



## CPS Field Experience Guide (06/2021)

Field Experience is defined by CPS as 5 or more hours observing in a classroom and/or school environment. These hours are often required by Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) to obtain credit toward an education preparation program. Field experience may also be referred to as observational hours, practicum experience, pre-student teaching, or pre-clinical experience. In a school year, the CPS Talent Office welcomes over 1,500 field experience students and partners with over 50 Institutions of Higher Education (IHE).

**The Field Experience Approval Notice is valid for all academic terms until the point of student teaching, at which time the student must complete the CPS Student Teaching approval process.**

*The CPS Field Experience Program is for service at CPS district schools and Academy for Urban School Leadership (AUSL) schools. University coordinators work to place students with cooperating teachers who teach in the same content area as the student is earning licensure. The [CPS School Locator](#) is a great resource to learn about local schools and view the governance/management network. For placements at charter, contract, option, or private schools please contact the school directly to inquire about field experience procedures.*

**Field Experience Registration** Prospective field experience students must follow all field experience guidelines established by their institution of higher education (IHE). Additionally, the IHE must be an affiliated student teaching partner.

**We review candidates on a rolling basis!**

Register at [www.teach.cps.edu/student-teacher](http://www.teach.cps.edu/student-teacher)

**Effective January 2018, active CPS employees and CPS volunteers (Level I and Level II) are required to complete all the steps below prior to the start of field experience.**

**Background Check** [Accurate Biometrics](#) is the contracted vendor for State of Illinois and FBI fingerprint-based background checks.

1. Download and print the [CPS Field Experience Background Check Form](#).
2. The charge for fingerprinting is \$53.00 and can be paid by company check, money order, cashier's check or MasterCard/Visa. No cash or personal checks are accepted. (This is a discounted rate that has been negotiated for CPS student candidates and differs from the rate listed on the Accurate Biometrics website).
3. You will be required to present a valid **state-issued photo ID**.
4. Bring all materials to any [Accurate Biometrics location](#). Fingerprints are sent directly to the CPS Background Check Team to be reviewed.

**PLEASE NOTE:**

1. Save your Accurate Biometrics receipt with your Transaction Control Number.
2. **Ten days** after you register, you will receive an email asking you to upload your Accurate Biometrics receipt. Be sure to complete this step in order to ensure your background check is processed in a timely manner.

## Approval Notification

*The Approval Notice is contingent on the successful completion of all approval tasks, including: completed registration (Step 2), and clear background check results (Step 3).* This notice authorizes the student to begin field experience. It will be emailed to the student and university coordinator listed on the student's registration. Field experience students must share their Approval Notice with the CPS principal and CPS teacher at their school placement before reporting to service.

To ensure the highest level of safety for our school communities, students are **NOT AUTHORIZED** to report to a CPS school until they have received an Approval Notice. Thank you for helping us ensure the highest level of safety for our schools and communities.

If an Approval Notice is not received within 15 days of fingerprinting, please contact your IHE coordinator and [studentteach@cps.edu](mailto:studentteach@cps.edu) for next steps. We look forward to welcoming you to CPS!

### Special Circumstances

**If you are aware of any arrests/charges/convictions** that may appear on your criminal background report, *begin the fingerprinting process far in advance*, since it may require 30 or more days to process results. Begin to prepare additional documents outlined on the [Background Check Guidelines](#), which may be requested by the CPS Office of Safety and Security. Any background check that does not produce a "clear" result will be required to go before the CPS Criminal Background Review Committee, and the Committee will make the final decision regarding field experience approval.

**If you are an international student and you do not have a social security number** you are still eligible to complete your fingerprinting at an Accurate Biometrics location. If you encounter any issues, please email [backgroundcheck@cps.edu](mailto:backgroundcheck@cps.edu) and [studentteach@cps.edu](mailto:studentteach@cps.edu).

**Out-of-State Participants:** Candidates who are physically out-of-state and unable to visit an Accurate Biometrics location are advised to take the following steps to ensure their fingerprints are properly submitted to Accurate Biometrics. More detailed instructions can be found at the [Accurate Biometrics Out-of-State Guidelines](#).

- ✓ Go to a local Police Station and request an FBI Fingerprint Card (FD-258). The Police Station will take your ink fingerprints and affix them to the card. If necessary, you can fingerprint at any licensed fingerprint contractor, however, additional fees may apply.
- ✓ Mail the following 4 items to:

**Accurate Biometrics - Illinois Licensing**  
**500 Park Blvd, Suite 1260**  
**Itasca, IL 60143**  
**RE: CPS Field Experience Program**

1. The FBI Fingerprint Card FD-258 (pages 12-13). Required information includes: full name, date of birth, home address, sex, height, weight, hair color, eye color, place of birth, reason fingerprinted, social security number, signature of official taking the prints, signature of person fingerprinted, and date.

2. The [CPS Field Experience Background Check Form](#). Be sure to complete all 5 pages and include your email address so you can receive a computer-generated receipt indicating the Transaction Control Number (TCN).
3. The [Identity Verification Certifying Statement \(page 6\)](#). Section 1 should be completed by the candidate. Section 2 should be completed by the authorized provider during the fingerprinting. Section 3 can be left blank since it is not applicable.
4. A **money order** in the amount of **\$53.00** made out to Accurate Biometrics. (This is a discounted rate negotiated by CPS and differs from the rate listed on the Accurate Biometrics website). If you would like to pay by **credit card**, print and mail the [Credit Card Payment Form \(page 7\)](#). Don't forget to include the expiration date and three digit security code of the credit card that you are using.

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### **Will background checks from other vendors be accepted?**

**No.** CPS cannot accept background checks from outside vendors and agencies. You must fingerprint at an Accurate Biometrics location using the CPS Fingerprinting Background Authorization & Release Form.

#### **If I did not receive an Approval Notice, can I start field experience?**

**No.** To ensure the highest level of safety for our students and school communities, an Approval Notice is required from every prospective field experience student.

#### **Can I obtain my background check results even though the results go to CPS?**

**Yes.** You may request a copy of your background check results up to a year after your fingerprints were processed. To request your results, please contact [backgroundcheck@cps.edu](mailto:backgroundcheck@cps.edu) to obtain a copy.

#### **Do I need to complete the field experience approval process if I plan to complete less than 5 total hours of classroom observations in CPS?**

**No.** If you plan to complete less than 5 hours, you only need permission from the cooperating school and school administrators. Every CPS school has different procedures for visitors, and you likely will be asked to register as a Level I Volunteer before reporting to the school.