

# **MIAA Officials' Background Checks**

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

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### **1) Why is the MIAA requiring officials to have background checks?**

The MIAA was asked by its member schools to help coordinate a comprehensive approach to administering background checks for athletic officials for regular season school contests since the task of having individual school districts complete a check for every official would be extremely time-consuming and difficult.

An MIAA sub-committee was developed in the spring of 2014, consisting of a superintendent, school administrators, school committee members, athletic directors and an official, and charged with considering the challenges and feasibility of this initiative.

It has become the standard to require volunteers working with children to complete a background check. The purpose of the required background check is to prevent individuals who should not be working with young athletes from doing so. Additionally, it serves to identify any criminal history of individuals who apply as an official. The MIAA and all of its member schools care about the protection of our student-athletes and feel confident that through our collective leadership we can achieve our goal of making MIAA high school athletics the safest program in which our youth can participate.

### **2) Who is required to complete the background check?**

All officials who desire to work for MIAA member schools during the regular season and in the MIAA tournament are required to complete the background check.

### **3) What type of offenses will the MIAA screen for when conducting a background check?**

The MIAA is conducting a federal and state search of criminal offenses, including, but not limited to applicable government sex offender registry data. (A check conducted only in one state will not meet the minimum requirements of the MIAA screening process.) **Effective for the**

**2015 season and beyond, a successful background check will be valid for a three-year period.**

**4) Who at the MIAA is responsible for processing the background check information?**

An MIAA Assistant and/or Associate Director will be assigned the task of processing and reading background check information.

**5) What if an individual has already been background-checked?**

The MIAA will conduct a background check, on behalf of its member schools, for all officials seeking to work regular-season and MIAA tournament contests, even if they already have been background-checked by another organization. In order to protect the civil rights of individuals, information is not shared among distinct entities. Consistency can be maintained by having the MIAA process all submissions through an identical method and judged equally.

**6) What is the cost for the background check?**

The cost for the background check and one sport registration will cost \$45. Each additional sport registration will cost \$10.

**7) Who will have access to the information found as a result of the background checks?**

Only the MIAA executive(s) assigned the responsibility for background checks will have access to the information via the background check company, Peopletrail.

**8) How do officials get copies of their background report?**

Individuals can request a copy of their information directly from Peopletrail.

Also, consistent with Section III - Required Background Check of the MIAA Background Check Policy, "Should the MIAA exclude a candidate or remove an official from the approved list as a result of a background check, it will notify the candidate or official of that action and provide the results of that background check."

**9) What is the timetable for completing the background screening process for each official?**

A timeline will be developed for each sport season for the 2015-16 school year. Fall officials will begin submission no later than July 1, 2015.

**10) As a local board officer, how do I justify the need for background checks?**

The safety, protection and well-being of our student-athletes should always be our top priority. We have a responsibility to enlist the services of the most qualified adults to serve as officials and to ensure all student-athletes are able to enjoy a fun and educational experience.

Parents trust their children will be safe while participating in high school events and no officiating group can be successful without the confidence of parents. Board officers also have a responsibility to protect individual officials and the board from potential financial hardships that result from litigation.

Advancements in technology and the accessibility of information have made screening and background checks the norm and a much-needed resource to determine the competency and safety of prospective officials.

The member schools of the MIAA are serious about protecting children. Together, we can ensure high school athletics are among the safest programs in which our youth can enjoy athletic participation.