



Michigan Youth Flag Football Background Screening Process

There are several changes this year in the background check process. These changes affect all new coaches and many coaches returning from season to season. These changes are in response to serious budgetary concerns, increased responsiveness to current and newly-revised Michigan state statutes, and the need for a strengthened and overall more consistent background check program.

Accordingly, the background check program for coaches is as outlined and contains the following provisions:

Coaches

Background checks are required for all Coaches (football and cheer, head and assistant coaching positions). The organization Michigan Youth Flag Football uses to complete the league background checks is National Center for Safety Initiatives.

NCSI's Mission: To serve as a leading resource in an overall effort to eradicate harm to organizations and communities across the globe through increased awareness, the creation of national standards, and the integration of fully-managed background screening programs.

- The programs and services of NCSI directly reduce the incidence of harm to children and protect youth-serving organizations from child predators. Our shared goal is the overall eradication of child abuse and molestation.
- NCSI's background screening programs are recognized as the "Standard of Care" in the youth-serving industry.

NCSI was formed in partnership with the National Council of Youth Sports (NCYS), with the goal of significantly increasing the level of safety for our youth.

Background Checks are paid for Bi-Annually but are checked each year. Currently, the cost of the background check is paid for by Michigan Youth Flag Football.

Because of the unique relationship between coaches and athletes, and the opportunity for individual contact in private practice and game locations, there are special requirements for background screening.



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All Michigan Youth Flag Football coaches are required to go through a full background check prior to approval of being a volunteer coach. All athletic coaches are required to be screened every two years. Upon initial assignment, you will be contacted by your League Coordinator and given instructions as to how to complete your background check on-line.

Coaches Who Have Already Undergone a Background Check

Coaches who are paid by non-Michigan Youth Flag Football sources, such as a schools, hospitals, law enforcement, etc., have the same screening requirements as other volunteer coaches, including a re-check every two years. The League Coordinator assigned to your league will inform you as to whether your background check is current or is in need of updating. All background checks must be current and in good standing as of the date of the coaches meeting and prior to being issued a coaches tee shirt or lanyard.

It remains incumbent on Michigan Youth Flag Football League Coordinators to very strictly monitor their leagues to insure that no coach is given a team roster or coaches' tee shirt until a Coaches Code of Conduct has been signed and a background check has been completed and passed.

1. Why does Michigan Youth Flag Football have a background screening program?

Background Checks have been implemented by Michigan Youth Flag Football to:

1. Promote a safe, nurturing, and supportive athletic environment in which youth athletes can pursue their athletic goals;
2. Provide an environment where parents of children can feel good about allowing their child to participate in the sport of flag football and cheerleading; and

Please note; this screening is not intended to serve as a profiling tool and is not used to determine coaching eligibility, nor can screening guarantee that incidents of abuse by



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coaches will not occur. Background screening is designed as a preventative risk management tool, but does not insure inappropriate behavior will not occur.

2. Who conducts the background screens?

Michigan Youth Flag Football has selected National Center for Safety Initiatives as its national provider. National Center for Safety Initiatives is a specialty consulting firm that provides professional background screening for all types of agencies. More information about National Center for Safety Initiatives is available on the NCSI website at www.ncsisafe.com. The Technical Support Desk at NCSI can be contacted by telephone at 440-542-9690.

3. What do we, as coaches, have to do to comply with this program?

Michigan Youth Flag Football requires any coach who has access to or direct contact with youth athletes (under the age of 18) during scheduled practices or games to:

1. submit for a background screen to National Center for Safety Initiatives; and
2. sign and submit the Coaches Code of Conduct form to Michigan Youth Flag Football.

This includes individuals who regularly attend practices or assist with game activities, or supervising Michigan Youth Flag Football athletes.

4. What type of offenses are coaches being screened for?

National Center for Safety Initiatives uses the National Council of Youth Sports (NCYS) standard guidelines as screening criteria. The following offenses are being screened for:

Convictions for the five following crimes will prompt a determination that an applicant 'does not meet' the criteria to serve a youth-serving organization:

- Any felony (any crime punishable by confinement greater than one year)
 - Defined on the basis of exposure for the offense for which the defendant was convicted, pled guilty or pled nolo contendere. If pled down, then the crime to which the defendant ultimately pled.



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- Defined as all crimes punishable by greater than one year in jail or prison, regardless of how characterized by jurisdiction. If range, alternate sentencing, or indeterminate sentencing, outer range greater than one year.
- Any lesser crime involving force or threat of force against a person.
- Any lesser crime in which sexual relations is an element, including "victimless" crimes of a sexual nature (including pornography).
- Any lesser crime involving controlled substances (not paraphernalia or alcohol).
- Any lesser crime involving cruelty to animals.

Additionally, NCSI will issue a Red Light determination for any disclosed criterion criminal offense and/or reported criterion criminal offenses that are in "pending" status.

5. During the application process why must I provide my social security number?

The social security number provides the necessary information (along with your name and date of birth) to produce the most thorough and accurate background screen. Screening based on name, date of birth, address history and social security number is standard throughout the industry. The Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) is the federal statute that outlines the basic laws and regulations that govern the background screening industry. It is also important to note that National Center for Safety Initiatives will not share your SSN with Michigan Youth Flag Football or any other entity.

6. What if an individual has previously had a background check performed?

The coach will still be required to have a background check performed by Michigan Youth Flag Football. The current reality of the industry is that there is no national clearinghouse for this type of information. Additionally, there are no standard criteria by which search reports are evaluated. Various organizations, businesses, and agencies use different criteria to determine eligibility for approving an individual's background screen. And, because of privacy concerns and certain requirements imposed by the Fair Credit Reporting Act, there is significant reluctance to share information between organizations.



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7. How do we know if our coaches' applications have been approved?

Coaches who have successfully completed the Michigan Youth Flag Football coach application process (including having a child currently registered as a Michigan Youth Flag Football athlete and successful background screen) will be issued a coaches tee shirt that must be worn during all games. This is indication to all that the coach is in "good standing."

An applicant will not be approved if: 1) he/she does not have a child currently registered with Michigan Youth Flag Football; 2) he/she has not submitted a background screen application or Coaches Code of Conduct during the current membership season; or 3) his/her coach application is denied due to information revealed during the background screening process.

Michigan Youth Flag Football reserves the right to substitute or assign a coach should no parents from the team be willing or able to assist with coaching. All assigned coaches are still required to undergo background screening.

8. What should I do if my screening returns incorrect or inaccurate criminal information?

There will be times, particularly if you have a very common name, when a background screening will return information that doesn't belong to you. When such information results in a "red light" initial screen, you will be advised of the negative information by National Center for Safety Initiatives and the following guidelines will apply:

NCSI uses one commercial data source to provide the SSN Trace. If you believe there is inaccurate data present on your SSN Trace, you may contact NCSI to discuss your dispute. NCSI will contact the commercial data source and will submit the dispute on your behalf. This company has procedures in place to handle consumer disputes and NCSI will work with them during the dispute process. You will be contacted by NCSI as well as by the commercial data source upon completion.



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9. If my background screening returns information that disqualifies me from being a Michigan Youth Flag Football coach in good standing who will make the final decision to approve or deny my application? Do I have the opportunity to appeal that decision? How do I initiate an appeal?

If the background screen returns a finding of a potential disqualifier and you acknowledge the information contained in the screen is yours, you will be provided the opportunity to clarify the report. The decision of NCSI issuing a green (approved) light or red (not approved) light will be the determining factor as to whether or not a coach is approved.

10. Who will be notified if an application is denied?

If the National Screening Panel determines that the application should be denied, the National Center for Safety Initiatives will notify the following individuals by email:

- applicant (coach)
- Michigan Youth Flag Football Executive Director
- Michigan Youth Flag Football League Coordinator

The notification will not indicate the offenses or content of the background check report. It will only indicate that the application has been denied and that the coach is not eligible to be involved in Michigan Youth Flag Football practices or activities.

11. What if we do not submit a background check?

Parents are likely to choose to place their children with other youth programs that evidence a commitment to safeguarding their youth members by conducting criminal background screening on all persons affiliated with the organization. By not submitting your request to coach and background check you are ineligible to participate as a coach with the Michigan Youth Flag Football program.