

EFFECT OF CRIMINAL CONVICTION OR FOUNDED COMPLAINT OF CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT

Generally

The Board will not hire or continue the employment of any part-time, full-time, temporary, or permanent personnel who are determined to be unsuited for service by reason of criminal conviction or information appearing in the registry of founded complaints of child abuse and neglect maintained by the Department of Social Services.

I. APPLICANTS FOR EMPLOYMENT

A. Criminal Convictions

As a condition of employment for all of its public school employees, whether full-time or part-time, permanent, or temporary, the Westmoreland County School Board shall require on its application for employment certification (i) that the applicant has not been convicted of a felony or any offense involving the sexual molestation, physical or sexual abuse or rape of a child; and (ii) whether the applicant has been convicted of a crime of moral turpitude.

Notwithstanding the requirements of the previous paragraph, the School Board may employ an individual who, at the time of the individual's hiring, has been convicted of a felony, provided that such individual (i) was employed in good standing by a school board on or before December 17, 2017; (ii) has been granted a simple pardon for such offense by the Governor or other appropriate authority; and (ii) has had his civil rights restored by the Governor or other appropriate authority. However, the School Board may employ, until July 1, 2020, such an individual who does not satisfy the conditions set forth in clauses (ii) and (iii), provided that such individual has been continuously employed by the School Board from December 17, 2017 through July 1, 2018.

The Westmoreland County School Board shall also require on its application for employment, as a condition of employment requiring direct contact with students, whether full-time or part-time, permanent, or temporary, certification that the applicant has not been the subject of a founded case of child abuse and neglect. Any person making a materially false statement regarding a finding of child abuse and neglect shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor and upon conviction, the fact of said conviction shall be grounds for the Board of Education to revoke such person's license to teach.

As a condition of employment, any applicant who is offered or accepts employment, whether full-time, part-time, permanent or temporary with the Westmoreland County School Board shall submit to fingerprinting and provide personal descriptive information. The information and fingerprints shall be forwarded through the Central Criminal Records Exchange to the Federal Bureau of Investigations for the purpose of obtaining criminal history record information on applicants who are offered or accept employment.

To conserve the costs of conducting criminal history record checks to applicants and school boards, upon the written request of the applicant, the Westmoreland County School Board shall inform another school board with which reciprocity has been established and to which the applicant also has applied for employment of the results of the criminal history record information conducted within the previous ninety days that it obtained concerning the applicant. Criminal history record information pertaining to an applicant for employment by a school board shall be exchanged only between school boards in the Commonwealth in which a current agreement of reciprocity for the exchange of such information has been established and is in effect. Reciprocity agreements shall provide for the apportionment of the costs of the fingerprinting or criminal records check between the applicant and the Westmoreland County School Board as provided by statute.

If an applicant is denied employment because of information appearing on his/her criminal history record, the School Board shall provide a copy of the information provided by the Central Criminal Records Exchange to the applicant.

B. Founded Complaints of Child Abuse or Neglect

The School Board requires, as a condition of employment, that any applicant who is offered or accepts employment requiring direct contact with students, whether full-time or part-time, permanent or temporary, provide written consent and the necessary personal information for the School Board to obtain a search of the registry of founded complaints of child abuse and neglect. The registry is maintained by the Department of Social Services. The School Board shall ensure that all such searches are requested in conformance with the regulations of the Board of Social Services. In addition, where the applicant has resided in another state within the last five years, the School Board requires as a condition of employment that such applicant provide written consent and the necessary personal information for the School Board to obtain information from each relevant state as to whether the applicant was the subject of a founded complaint of child abuse and neglect in such state. The School Board shall take reasonable steps to determine whether the applicant was the subject of a founded complaint of child abuse and neglect in the relevant state. The Department of Social Services shall maintain a database of central child abuse and neglect registries in other states that provide access to out-of-state school boards for use by local school boards. The applicant may be required to pay the cost of any search conducted pursuant to this subsection at the discretion of the School Board. From such funds as may be available for this purpose, however, the School Board may pay for the search.

If the information obtained pursuant to the preceding paragraph indicates that the applicant is the subject of a founded case of child abuse and neglect, such applicant shall be denied employment, or the employment shall be rescinded.

If an applicant is denied employment because of information appearing on his record in the registry, the School Board shall provide a copy of the information obtained from the registry to the applicant. The information provided to the School Board by the

Department of Social Services shall be confidential and shall not be disseminated by the School Board.

II. EMPLOYEE CHARGES AND CONVICTIONS

A. Criminal Proceedings

An employee who is charged by summons, warrant, indictment, or information with the commission of a felony or a misdemeanor specified in Va. Code § 22.1-315 may be suspended in accordance with Policy GCPF Suspension of Staff Members.

If a current employee is suspended or dismissed because of information appearing on his/her criminal history record, the School Board shall provide a copy of the information provided by the Central Criminal Records Exchange to the employee.

The superintendent shall inform the School Board of any notification of arrest of a school board employee received pursuant to Virginia Code §19.2-83.1. The School Board shall require such employee, whether full-time or part-time, permanent, or temporary, to submit to fingerprinting and to provide personal descriptive information to be forwarded along with the employee's fingerprints through the Central Criminal Records Exchange to the Federal Bureau of Investigation for the purpose of obtaining criminal history record information regarding such employee. The contents of the employee's criminal record shall be used only to implement dismissal, suspension or probation in accordance with §§22.1-307 and 22.1-315 of the Code of Virginia.

B. Founded Complaints of Child Abuse or Neglect

Any employee of the Westmoreland County School Board will be dismissed if he or she is or becomes the subject of a founded complaint of child abuse and neglect and after all rights to an appeal provided by Va. Code § 63.2-1526 have been exhausted. The fact of such finding, after all rights to an appeal provided by Va. Code § 63.2-1526 have been exhausted, shall be grounds for the local school division to recommend that the Board of Education revoke such person's license to teach.

III. COURT ORDERED PROBATION

For purposes of this policy, a court's placing an individual on probation pursuant to Va. Code § 18.2-251 is treated as a conviction and as a finding of guilt.

IV. COSTS OF FINGERPRINTING, CRIMINAL RECORD AND ABUSE AND NEGLECT CHECKS

The School Board shall pay for the fingerprinting, criminal record check and abuse and neglect check conducted pursuant to this policy.

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Amended: July 16, 2012
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Legal Ref.: Code of Virginia, as amended, §§ 18.2-251, 19.2-83.1, 19.2-389, 22.1-78, 22.1-296.1, 22.1-296.2, 22.1-296.4, 22.1-307, 22.1-315, 63.2-1515.

Cross Refs.: GCPF Suspension of Staff Members
 GCPD Professional Staff Discipline