapist (also called a related services provider) while attending your pre-K program. These services are funded through the NYCDOE.

You are not required to maintain any security clearance information on file for SEITs and related services providers who visit your program to assist pre-K students with disabilities, as security clearance is tracked by the DOE and the employing agency. However, you should request that all SEITs and related services providers visiting your program show photo identification when entering your facility, and provide you with the following information before working with any of your students:

- Name and contact information of the SEIT or related services provider
- Name and contact information of the agency that employs the SEIT or related services provider
- Name of the student(s) receiving services
- Anticipated frequency and timing of visits from the SEIT or related services provider (e.g. every Wednesday from 10am-11am, etc.)

You may not deny access to a SEIT or related services provider who visits your program to provide mandatory services to one of your pre-K students.

If you have a concern about a SEIT or a related services provider working with a student in your program, you must contact the employing agency. As a mandated reporter, you are required to call the State Central Register to report any suspected case of child abuse or maltreatment.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What are the most common positions or titles that the eligibility clearance procedures apply to?

Program staff positions or titles that must complete the procedures listed in this section include, but are not limited to, education directors, lead teachers, assistant teachers, and all staff who have contact with NYCDOE students or student records, including office staff, food service workers, custodial staff, social services workers, substitute teachers and consultants (e.g. an art or dance teacher who visits your program on a regular basis).

2. Must substitute teachers be cleared through the processes described above?

Yes, substitute teachers must be fully cleared through the processes described above before coming into contact with students in your program. It is your responsibility to confirm that substitute teachers working in your program have completed all necessary Eligibility Clearance Procedures before beginning work.

The NYCDOE and NYC DOHMH have collaborated with an agency called School Professionals to create a pool of substitute teachers that NYCEECs may access to cover temporary staffing needs. If you are working with School Professionals, you should follow all instructions provided by the agency to ensure that substitute staff members are appropriately cleared.

3. Must volunteers be cleared through the processes described above?

Yes, all volunteers must be cleared through the regular process, unless they are supervised at all times by a cleared staff member.

4. How do I request information about a prospective staff member from the Statewide Central Register?

You must first register your site by completing the SCR Online Clearance System Agency Information Registration Sheet and faxing it to OCFS (if you have not yet registered). You will be emailed with a User Name and Password with which you will be able to access the Online Clearance System. Utilizing the Online Clearance System, you can request information on the staff member. If you are seeking clearance of an individual that is new to your organization or has never been cleared by the SCR through your child care program, you will need to pay a \$25.00 processing fee.

Send your check or money order to the Office for Children and Family Services, Capital View Park, Attn: Bureau for Financial Operations, 52 Washington Street, Rensselaer, NY 12144 within 2-3 business days. After the SCR conducts its search, you will receive an electronic notification of the search result directly from the SCR. You should review the information provided by SCR and keep a copy on file at your site. If your site is not yet permitted by your licensing agency, please contact your Field Office for additional information on how to obtain data from the SCR.

5. How can individuals request a copy of information concerning themselves from the SCR?

Individuals may make inquiries of the SCR by submitting a written request to:

New York State Office for Children and Family Services

New York State Central Register

P.O. Box 4480

Albany, NY 12204

Inquiries from individuals concerning their own SCR records must contain:

- The individual's full name, and any aliases or previous names they may be known by
- The individual's date of birth
- All current and previous home addresses
- Name and address of any child care facility or school the individual has previously been associated with as an employee or volunteer
- The names and dates of birth of any children of the individual making the request
- Any SCR identification number associated with the individual's name (if known)