

Dear all,

Forgive me – this is long. Yet you need to know the process with regards to background screening. I beg you to please go to the website and read all of the materials and the FAQ on background checks. A tremendous amount of information is also in *Technique*. Please keep in mind this is a process which continues to evolve. Changes have taken place over the past 12 months which have made for a better process for our members. The experts regarding these issues are at NCSI and in the Member Services department, specifically Erica Koven and Kathy Feldmann. My member services staff can answer many questions on this as well. I know you all realize my department is not the creator of the rules; we are the administrators/facilitators of the membership programs. This is a mandate requirement for membership and is deemed so by the Board of Directors.

There are 4 requirements at this time for professional membership:

- Payment of fees for membership – online, fax, phone, mail
- Minimum age of 18 and above for professional. Junior professional for 16 & 17 years old. (Jr Pros do not do background check)
- Current safety certification (may recertify up to one full year prior to expiration). May take online course 24/7/365. Safety courses will be at all regional and national congresses.
- Received Green light from NCSI for background check and this green light information has been sent to USAG.

With regards to background checks, **the first place the person must check is with NCSI**. The pending member (non-member) can go online to NCSI and look up their status. Go to the [usa-gymnastics.org](http://usa-gymnastics.org) website and hit Member Services button on top of home page. You will be at the Home page of Member Services and the notice the link for personal look up of status on NCSI is on the front page. Or they may call NCSI. Call toll free 1-866 – 833-7100.

Over 13,200 people have completed background screening and have received green lights. So what do I know after 15 months of going through this process?

- The majority of background checks go through with results reported in 5 – 10 days.
- Most background checks cost less than \$ 30. ( 70 % cost \$ 21.50)
- There are additional fees and/or checks for additional last names and/or two or more counties lived in or counties listed/attached to a social security number. This has always been announced and is on our website and is covered in the FAQ and in issues of *Technique*.
- NCSI contacts the members by email and often with a follow up phone call asking the person to contact them. Our people have not followed up when they needed to in a timely fashion because they deleted the email, did not read it, email went to spam account and they did not check spam, did not recognize NCSI. They did not get the phone message or again did not recognize NCSI and did not follow up. Other things that happen are failures of email and voice mail.
- Very often NCSI does not require money but needs to clarify information either through the phone call or with a copy of the passport, license, or birth certificate.
- If additional fees or information are needed, the process will move as quickly as the member returns call to NCSI. Therefore it can take 3 weeks to many months if the member never makes the contact.

- The person has the right to dispute additional charges. This is stated on the NCSI website. They must talk to a person prior to paying the additional fees.
- In the last quarter of 2008, we instituted a new system with regards to letting the members know they are in pending and what they should do about it. This was sent via email. Again the problems or excuses as to why they did not take action are the same as listed in number 4 bullet point. Since many members still did not respond to this call to action we at USA Gymnastics sent out a Red Light Status notice to these people stating again what they should do. The good news is surprisingly many did receive and read this Red Light email! Many of these have been resolved and a green light was issued.
- We spend hours every day on this process. Calls with the members, calls with NCSI, helping our members resolve issues etc. but the most efficient way to get things moving with the background check is for the member to contact NCSI and get all issues completed with them. Then USA Gymnastics/Member services can help in the next steps, if there has to be any next steps.
- NCSI sends USAG a file of green light members every day Monday through Friday. Erica Koven uploads this information into each member's record daily.
- NCSI sends the notice of any Red Light status daily to Kathy Feldmann via email. I look at these every day and go through the process to change the status to green light or contact the person to allow an appeal of the red light. The overturn of a Red to a Green may be done with 1-3 days. The appeal process may take up to 60 days depending on how quickly the person gets information and forms to Kathy Feldmann at USAG. Again the responsibility is on the individual person
- I believe some people have pushed the envelope as much as they can and decided not to do anything about completing the membership until such time comes that they are denied access onto the floor. People took advantage of the verification forms. Please note there was a 12 month GRACE Period for the roll out of this new program.
- I know some people fib or place blame on others. I have heard it all. I also know that some errors and/or omissions have been made and things need to be corrected. However we can not do anything about correction if the person does not take the proper action.
- I know this is not your job to check on these people, however so many of you have reached out to me I wanted to help those of you who requested help, information and a list of pending members.
- I know we are here to help you and please never hesitate to email or call. Erica and I are your main points of contact.
- I know screaming, yelling and cursing at my staff does not hasten the process to solution.
- I know this is now long enough and thank you for getting to the end of this email.

Thank you for helping us help our/your members. Wishing you a fun, safe and successful year.

Kind regards,  
Kathy

Kathy Feldmann  
USA Gymnastics  
Vice President - Member Services