

Dear USATF Member Club:

This letter is to inform you that beginning in 2007, USA Track & Field Missouri Valley is implementing a background screening program for all coaches and volunteers who come in contact with youth athletes during registered club practices or other club-related track and field activities.

This initiative is following the lead of other youth-based organizations, such as Little League Baseball, Pop Warner Football and American Youth Soccer Organization in ensuring that we provide our youth with the safest environment possible in which to thrive as athletes.

We realize that your club seeks to attract the most qualified volunteers to administer your programs and activities. At the same time, we all must be aware that this could make your club a target for those with criminal backgrounds, including sexual predators. The background screening is intended to preserve the safety and security of our youth members. Additionally, having all of your coaches and volunteers properly screened may protect you and your club from possible criminal or civil liability, and/or loss of personal assets or depletion of club assets resulting from costly litigation.

The intent of the background screening is not to arbitrarily exclude volunteers who may have a criminal conviction in their past; rather, it is to identify individuals who may pose a risk to children and limit the potential for future harm.

Attached you will find a "Question & Answer" sheet which should provide you with more insight into the program and answer many of the questions you may have.

Youth club coaches and volunteers who have successfully completed the USATF application process (including the background screening) will have their names posted on the USATF web site as being in "good standing." Only these individuals will receive the protection of USATF's practice insurance liability program. Additionally, if a lawsuit is filed against your club because of an act performed by a volunteer who is not in "good standing" your club will not be covered.

A club coach or volunteer's name will not appear on the USATF web site if: 1) she or he is not a current USATF member; 2) he or she fails to submit the Coach/Volunteer Application form (including signing the "Background Screening Acknowledgement"); or 3) his or her club coach/volunteer application is denied due to information revealed during the background screening process, or for any other reason.

Please submit the club membership application form and club practice schedule along with the \$30 club fee to Susan Melgares, 2345 Brockman, Manhattan, KS 66502 (\$100 late fee for renewing competitive clubs if after May 1)

Because of the sensitive nature, please submit the Coach/Volunteer Application to the address on the top-right hand corner of the form. There is no fee with this application.

Sincerely,

Mark Stanbrough
Missouri Valley USATF President