



NCSI Criminal Background Screening Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Who is NCSI?

A: National Center for Safety Initiatives, known as the Gold Standard provider of background screening programs for youth serving organizations, is the authorized provider for all USA Swimming criminal background checks. NCSI has been a trailblazer in youth protection for nearly two decades and is recognized by the National Council of Youth Sports for its pioneering work. NCSI provides services to the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee, as well as to more than 60 national governing bodies in sport. NCSI is accredited by the Professional Background Screeners Association and has offices across the country.

Q: My background check doesn't expire until a later date (i.e. January 31, 2027), do I need to do a background check now with the new provider?

A: No, you do not need to complete a new background check until the month your background check is due to expire. Your current background check is valid until the expiration date listed on your member profile on your USA Swimming account.

Q: How do I submit my screening to NCSI?

A: After purchasing your USA Swimming membership, log in to SWIMS and go to the Education tab. Select the course Background Check. Click on View Info and then start to process your NCSI background screening.

Q: When applying for a background screening with NCSI, why am I getting asked to create an MFA?

A: NCSI requires multi-factor authentication (MFA) to protect your account and personal information. MFA adds an extra security step when you log in or submit sensitive details, helping prevent unauthorized access. You will be prompted to enter a phone number and create a password specifically for the background check system.

Q: Do I need to have an active email address?

A: Yes. An active email address is required to complete your background screening. NCSI's primary form of communication with you is via email. It is VERY IMPORTANT that you provide an email address and that you check it frequently following your initial application. Please add @ncsisafe.com to your accepted email domain list to receive notifications from NCSI.

Q: Who must complete the background screening?

A: The following individuals must complete the background screening:

- All USA Swimming non-athlete members subject to the exclusion below.
- All adult National Team and National Junior Team athletes.
- All adult athletes selected to participate on a national or international team, or an event to which the USOPC sends athletes.
- All adult athletes training at the Olympic and Paralympic Training Center.

Exclusion: The criminal background check requirement is waived for Junior Coaches and Junior Officials.

Individuals who have not completed the criminal background screening do not meet the eligibility requirements to participate with USA Swimming.

Q: What fee is associated with completing the required USA Swimming background screening through NCSI?

A: The background check costs \$30. The fee to renew the background check (every other year) is also \$30.

Q: How will I get access to the Applicant Portal?

A: After you complete the background check application, you will receive an email from NCSI with instructions for accessing the applicant portal using your secure login.

Once logged in, you can check real-time status updates and send messages directly to the NCSI support team if you have questions. Your messages are answered by a Customer Service representative, allowing you to get timely support and stay informed throughout the process.

Q: When does my background check expire?

A: Background checks are valid for two years. Your USA Swimming non-athlete membership card includes a "Valid Through" date for your background check and your safety certifications. Your background expiration date is also available through your USA Swimming Account.

Q: What information is needed to process my background screen?

A: The background screening application requires the following information:

- **Full Legal Name**
- **Address**
- **Date of Birth**
- **Social Security Number**
- **Government Issued ID (one of the following)**
 - **Drivers License**
 - **Passport**
 - **State ID**

All required fields are marked with an asterisk. We cannot complete the background screening if any of the required information is missing.

Q: Why does NCSI need my SSN?

A: USA Swimming requires a full SSN as part of your NCSI application to help prevent the use of false names or inaccurate information. It also aids in verifying your current address and identifying previous addresses, which is essential for determining the jurisdiction in which the background screening will be conducted.

Q: Can a non-citizen of the United States without a social security number complete the background screening requirement?

A: Yes, individuals with or without a social security number can submit their background check screening using the same submission instructions. However, the processing time may be longer, and the processing fees may differ from a domestic screen due to the need to conduct a Homeland Security Search.

Q: How long does it take to process my background screening?

A: Most background checks are completed within 5-10 business days. However, delays can occur in different states for various reasons such as court staffing or other delays, so it's important to plan accordingly. We advise submitting your background check on the first day of the month it is due to expire to avoid delays.

Q: What happens if I forgot my password for my NCSI background screening?

A: When you start your background screening, you'll enter your email address. The system will check whether you've screened before. If you have, you'll be prompted to either enter your password or select "Reset Password." Resetting your password will also allow you to set up MFA again if your phone number has changed.

Q: Does USA Swimming or NCSI perform a credit check during the background screening process?

A: No, neither USA Swimming nor NCSI conducts a credit check as part of the background screening process. As a Consumer Reporting Agency (CRA), NCSI complies with the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA), but credit checks are not included.

Q: Is the information supplied to NCSI secure?

A: NCSI is aligned with industry best practices regarding data security, including high level encryption to protect information submitted online. Internal security measures ensure that your personal information is only viewed as needed to process your screen by qualified personnel who are trained in handling confidential data. NCSI is PCI-compliant and does not share any personal information with third-parties.

Q: If I have a question mid-application, who can I contact?

A: You can contact NCSI during the hours of 8:30am – 5pm EST at 866-996-7412, or email NCSI at support@ncsisafe.com.

Q: How will I know if there's a problem with my background check or if NCSI needs information from me?

A: If more information is needed to complete your background screen, then NCSI will notify you via email. These messages are dispatched from the NCSI Verification Team using our server: support@ncsisafe.com. Your local affiliate name and your screening file number will appear in the subject line of the verification email.

Q: What can I do if I think my report is incorrect?

A: You will be provided an opportunity to alert NCSI of any questions or potential errors on your report. Email will be our primary way of communicating with you, so be sure to provide an accurate email address and check it regularly until your screen is complete. For any questions regarding inaccuracies, please reach out to compliance@ncsisafe.com.

Q: How do I obtain a status update, copy of, or receipt for my criminal background check screening?

A: Once you have submitted your application, you will be able to login to your Applicant Portal to view the status of your file. You can also reach out to NCSI's Support Team at support@ncsisafe.com or 866-996-7412.

Q: Will I be notified when my background screening is complete?

A: Yes, you will receive an email from NCSI that your background check is complete. Also, NCSI will transfer the results directly to USA Swimming so that the participation determination can be made and USA Swimming may make you eligible for membership.

Q: Why is my background screening taking longer than another registrant that submitted a background screen at the same time?

A: NCSI performs one or more county court searches and federal district court searches as part of the background screening. These involve getting information directly from the courts in question. Some courts may return information to NCSI the same day, while others can take longer. Once NCSI has information back from the courts, it is processed right away. Other delays may result when NCSI requests additional information from you.

Q: What information is provided to USA Swimming from my criminal background screening?

A: USA Swimming can be made aware of the content provided on a background screening report. Limited staff members of USA Swimming designated by the safe sport department may have access to the screening report.

Q. What is a Clear result?

A: A “Clear/Eligible Result” indicates criminal record information relating to USA Swimming's criteria was not sourced or reportable in the process and therefore a “Clear/Eligible” report was issued to USA Swimming.

Q.: What is an Ineligible result?

A: An “Ineligible Result” indicates that criminal record information relating to USA Swimming’s screening criteria was sourced in the process and therefore an “Ineligible” report was issued to USA Swimming for review.

Q: Will I know if my background screening report is Ineligible?

A: Yes. If NCSI sources criminal history information relating to USA Swimming’s screening criteria, you will be notified and provided information for your review. Pursuant to the Fair Credit Reporting Act, you will be provided an opportunity to alert NCSI of any questions or potential errors on your report. Email will be our primary way of communicating with you, so be sure to provide an accurate email address and check it regularly until your screen is complete. Please be sure to respond immediately if NCSI contacts you for additional information.

Q: Can I appeal participation decisions made by USA Swimming?

A: USA Swimming will use the report provided by NCSI to determine an individual’s eligibility for participation with USA Swimming in accordance with the USA Swimming established policies. Registrants have the right to appeal to a USA Swimming’s National Board of Review Special Panel, pursuant to the procedures outlined in USA Swimming’s Background Check Policy.

Q: May I receive a copy of my background screening report?

A: Yes, NCSI is happy to provide you with a copy of your background screening report and will require you to authenticate yourself before sending you a copy of your screening from their secure server support@ncsisafe.com . If you have any questions about your screen or your report, please contact support@ncsisafe.com

Q: Who can I contact if I have questions about my background screening report?

A: If you would like to check the status of your report, you can email support@ncsisafe.com. If you would like to dispute the contents of your report, please email compliance@ncsisafe.com.

Q: If a U.S. Citizen has lived internationally within the past 7 years what is the process and cost of a background check?

A: The short answer is \$30 for the domestic background check and \$25 for a Global Watch Screen .

The following individuals would not need to pay the additional \$25 for a Global Watch Screen.

Global Sanctions Lists:

- The search for individuals who have lived outside the U.S. for more than six consecutive months within the past seven years and and holds a valid US Visa.

Canadian Citizens:

- Canadian citizens, and those who have lived in Canada, that provide a Level 1, 2, or 3 Criminal Record Check conducted within one year of the screen may forgo a Homeland Security check. Documentation will be required.

U.S. Visa Holders:

- Individuals with a current U.S. Visa are exempt from the Homeland Security check requirement upon verification of visa status. Documentation will be required.

U.S. Military & Diplomatic Members:

- Individuals who, in the last seven years, lived abroad for more than six consecutive months are exempt from the Homeland Security Search if they resided in U.S. government housing. Documentation will be required.

Q: If I have paid for an a Global Watch Screen with in the past two years, will I have to pay for another a Global Watch Screen when I renew even though I have not lived internationally since my last background check 2 years go?

A: No, if you have not lived internationally since you processed your last background check you will not need to pay for the Global Watch Screen at the time you renew your background check.

Q: At what point in the process will my club and/or LSCs be notified if I failed a background check?

A: Your LSC's Registration Chair and the Club with which you are affiliated will be notified upon the earlier of: (a) the completion of the USA Swimming Board of Review Background Check Appeals process or (b) fifteen (15) days after the disqualification for membership notification is received by you and no appeal is filed. If your appeal is sustained and you are granted membership, neither the LSC nor the Club will be notified of the disqualifying information, unless

and to the extent membership is granted on a probationary or restricted basis.

Q: Why does USA Swimming have a Background Check Program?

A: USA Swimming was among the first National Governing Bodies to require criminal background checks for coaches when the program was implemented in 2006. Since this program was initiated, criminal background checks have become a standard practice in the youth sports industry requiring not only coaches, but officials and others who have frequent and direct interaction with young people to complete background checks.

USA Swimming's background check requirement is designed to deter individuals who should not be working with athletes from ever applying for membership. Additionally, it serves to identify any unsuitable criminal history of those individuals who do apply for membership. Like previously mandated USA Swimming safety and education requirements, the background check program is another layer of protection for athletes in our sport.

It is important to emphasize that the purpose of this background check is to determine an individual's eligibility for membership in USA Swimming based on the criteria stated in the program overview found at www.usaswimming.org/backgroundcheck. This check is not intended to serve as a pre-employment background screening program. The background check process is a criminal record search and is not a substitute for a club conducting appropriate pre-employment screening of applicants. It is a club's responsibility to screen potential employees. Clubs should carefully check references and prior employers, and consider requiring additional information such as driving records, before making a hiring decision.

For more information regarding USA Swimming's background check program, contact backgroundcheck@usaswimming.org.