LEGAL ALERT!

FBI BACKGROUND CHECK DEADLINE EXTENDED

But Deadlines for State Police Background Check and DHS Clearances Remain

What does the new law do?
Act 18 of 2020 amended the Child Protective Services Law (CPS Law) to, among other things, add a new Section 6387. Section 6387 grants certain individuals who would otherwise be required to obtain an FBI background check recertification during the COVID-19 emergency an extension until Dec. 31, 2020, to obtain the recertification.

Does new Section 6387 affect the recertifications of the State Police criminal background check and the DHS child abuse clearance?
No. New Section 6387 requires individuals who need recertifications of their State Police criminal background checks or their DHS child abuse clearances to do so within 60 months of their previous certifications, even if that deadline falls within the period of the COVID-19 disaster emergency. Both the State Police criminal background check and DHS child abuse clearance may be completed online. School employees needing to renew those two checks should do so now.

Central-Western Region News

A Message from Maria Heinrich
Central-Western Region President and Fourth Grade Teacher

CW Teachers Finding Ways To Support Our Region: National Nurses Week was on May 6-12, during an unprecedented time of a global pandemic when we’re counting on our healthcare workers the most. CW Region members showed their support for Healthcare-PSEA members, our affiliate union who represents the nurses at Somerset and Indiana Hospitals. CW members donated donuts, pizzas and snack bags to our brothers and sisters working on the front lines.

In addition to supporting our nurses, CW Region donated $100 to food banks and similar charitable organizations in each of the six counties we represent. Those recipients are: Somerset County Mobile Food Bank, Greater Johnstown Christian Fellowship, Bedford Food Outreach, INC, Brookville Food Pantry, Lecchburg Food Pantry – PATH Program and the Indiana County Community Action Program Food Bank.

Somerset EA Members Natalie Barnhart and Kayla Bowser distributed donuts to show appreciation for Healthcare-PSEA members at Somerset Hospital.

County Meeting Correction: There is no online meeting scheduled in May for the Cambria County Coordinating Council.
Staff Spotlight
BOBBIE BRAY, Associate

Where are you from? Originally from Ebensburg but have lived in Richland for 27 years now.

How long have you worked at PSEA? More than 7 years. Before that, I was the managing partner’s assistant at a law firm. Prior to that, I was a 9-1-1 Dispatcher.

What ages are your kids? I have 28-year-old twins (one deceased), a 27-year-old, a 24-year-old, a 21-year-old and 18-year-old twins.

Facebook or Twitter? Facebook for sure. I do not understand Twitter. Plus I can find myself scrolling for days on Twitter.

First place you want to go when the stay at home order is lifted? Visit my children and grandchildren, and TJ Maxx

What’s the last show you binge-watched? Game of Thrones

Favorite nearby restaurant and must-have dish? Nyko’s for their Sushi, the Volcano Roll is my favorite.

Name one thing you’re looking forward to this summer: Sunshine and family time at the lake

From Region Staff: Most Frequently Emailed Questions

Q: Am I required to complete an SLO for the 2019-20 school year?
A: PDE has excluded all measures of student achievement from the evaluation system for the 2019-20 school year. This means that SLO results should not be included in the summative rating for a professional or temporary professional employee. An employer may use SLOs for purposes other than educator evaluation and may require educators to complete SLOs for those purposes. Employees should follow the directives of their employers regarding SLOs. If your employer plans to use SLOs as a part of the educator evaluation process, please contact your UniServ Representative.

Q: Must schools continue to offer instruction during the closure?
A: Yes. Act 13 requires each public school entity to make a good faith effort to plan to offer continuity of education to students using alternative means during the period of closure. PDE must provide guidance to school entities, and intermediate units may provide technical assistance. Public school entities must submit their plans to PDE and must post their plans on their websites.

Q: If we were bargaining before the COVID-19 closures, can we continue to bargain?
A: Yes, but this is treated on a local to local basis. Some locals and districts have continued virtual bargaining, others have placed bargaining on hold until in-person gatherings are once again permitted.

Q: Will I lose retirement benefits due to the school closure?
A: No. No employee of any public school entity who was employed as of March 13, 2020 will receive more or less credit, or contribute more or less, than he or she would otherwise have contributed pursuant to the Public School Employees’ Retirement Code had the COVID-19 pandemic not occurred, had the minimum instructional day requirement not been waived, or had the Secretary not taken one of the actions he was authorized to take under Act 13.