

TU's Procedure for Background Checks For Overnight Camps

Since 2005, TU staff has performed background checks for all volunteers and staff who have participated in overnight youth camps sponsored by TU national, chapters, and councils. These overnight youth camps will be called "TU Camps" in this document. This document establishes procedures for doing background checks on adults who participate in TU Camps and also addresses TU's Sexual Abuse Policy.

The TU background check procedure was instituted to protect children attending TU Camps from risks that may occur at overnight youth camps. In addition, the background checks will assist sponsoring councils and chapters in the recruitment of qualified volunteers.

Each chapter or council planning to conduct a TU Camp must appoint a Camp Director and provide his or her contact information to TU's Headwaters Program Director, Franklin Tate, at ftate@tu.org.

It is the responsibility of your council or chapter's Camp Director to make sure that your chapter or council complies with this procedure.

Some states have laws that impose requirements on how youth camps and similar activities are to be conducted, and at least one state has imposed background-check requirements on employees and volunteers who have contact with children. It is the responsibility of your council or chapter's Camp Director to make sure that your camp complies with your state's laws concerning those activities.

If your Camp Director is uncertain about how to comply with this procedure or how to determine the requirements of your state's laws, please ask him or her to contact TU's Headwaters Program Director, Franklin Tate, at ftate@tu.org.

Background Checks

TU performs background checks at three levels: county, state, and federal. The checks also include the nationwide sex-offender database. TU conducts its background checks on an annual basis, even for volunteers and other persons who have served at a camp in previous years.

Who Must Have Background Checks?

All persons (1) who are TU volunteers, TU employees, or other TU-retained staff and (2) who will have a high degree of contact with youth at a TU Camp must pass a TU background check before he or she will be allowed to participate in any TU Camp. The persons who must pass the TU background check include:

- All TU volunteers, TU employees, or other TU-retained staff staying overnight at a camp;
- All TU volunteers, TU employees, or other TU-retained staff attending multiple days at a camp;
- All TU volunteers, TU employees, or other TU-retained staff who will be alone with

youth for any period of time, including on hikes, on wade trips, in watercraft or otherwise on the camp's grounds.

"TU-retained staff" refers to people paid or otherwise retained by the council or chapter sponsoring the camp to assist in the camp, such cooks, nurses, and guides. TU national and councils and chapters sponsoring a camp are not responsible for conducting background checks on persons paid or otherwise retained by the owners or managers of the camp facility itself.

If your chapter or council is planning to conduct youth activities (including TU Camps) where your state or another entity requires background checks that exceed these requirements, please contact the TU Headwaters Program Director, Franklin Tate at ftate@tu.org, about how to get those checks completed.

Background Check Procedure

TU contracts with IntelliCorp to conduct background checks on TU volunteers, TU employees, and other TU-retained staff who participate in TU camps. The cost of each check is between \$15 and \$30, depending on the state. TU's national office covers the cost of this service.

IntelliCorp provides a secure portal through which the person having the background check submits the required information for the check. While TU's Headwaters Director and Coordinator coordinate between the Camp Director and IntelliCorp, the Director and Coordinator only have access to the person's name, date of birth, contact information, and the last four digits of his or her social security number.

1. Each youth camp will designate a single person to be the point of contact (POC) to contact volunteers and any TU-retained staff (such as nurses, cooks, and guides) who are required to have background checks under this procedure. That person may be the Camp Director or another person designated by the Camp Director.
2. The POC will be the camp's liaison with TU staff.
3. The POC will direct volunteers and TU-retained staff to the on-line portal:
tu.volunteerportal.net
2015 password: rustyspinner
4. The POC requests volunteers and TU-retained staff to report back to them when this task is complete.
5. When each POC is sure that his or her full roster of volunteers and TU-retained staff has submitted information for background checks, he or she then notifies TU's Headwaters Program Coordinator, a TU employee who works with TU's Headwaters Program Director. The contact information for the Coordinator will be provided to the POC. The POC sends a roster (first and last names) to the Youth Education Coordinator.
6. The Youth Education Coordinator will then log into the IntelliCorp portal and check to see whether the volunteers and TU-retained staff have cleared their checks. If any volunteer or TU-retained staff has not yet entered his or her information into the system, the Coordinator will tell the POC at that time. It is the POC's responsibility to contact volunteer or TU-retained staff members who have not entered their information into the

IntelliCorp system and remind them to enter their information.

7. Volunteers and TU-retained staff can be added up to a week before camp starts. The maximum wait time for background check clearance is usually one week. The Coordinator manages background checks for 20 separate camps, so every attempt should be made to minimize last minute checks.
8. Once a background check is completed, the portal categorizes checked individuals into two categories: Clear or Review.
9. If an individual is placed in the "Review" category, the Coordinator accesses the background check details in the portal to see why the respective individual did not clear.
10. There are multiple reasons why an individual is put under "Review," not all of them related to criminal charges. For example, an individual without a lengthy documented personal history may be put into "Review" status. However, if the individual's "Review" status is related to criminal charges or to his or her listing as a registered sex offender, the Coordinator refers the case to the Headwaters Program Director and TU's Vice President for Volunteer Operations.
11. The Vice President for Volunteer Operations and the Headwaters Program Director and Coordinator consider information about the individual under "Review" and make a determination about his or her ability to volunteer or work at a camp. In making this determination, the VP for Volunteer Operations may consult with TU counsel, TU staff members, and members of the TU national Board of Trustees.
12. Once final decisions about "Reviewed" volunteers or TU-retained staff are made, the POC is notified of which individuals have been cleared for assisting in the camps and which have not.
13. Pursuant to the Fair Credit Reporting Act, anyone who submits his or her information to IntelliCorp for a background check of this nature has sixty (60) days after receiving his or her background check results to request from IntelliCorp a free copy of the IntelliCorp report, if he or she wants to see it for any reason.

TU employees planning to attend a camp will have their background checks done by TU's Human Resources Department, but it is the responsibility of the POC to notify the TU Headwaters Program Director, Franklin Tate at ftate@tu.org, of any TU employees who will attend a camp. The Director will in turn work with TU's Human Resources Department to have background checks for those employees carried out.

Required Disqualification.

TU will not allow any person to participate in a TU Camp who is a registered sex offender or who has been convicted of, has pleaded guilty to, or has pleaded "no contest" to one of the following crimes:

- Crimes against children
- Felony offenses against persons

- Felony offenses against a family member
- Crimes defined as public indecency
- Crimes involving the use of weapons
- Any violent crime
- Any felony drug-related offense
- Any felony conviction within the five (5) year period preceding the background check
- Any offense involving driving under the influence, driving while intoxicated or the equivalent within the five (5) year period preceding the background check.

A person convicted of a DUI-related offense within the five (5) year period preceding the background check may be allowed by TU's Vice President for Volunteer Operations to participate in a TU Camp, in the Vice President's sole discretion.

Possible Disqualification.

For all other criminal offenses or felony convictions older than the five-year period, TU's Vice President for Volunteer Operations shall review the applicant's situation on a case-by-case basis and decide, in his or her sole discretion, whether to allow the person to participate in the camp. Factors to be considered include, but are not limited to:

- The nature and severity of the criminal conduct
- The position for which the person seeks to volunteer
- The length of time since the criminal conduct occurred
- The circumstances under which the crime was committed
- The degree of rehabilitation
- The likelihood that the person will commit the crime again
- The number of crimes committed by the prospective volunteer

Sexual Abuse Policy

- TU has developed a *Sexual Abuse Policy* that adds another layer of protection for youth involved in TU activities and for TU volunteers, TU employees, and other TU-retained staff.
- Camps Directors are responsible for assuring that all of TU's volunteers, TU's employees, and other TU-retained staff who participate in TU Camps read the *Sexual Abuse Policy* and sign the last page of it.
- Camp Directors must keep the signed Sexual Abuse Policy forms on file and verify, before the start of a TU Camp, to TU's Youth Education Director, Franklin Tate at ftate@tu.org, that all of TU's volunteers, TU's employees, and other TU-retained staff participating in the camp have signed the form. Camp staff should go over the Sexual Abuse Policy during one of the early meetings prior to camp and have as many of TU's volunteers, TU's employees, and other

TU-retained staff participating in TU Camps as possible sign the form at that time.

- Volunteers and employees who attend a TU Camp to give a single presentation to the whole group, for a single day, do not need to sign off on the *Sexual Abuse Policy*