

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



The United States Bowling Congress developed the Registered Volunteer Program (RVP) that impacts every person who has contact with young bowlers who participate in USBC youth leagues, tournaments and/or other programs.

## **The USBC Registered Volunteer Program accomplishes a very important goal:**

It ensures that all volunteers who have regular contact with USBC youth bowlers are qualified to do so. It includes a mandatory criminal background screening designed to remove and/or discourage those who might harm our kids.

Child abuse, sexual misconduct and domestic violence are insidious crimes committed by people who often look and act "normal." The only practical way to make youth bowling safe is to identify those who refuse to abide by acceptable standards of behavior and conduct, remove them from contact with our young people and establish barriers to prevent other predators from gaining access to children who bowl.

Volunteers have been participating in the RVP program since 2006 which included a screening process by the National Center for Safety Initiatives (NCSI). Each individual screened was either given a "green light" or a "red light" determination. When a volunteer receives a green light he/she receives a lanyard and Registered Volunteer badge to wear when working with USBC Youth. A red light determination means that individual is not allowed to work with youth. Anyone working with USBC Youth should be wearing the badge.

The program has been in place for a few years but USBC, working in conjunction with NCSI, has now improved the mechanics of the process to a more user-direct program. On the following pages are some of the more frequently asked questions regarding the program and the changes.

## **What is the Registered Volunteer Program supposed to accomplish?**

It's designed to protect children who bowl in USBC Youth programs from those who might do them harm. This will be accomplished by:

- Providing USBC with the tools to identify and eliminate undesirable volunteers who may already be involved in our youth programs.
- Erecting barriers that will discourage, if not prevent, predators from trying to establish relationships through bowling.
- Providing everyone involved with rules and guidelines to monitor our programs on a continuing basis.
- Establishing standards that will uniformly protect youth bowlers across the nation and serve as a model other youth sports and social organizations can use.

# GET BEHIND THE BADGE



**REGISTERED VOLUNTEER PROGRAM**  
DO YOU KNOW WHO'S ON THE LANES WITH YOUR KIDS?

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**Why should we continue to do this? There have not been any red lights in our town since this program began.**

In USBC's view, this is a zero tolerance program. One child harmed is one too many.

The unfortunate reality is bowling does have a problem with undesirable adults involved in USBC Youth programs. USBC local associations have voluntarily reported six incidents in the past two years.

Thus far, the USBC Registered Volunteer Program identified more than 200 "red light" individuals (those who do not qualify to work with USBC Youth bowlers under our RVP criteria). Without taking proactive measures to protect our children, bowling is vulnerable.

Consider the following:

- The American Medical Association estimates 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 8 boys in America will be molested or abused before they reach age 18.
- 67% of victims of sex offenders are under age 18.
- 90% of sex offenders are known to their victims – relatives, friends or authority figures who gain a child's trust.

**Why did USBC make the change from the association and Registered Volunteer Supervisor (RVS) overseeing the program locally to individuals enrolling?**

There are many reasons, including:

- Streamlines the process
- Saves time and money for the local association
- Less paperwork
- Process is simplified for the volunteer. He/she will work directly online.
- Decreases the opportunity for confidential information to be shared
- In the vast majority of cases, the cost of an individual background screening will be reduced from \$25 for two years to \$21.25.

**Will there be a need for a Registered Volunteer Supervisor (RVS)?**

As of Aug. 1, 2009 there no longer will be a need for a RVS. Collecting Volunteer Enrollment Forms, fees, etc. is no longer necessary as the new user-direct process will eliminate the need for the RVS to administer the program and will free up his/her time for other value added services.

**Who will take care of things in my community? Without an RVS, what's to prevent "bad folks" from slipping through the cracks?**

Just like today, everyone should be "looking out" for the youth. It will be the responsibility of center staff, coaches, league coordinators, parents, association volunteers and bowlers to ensure that anyone working with USBC Youth is wearing a Registered Volunteer Badge. If they're not, then ask them to leave and make your center management aware of it.

**Is it still an optional program for proprietors?**

Yes, bowling center participation remains optional. However, because the RVP is a valuable service a center can provide to its customers, USBC encourages every bowling center to participate. If a center does not participate, the center employees and any volunteers in the center affiliated with USBC Youth programs are not required to participate in the RVP.

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## Is it still an optional program for proprietors? -continued

Each center, participating or not, is asked to complete a Center Enrollment Form indicating its decision to participate or not participate. By doing so, the proprietor acknowledges he/she was given an opportunity to offer this program and may assume responsibility if a USBC Youth member is harmed by a center employee or one of its volunteers. Failure to complete the Center Enrollment Form will mean USBC may, at its discretion, deny, or revoke certification of all USBC Youth activities conducted in said center.

## Who must enroll to become a Registered Volunteer?

Anyone 18 years of age or older who has regular physical or verbal contact with USBC Youth bowlers, holds a position of authority or supervision over USBC Youth programs, has an opportunity to establish a position of trust, and/or has an opportunity to build a one-on-one relationship through USBC Youth programs must register as a USBC Registered Volunteer.

Specific roles or positions within the USBC Youth program that require registration include:

### Positions(s) of authority:

- USBC Headquarters employees
- USBC National Board and Youth Committee members
- Local Youth association board members in non-merged associations
- Local Youth Committee members in merged associations
- Local Association Manager in merged and non-merged youth associations

### Opportunity to build one-on-one relationships:

- USBC Youth league officers
- USBC Youth league or tournament coaches
- USBC Youth tournament directors
- Non-family members who serve as overnight trip chaperones

Not every bowling center employee needs to go through the Registered Volunteer Program, only those 18 years of age and older who have direct, ongoing contact with USBC Youth bowlers.

For example, the following individuals may fit these criteria:

- Youth Director
- Bowling center manager

Center management may request registration for other employees.

Regardless of center participation, all applicable association leaders will be required to participate in the RVP.

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**What is the proprietor's role in this new process?**

The center's role has always been, in part, to help provide a safe environment for all youth. He/she will determine whether the center will participate in the program and if so, determine which individuals should go through the program.

The center would then monitor all individuals who work with the USBC Youth to ensure they are wearing their RVP badge.

**What do we do if our proprietor won't cooperate or lets someone who isn't wearing a current RVP badge work with USBC kids?**

Center participation is still optional. If it is a participating center and he/she allows someone without a badge to work with USBC Youth you should bring it to the attention of the center. The final step would be to contact USBC Headquarters at (800) 514-2695 extension 8243.

**Who will be notified of Red Lights?**

NCSI will send a formal letter to the individual and notify USBC Headquarters. It is the bowling center's responsibility to make sure volunteers who work with USBC Youth wear a current RVP badge.

**How will the association know who is green light and red light?**

Individuals will know who has a green light determination in two ways. First, they are wearing an RVP badge and second by searching "find a volunteer" on bowl.com.

**Is there a cost increase?**

No. While it will still cost \$20 for the official screening, administrative fees have been reduced from \$5 to \$1.25. The new total fee will be \$21.25 for two years rather than the previous \$25 except in areas or states that require additional fees for access to its data. (This issue is out of the control of USBC and NCSI.)

**How do I register?**

Registering will be simple. Detailed information is provided on bowl.com in the USBC Registered Volunteer Guide to Enrollment. Basically, individuals will log on to www.bowl.com and go to the Registered Volunteer section to view important documents (Fair Credit Reporting Act, Code of Conduct, Rules and Policies, etc.). He/she will be linked to the NCSI Web site where personal information will be entered. The volunteer will pay for the screening by credit card and NCSI will then begin the screening process.

**Will USBC still supply RVP lanyards/ID cards?**

Yes.

**What is NCSI's involvement?**

NCSI (National Center for Safety Initiatives) will continue to perform the background screenings.

**Who is responsible for the payment?**

Each individual who enrolls and/or renews will be responsible for the payment, by credit card. If the center or association has determined to pay for a screening(s) it will be up to them to reimburse the individual.

**Is there a way to do this and not use the Internet?**

In rare cases it could be done however there will be an additional fee from NCSI.

**How will I know it when it's time to go through it again?**

Each individual will receive an e-mail approximately 30 days prior to the expiration date. This will be the reminder to log on to www.bowl.com and begin the renewal process.

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**What is the security of this new system like?**

NCSI will continue to provide the highest levels of security to protect the privacy of USBC volunteers and their personal information according to the requirements of the Fair Credit Reporting Act.

**Can we still access find-a-volunteer to determine who is a Green Light?**

Yes, that will be the easiest way to find a Registered Volunteer.

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