Special Olympics
Pennsylvania

<u>Did You Know?</u>
SOPA Background Checks

- **<u>SOPA, by SOI Risk Management requirement, does not accept outside clearance reports</u>**, and requires all volunteers to have clearances done using our vendor, Sterling Volunteers (formerly Verified Volunteers). SOPA covers the cost of this required clearance process, and the clearances are good for 5 years.

- SOPA requires two different clearances: the state and national criminal background check (done on the Sterling Volunteers website), as well as the PA child abuse clearance (done on the PA state Compass site). **<u>The SOPA clearance process can be completed in one sitting in +/- 45 minutes. Typical turnaround time to get a completed report from Sterling Volunteers is 14 days</u>**.

- While it is possible to complete a PA Child Abuse clearance without using an authorization code, SOPA requires it for two reasons: it allows SOPA direct access to the full clearance report, <u>and i</u>t allows SOPA to cover all the costs of the clearance. **<u>If the red authorization code provided by Sterling Volunteers is not used, SOPA will NOT get the PA Child Abuse report and therefore, consider the volunteer incomplete and INELIGIBLE.</u>**

- **<u>As long as it has been less than 90 days since you started the clearance process, you do not have to start over from the beginning, and can just redo/complete the PA child abuse portion</u>**. Simply log back into your PA compass site and redo the child abuse clearance, but this time, remember to input the red authorization code at the end of the clearance where indicated.
  If it has been over 90 days since you started the clearance process, that clearance order will have closed as incomplete and you will need to start over from the beginning. In this instance, please contact SOPA (email: ClassAPAVolunteerDisclosureStatement@specialolympicspa.org) to restart your clearances.

- **<u>As a SOPA Volunteer, you are always able to log into your profile on the Sterling Volunteers website (www.sterlingvolunteers.com) to retrieve a complete, detailed copy of your background clearance report including state and national findings, as well as the PA child abuse review.</u>** Or, if you would prefer separate reports sent directly from the state, you can go to the PATCH website (PA Access to Criminal History) at https://epatch.state.pa.us/Home.jsp and follow the steps for a new volunteer record check to print off a copy of your PA criminal background check. For a copy of your PA child abuse clearance, you can log back into your PA Compass profile to print off a copy of that clearance.

If you have any questions or issues with your code, or need any assistance in completing your clearances, do not hesitate to contact the Sterling Volunteers Customer Care team at: SpecialOSupport@SterlingVolunteers.com or call 1-855-326-1860, Opt 3.