

EMSOA Member Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) regarding the new MIAA background check policy

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Answers

- 1) **Are the new fees of \$10 per sport going to replace the existing dues structure that each organization pays to the MIAA to register officials currently?**

Answer: Yes, EMSOA has paid \$6 per EMSOA official (to officiate soccer) to the MIAA in past years. Starting in 2015 that will not happen. The EMSOA official will pay \$10 through ArbiterSports.com. The MIAA will no longer accept payments from Official's Boards. The \$10 fee will be paid by each EMSOA official, every year. EMSOA officials will pay a \$10 fee for each sport they officiate each year. EMSOA officials will pay a \$35 fee for a background check every three years.

- 2) **Why do officials now have to pay \$10 to register each season to be an MIAA official?**

Answer: Under the new MIAA Background Check policy the MIAA will no longer allow Official's Boards (i.e. EMSOA) to pay bulk registration fees for their officials. Prior to 2015 the bulk registration fee was \$6 per official and the individual registration fee was \$12 per official. The 2015 individual registration fee is \$10 and will be paid by each EMSOA official at ArbiterSports.com. NOTE: The EMSOA already has collected that \$6 from each member as part of your dues for the 2015 season (one Varsity fee). The EMSOA will work with each chapter to get that \$6 back to you, most likely though providing food and non-alcoholic beverages to you at some or all of your chapter meetings this Fall. That will be announced at the mandatory interpretation meetings.

- 3) **Once registered, will the MIAA and Arbiter keep this list available to all assigners for the MIAA for all sports?**

Answer: Yes. The information that you provide to Arbiter (via the MIAA portal) will be part of your profile that is available to All assigners who use Arbiter and who assign you (high school, college, adult, pro, any that use Arbiter) Of course you can have Only one e-mail address for Arbiter and if

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you have more than one, you will be strongly encouraged to merge your Arbiter profiles into one. All Assignors who assign MIAA games (any sport) will have access to the list Only through the assignors group, which is now an EMSOA group for the EMSOA referees. Anyone cleared to referee will have an “Eligible to Officiate” check next to their name. Anyone who has not registered with the MIAA or did not clear background check, etc. will Not have the check mark. Not having a check mark does Not mean you failed a background check. For example, inactive EMSOA members would not register with the MIAA.

4) Will the list of registered officials be available to other sport organizations (i.e. can I confirm as a private soccer club that my officials are properly cleared?)

Answer: Yes. Anyone who uses Arbiter to assign any sport and who assigns you, will see where the “Eligible to Officiate” check-box is checked. That means you are registered with MIAA and have cleared their background check.

5) Is the MIAA a registered non-profit?

Answer: The MIAA website states the MIAA is a 501(c) non-profit organization. However, the MIAA is merely coordinating this background check for the school districts, and you the referees are each considered For-Profit and an Independent Contractor.

6) I was told by a CPL Law Enforcement Official that by law we are not responsible to pay for the background checks, is this true?

Answer: The MIAA is conducting the background checks for all of the school districts across the entire Commonwealth of MA. You are considered an Independent contractor, and For-Profit, as an individual referee. Additionally, the MIAA is not using a CORI check, and therefore any laws related to CORI do not apply to the MIAA background check. The MIAA is using a certified group to conduct a nation-wide background check plus a county-by-county check in MA. All of that is being performed electronically.

7) I have already had a background check from USSF, does this cover the background check requirement for the MIAA?

Answer: No, each EMSOA official must have a MIAA background check performed and pay the \$35 fee on ArbiterSports.com.

8) As an educator, I am required by law to have a CORI check and be fingerprinted. Will this be acceptable by Arbiter?

Answer: ArbiterSports.com is not requiring EMSOA officials to get Background Checks, it is the MIAA. The MIAA will not accept your existing CORI check. You will still be required to get the MIAA Background check and pay the \$35 fee. By State Law, an individual school district is Not allowed to

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share a CORI check with any other school district or organization. The MIAA is Not conducting a CORI check, see #6, above.

9) If a referee works in both Central and Eastern MA, does one check cover them or is it separate by MIAA soccer board?

Answer: Yes, one MIAA background check will cover them. The EMSOA official will only be required to have a single MIAA Background check and pay one \$35 fee.

10) Does my background check from another state fulfil the MIAA requirement for a background check?

Answer: No, the EMSOA official that has a Background Check from another state is required to have the MIAA Background check and pay the \$35 fee.

11) Will officials be compensated with higher game fees to cover the background check fee?

Answer: In 2015, game fees will remain the same as 2014. In 2016 game fees will be increased by \$2. The EMSOA Executive Board will discuss asking the MIAA to recommend a \$4 per game increase for 2016, however nothing is guaranteed.

12) Why should the official have to pay the \$35 background check fee, when other employees don't (i.e. teachers, janitors, administrators, coaches)?

Answer: Public school teachers (etc.) are employees of the school district. A sports official is an Independent Contractor. However, all of the school teachers, employees, etc. are being required to be Finger Printed at a cost of \$55 (which they must pay as an individual) to have a nation-wide background check performed the next time their school district conducts a background check on them. The MIAA background check does Not require finger printing. Therefore, EMSOA referees will be paying less than school employees will be paying (shortly).

13) What if an official doesn't have a credit card? How does the background check and MIAA fee get paid?

Answer: The MIAA policy is that the Background Check fee and the MIAA Registration fee must be paid by credit card on ArbiterSports.com.

14) Can we convene a meeting of the EMSOA membership before June 15th?

Answer: No, the logistics of getting the entire membership together by June 15th are not feasible. However, there is an executive board meeting on June 14th. Concerns of EMSOA members should be channeled to their chapter representatives (see the EMSOA website for officers) so they can be discussed at the Executive Board Meeting.

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15) What opinions do other official's boards in the state have regarding Background checks?

Answer: Joel Perry and Tom Stagliano attended the MIAA sponsored meeting for the EMSOA. At that meeting the only questions that any of the other sports officials had were similar to the questions that we have asked, above. All of the sports official's organizations at that meeting appeared to be resigned to the fact that the MIAA will institute a background check and an electronic registration for every sport. They appeared to want to make the process flow as smoothly as possible. The \$35 background check fee is much lower than the \$90 charged in Florida. Additionally, the MA laws make background checks expensive in MA. Therefore, the sports officials' associations would be better to agree to and support the process, and then ask for an additional \$2 per game bump in fees for 2016 to cover the expense.

16) Will the EMSOA support any member who "fails" the MIAA background check?

Answer: Yes. The individual EMSOA member who fails the background check and wants support, should contact the EMSOA judicial committee. There are some members who, over the years, we have approved their right to referee based upon their background. If requested, we will provide that information to the EMSOA member so she/he can use it in their appeal to the MIAA. Additionally, we will provide whatever support you request. The EMSOA exists to support its individual members.

17) I coach Freshman Soccer and coach within MIAA, why can I be okay there, but not as a referee?

Answer:

Indeed, the MIAA speaker/administrator at the Background Summit used to be a School Superintendent. He noted, that it is "possible" for a teacher to be cleared to teach in one school district and Not cleared to teach in another, based upon the same background report. Every school district has their own standards.

In this case, the MIAA is applying one standard across the entire state for sports officials. However, it is "possible" for someone who currently is cleared to teach to Not be cleared to referee.

What makes it infuriating to everyone is that the CORI laws Prevent a school system from sharing the CORI information (good or bad) with anyone else....

And the MIAA is Not using CORI, it is using a different background check methodology, see Question/Answer #6

18) What kind of discount did the MIAA receive from Peopletrail and what is the length of the "contract" with them? Were other companies were considered, especially those local within Massachusetts? I am also curious as to why the MIAA is taking this opportunity to discontinue the bulk individual "per sport fee", now requiring individuals to pay the \$10 on their own - essentially

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raising the fee \$4.

Answer:

The MIAA claims they have been studying this issue for roughly 18 months (October 2013) before making a decision. They claim they checked with a variety of agencies, and that the PeopleTrail was both highly rated and reasonably priced. The MIAA could Not use any agency that would use the CORI system, as the laws in MA regarding CORI are very restrictive, which is why the school districts petitioned the MIAA to assist them.

I believe that PeopleTrail is doing this for just a touch above Cost. PeopleTrail is associated with Arbiter, and since MIAA is using Arbiter to get this all electronically organized, Arbiter is getting their "nose under the tent" across all of MA in front of all of the referee associations. Essentially, All assigners will have to use Arbiter to make this work. That equals a lot of money.

MIAA addressed the \$10 registration issue. In 2014 and prior, the registration was \$12 for an individual and \$6 if the sports officials board in that sport paid the registration fee in bulk. Eventually, by 2011 or so, every board was paying in bulk. The MIAA stated that they have not had an increase in revenue from the referees in Many years, and believed the \$10 (no bulk discount) was fair. Of course, they did it now because they are using the electronic Arbiter portal. From what the EMSOA can determine, the MIAA is Not making any money on the background check. They need the \$4 bump per referee because it will cost them a lot to administer this background check system and review any (ANY) "flag" that PeopleTrail finds and then form an appeals process.

The EMSOA has recommended to the MIAA to do one of two things in the near future to make up the money to the refs (on average it is \$16 per year)

- The game fees paid to the refs are going up \$2 per game in 2016-17 season, and the EMSOA recommended \$4 with the extra \$2 to compensate for the increase charges to the refs
- Or the MIAA could charge each school district an additional \$300 per year starting in 2016. Over three years and more than 320 school districts, that would pay the \$280K for the re-checks every three years. Thus each referee/umpire would pay Once for a background check and the schools would pay for all re-checks. This option would be far less expensive for the schools. The MIAA has not responded (yet).

19) How far back is the MIAA checking and what is the threshold for not being allowed to referee?

Answer:

The EMSOA submitted several questions to the MIAA a few weeks ago. We specifically

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requested that the background checks only go back fifteen years. We specifically asked the MIAA to provide a rough guideline of what may cause the MIAA to deny refereeing/umpiring eligibility to a sports official. The MIAA has not responded (yet).

20) How can I request a copy of the background check report?

Answer:

The officials can request a copy of the report to Support@peopletrail.com.

Phone (801) 307-4100 or (866) 223-8822.