

# EASTHAMPTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## EASTHAMPTON MUNICIPAL BUILDING

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Nancy Follansbee, Superintendent

Date: August 12, 2015

To: All Employees (including substitutes, coaches, advisors, and student teachers)

From: Nancy Follansbee, Superintendent

Re: Background Checks Law – School Committee Policy

On January 10, 2013 Governor Patrick signed Chapter 459 of the Acts of 2012, “An Act Relative to Background Checks”. On June 10, 2014, the Easthampton School Committee voted on Background Checks Policy #GBL-R for the district with regard to the Act Relative to Background Checks. This new law expands what public schools, already do in conducting state CORI checks on all employees at least once every three years. Easthampton Public Schools currently run CORI checks on all employees every three years (majority of employee and substitute CORI records expire September 2015).

This Act creates a national criminal database check for all school employees and contractor employees. For all current K-12 school employees and early educators, the law directs the Board of Early Education and Care and the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to adopt regulations that phase in national background checks over three years. Unlike state CORI checks that have no associated fee, individuals will pay a fee to comply with this requirement that ranges from up to \$35 for non-licensed employees to up to \$55 for license-holders. The Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS) will design the system to meet this new national background check requirement. Substitute teachers are school employees under the new law and, therefore, must submit their fingerprints for the state and national checks. If substitute teachers hold educator license issued under G.L. c. 71 § 38G, they will pay a fee up to \$55; otherwise, they will pay a fee up to \$35.

All current or existing school and early education employees are currently required to submit to fingerprint-based background checks on a phased-in schedule with a deadline of the beginning of the 2016-17 school year. Under the new law, it is anticipated that an individual would need to submit his/her fingerprints only once. EOPSS expects that the FBI will bring into operation a new “Rap Back” service in the next two to three years. That service would allow authorized agencies to receive notification of subsequent criminal activity reported to the FBI based on previously submitted fingerprints. As in the past, employees will be required to submit to state CORI checks (which are not fingerprint-based) at least once every three years. There is no fee for CORI checks.

The Statewide Applicant Fingerprint Identification Services (SAFIS) Morpho Trust USA IdentoGo™ registration website is available to begin scheduling fingerprinting appointments and includes information on fingerprinting sites. You will be required to provide the Easthampton Public Schools ESE Organization Code 00860000. You will find the SAFIS Registration Guide for Pre-K-12<sup>th</sup> Grade Education (ESE) on our website at [www.epsd.us](http://www.epsd.us).

For more information please visit:

<http://www.mass.gov/edu/2013newsupdates/frequently-asked-questions-regarding-background-checks.html>

<http://www.malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2012/Chapter459>

For questions specific to elementary and secondary education, please contact the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education at [expandedbackgroundchecks@doe.mass.edu](mailto:expandedbackgroundchecks@doe.mass.edu).

For general questions about the new law, please call the Executive Office of Education at (617) 979-8340.

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