



the Roman Catholic Diocese of Paterson, New Jersey

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DIOCESE OF PATERSON

CHILD and YOUTH PROTECTION PROGRAM PROCEDURE MANUAL

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WHAT IS REQUIRED?

Maintain Files

The Child Protection Coordinator at each location must have a separate Child Protection file for each Employee, Educator or Volunteer who has regular contact with children or minors. This applies at both the Parish and School level. Since these files contain personal and confidential information, each Coordinator must sign a Confidentiality Agreement. It is important the files are secure and that only specifically authorized persons as specified in the Confidentiality Agreement are given access to them on a need to know basis.

Each file must have the following REQUIRED documents:

- Signed Consent and Disclosure Form,
- Results of Internet Background Check and/or NJ State Fingerprint Clearance Letter,
- Signed Code of Conduct Acknowledgement, and
- A Certificate confirming completion of VIRTUS program, "Protecting God's Children".
- Keep 2 separate groups of files, Current and Inactive.

IMPORTANT: DO NOT DISCARD FILES OF FORMER STAFF.

THEY MAY BE NEEDED AT A FUTURE DATE.

For **Priests, Deacons and Seminarians**, the above documents are kept securely in the Chancery Office. Local parishes and schools are not required to keep a file for Priests, Deacons or Seminarians.

For the **School Educator and/or Employee**, an Internet background check may have been completed while waiting for the results of the Department of Education Fingerprint Clearance; however, it is both Diocesan Policy and State Law that they also have a fingerprint clearance letter issued by the NJ State Department of Education with the State seal and the current school's name and location listed.

Communicate Changes

The Coordinator is also required to regularly update the Diocesan Child Protection Office of any changes or updates to the files for each individual. This information is sent to the Diocesan Office using the PGC Change Word Form.

Review of Monthly Reports

Finally, the Coordinator needs to review the Monthly Reports sent by the Diocesan Office of Child and Youth Protection which confirm the status of each individual assigned to their location. If there are discrepancies, contact the Diocesan office and, if necessary, fill out the PGC change form.

SECTION A - INTERNET BACKGROUND CHECKS

Parish Employees, Parish Volunteers and School Volunteers

Why Internet Checks? What about Fingerprint checks?

Internet background checks are conducted to confirm that an individual does not have a criminal history. Until 2011, the Diocese of Paterson required all volunteers and employees who had regular contact with children and minors, to get fingerprint clearance, but that has changed. Our Internet Service Provider does a thorough research of individuals based on the criteria we have chosen. Fingerprint checks are required for Priests, Deacons and Seminarians, as well as Educators and all Employees of Schools. Parish Employees, Parish Volunteers and School Volunteers need the internet background check only.

The first step in the approval process, even before they begin working /volunteering, for Employees and Volunteers is the Internet criminal history background check. This must be run for School employees as a safeguard until fingerprint results have been returned.

What if the individual was previously fingerprinted/background checked?

For volunteers and parish employees only, we can accept copies of previous fingerprint clearance letters IF the clearance is dated less than 3 years ago. We also accept NJ State Licenses for Nursing, Social Workers and other medical professions. These licenses are typically issued for 2 years and must be current in order to accept them.

What is the Actual Internet Background Process?

Prior to an individual beginning their new role, we need to check the individual's background for any criminal history. **Do not send a person to training before you do a background check.** Getting an Internet check done is an easy process and often only takes minutes for results.

- 1.** Access the Diocesan Website: www.chancery.rcdop.org
- 2.** Click "log-in" in upper right hand corner. Next, click Child Protection in the ribbon across the top. When it opens, you will find Child Protection Documents, click to open and print out "Background Check - Consent Disclosure Form". Have the individual fill out both page 1 and 2 of the Consent form, being sure both pages are signed and dated. These pages are then retained by the Coordinator in the individual's folder. This allows for future re-checks.
- 3.** If the Coordinator is to input the information, follow the instructions as shown in the "Background Check User Guide -2012" found in the same section of the www.chancery.rcdop.org website.

4. It is acceptable to have the individual fill out the form online through the "invitation" process. Use the instructions as shown in "E-Invite Background Check User Guide-2012". **(Note: If you use this approach, please be sure to follow up with the Candidate to be sure they successfully complete the process in a timely manner, i.e., before they begin employment/volunteer service.)**

5. Next, the Coordinator will access the Internet provider's website:
<https://secure.sterlingdirect.com/Default.aspx>. (Save as a favorite).

6. Sign in with your User ID and password. If you do not remember your password, contact the Diocesan Child Protection Office. They will contact Sterling Info Systems to have your password reset. If you are a new coordinator, you must also contact the Diocesan Office (either Joan or Joanne), and they will instruct Sterling Info Systems to send you a "Welcome" email with User ID and password information plus instruction manuals for this system.

7. After you sign in, begin by entering the candidates SSN (Social Security Number), then click "go" and follow the prompts. Further instructions are in the Background Check User Guide-2012.

8. When results come in, be sure there is no Criminal Status noted. If it is clear, print out the "Details" copy and retain it in the individual's folder.

9. If there is a criminal history incident, you must contact Joan Valk immediately. The case will be reviewed by the Diocesan Counsel and when a decision is made, you will be notified. Under no circumstances is anyone permitted to interact, work or volunteer with children and/or minors until this situation is resolved.

10. Sterling Info Systems bills each location for each background check. Each location must pay the invoice amount directly to Sterling Info Systems.

SECTION B - FINGERPRINT CLEARANCE

Frequently Asked Questions

Who needs to be fingerprinted?

Priests, Seminarians, Deacons, School Educators (Full time, Part time and Substitute, includes principals) and other School Employees (e.g. Coaches, Counselors, Secretaries, Kitchen Workers, Maintenance, etc.)

Who keeps the fingerprint results for Priests Deacons and Seminarians?

These results are kept in the Chancery Office, along with the signed Code of Conduct and training certificate.

What about Parish Employees?

Parish employees only need an Internet Background Check.

What about School and Parish Volunteers?

It is no longer necessary to secure fingerprints for School and/or Parish Volunteers. However, these individuals must have an Internet Background check.

Who keeps the fingerprint results for school employees?

These results are kept by the Coordinator at the parish/school. You may have one location for both school and parish files or you may have school files at the school and parish files at the parish.

Why can't I just get a background check for a teacher, she's a substitute?

Not only is it a Diocesan requirement, but it is the law in the State of New Jersey that all Educators and Employees of Schools be fingerprinted, and that process must be done through the **NJ State Department of Education. (DOE)**

I have a new teacher who is waiting for their NJ DOE clearance letter. Is the teacher approved to work with children and/or minors?

No. However, the teacher will be **temporarily approved** if you run the Internet Background Check.

I have a volunteer who was fingerprinted in 2005, left in 2008 and returned to work with children, in 2012, more than three years later. Do I need to re-fingerprint or Internet Background check?

Yes. **Volunteers who return must be Internet Background Checked** if the fingerprints are more than three years old. They may not begin until clear results are received. The returning individual DOES NOT need to be re-trained in Virtus but, should sign a Code of Conduct.

Do I need a fingerprint letter with my school name if the teacher works and/or substitutes at various locations?

It is not possible to have more than one school on a Clearance Letter from the DOE. Just be sure to have a copy of a current Clearance Letter. However, we recommend for your protection, that you run an Internet Background Check.

SECTION C – FINGERPRINTS FOR SCHOOL EDUCATOR and/or EMPLOYEE

First Time/New Applicants

Applicant must have the IndentoGo Form # IDG_NJAPP_110113 and your School's Unique Identifier Code in Box #7.

You may share these instructions with the applicant.

1. The process begins when the applicant accesses the website for the NJ State Department of Education (DOE) Criminal History Review Unit—
www.nj.gov/education/educators/crimhist
2. Applicants click on "File Authorization and Make Electronic Payment for Criminal History Record Check ", This will give you direct access to the Criminal History Review ePayment Process and IndentaGo Fingerprinting Process: **On-Line Applicant Authorization and Certification (AA&C).**
3. On the next screen, select Option #1 ... "New Administration Fee Request (New Applicants Only).
4. On the next screen, **Applicant Authorization and Certification (AA&C) Initial Application Request**, choose Option #3 -All Job Positions, except School Bus Drivers and Bus Aides, for Non Public Schools". This is the option for our Parochial Schools.
5. **Applicant Information:** Complete the requested information (includes county/district/school code names which are segments of the School's Unique Identifier given to you by your school. Proceed to the Legal Certification. You must read and accept the terms of the AA&C by checking the box.
6. Please complete the required payment information. There is a \$10.00 admin fee and a \$1.00 convenience fee. You may use VISA, MasterCard, American Express or Discover credit cards.
7. You must click "Make Payment" only one time to complete the transaction.
8. You will be presented with 3 options, start with #1 and then choose #2 IndentoGo NJ Universal Fingerprint Form. Complete the form.
9. At this point you will be directed to a page allowing you to view and print your form. Print it out. **You must use this form only!** People with handwritten forms may be sent home without getting fingerprinted.

- 10.** After printing out the IndentoGo form, you must select the third option, **“Click here to schedule your fingerprinting appointment”**.
- 11.** The applicant must follow the instructions for fingerprint locations in order to complete the actual fingerprinting process. The applicant must keep the scheduled appointment as fees will be charged for cancellations not made in a timely manner.
- 12.** Next complete the requested information and pay \$66.50 electronically to IndentoGo.
- 13.** Results will be sent to the applicant’s home. A copy of the document must have a seal issued by the State Dept of Education, and include the School’s name and location. Your School will be notified of any future criminal activity. The applicant must bring the State of NJ letter of approval to you for your files.
- 14.** Be sure to send the approval date to the Diocesan Child Protection Office. You may use the PGC Change form, or send an email stating the information. Failure to do this will result in the employee being unapproved.

Requesting a Transfer or Archive Application

- 1.** The applicant will follow steps 1 and 2 as above.
- 2.** Select Option 2 ... “Archive Application Request (Applicants Previously Fingerprinted for the Dept of Education and Approved Subsequent to February, 2003”.
- 3.** Next, the applicant enters their Social Security number to determine Eligibility.
- 4.** If eligible, choose Option #3, All positions, except School Bus drivers and Bus Aides for Non Public schools.
- 5.** Complete the application and proceed to the Legal Certification. Be sure to accept the terms of the AA&C by checking the box.
- 6.** Complete the payment information. There is a \$34 fee and Visa, MasterCard, American Express and discover are accepted.

Duplicate Letter Request

1. Follow all of the steps above but, choose Option #3. After steps 1 and 2.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

If you have fingerprints from the DOE that are dated **BEFORE** February, 2003, you must go through the process again and get new ones. The process of archiving DOE fingerprints did not become effective until after February, 2003.

SECTION D - CODE OF CONDUCT

What is the Code of Conduct?

The ***Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*** was established by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in June, 2002. The Code of Conduct is a document that states the Clergy and other church personnel must follow standards of behavior and integrity.

All Diocesan Priests, Deacons, Seminarians, Employees, Educators and Volunteers at the Parish, School, Agency or Diocesan level are required to read and sign this document.

Securing a Signed Code of Conduct

- 1.** Access the Diocesan Website: www.chancery.rcdop.org
- 2.** Click "log-in" at the top right corner and then choose "Child Protection" in the ribbon across the top.
- 3.** There are listed several "Child Protection Documents", scroll down to open the document "Code of Conduct". It is available in both English and Spanish.
- 4.** Print out all pages. Individuals are given a complete copy of this document. They must sign the acknowledgment statement which is then kept in the individual's Child Protection Folder.

SECTION E -"VIRTUS" TRAINING CLASSES

What is the VIRTUS Class?

The VIRTUS training class is an instructional course entitled "Protecting God's Children" that teaches safety standards for the protection of children and young people. Furthermore, it instructs adults how to be aware of situations where children and young people may be in danger of a predator, or their safety is compromised. It also helps adults recognize signs that a minor has been abused. Finally, and equally as important, it instructs adults how to report abuse.

How to register for class:

1. **After receiving a cleared Internet background check**, the individual has 90 days to attend the VIRTUS training, "Protecting God's Children".
2. They must access the website: www.virtusonline.org and click on the word REGISTRATION in the left column of the page, and follow all the prompts.
3. An individual or Coordinator can see a list of classes at www.virtusonline.org or the Diocesan Website at www.rcdop.org .Click Diocesan Offices on the right side of the ribbon. In the drop down, choose Child Protection. Then on the left click Child Protection and then, Training: Child Abuse.... Finally scroll to the bottom of the page to "Click here to register for Child Protection Training".
4. After the individual has attended the class, they will be given a certificate that states they have successfully completed the training.
5. A copy of this document is to be retained in the individual's Child Protection file. The individual may keep their certificate.
6. If the individual has not attended the class within a 90 day period, they will **NOT BE APPROVED** to work with children. This information can be found for your location, on the Monthly Review Report.

NOTE: The Diocesan office receives sign in sheets for all attendees of the VIRTUS classes. They are then input into the database as having attended the class. We do not, however, keep the certificates of attendance, but we do record the date. If necessary, the Office of Child Protection can recreate certificate.

SECTION F - PGC CHANGE FORMS

It is the Coordinator's responsibility to see to it that every person who works, volunteers or interacts in any way with children and/or minors has a file with the following documents.

- Signed Consent and Disclosure Form,
- Results of Internet Background Check and/or NJ State Fingerprint Clearance,
- Signed Code of Conduct Acknowledgement Form
- Certificate stating completion of VIRTUS program, "Protecting God's Children".

When information needs to be changed or updated, the preferred way to communicate is through a PGC Change Form. You may also fax the information to 973-777-4928 (Attention: Joanne Mikolajczyk)

How do I fill out the Form?

1. Access the Diocesan website: www.chancery.rcdop.org. Then choose Child Protection in the ribbon. This will lead you to all Child Protection Documents.
2. Choose [PGC Info Change Word Form Feb 2011](#).
3. Fill out the top shaded line of PARISH / SCHOOL, LOCATION, DATE FORM COMPLETED.
4. On line 1, type in the person's last and first name respectively. The next two fields have drop down menus. Find the appropriate role and action requested and click on them.
5. Be sure to complete the effective date column. You may also include any other information you deem necessary in the NOTES field.
6. Do this for each person you need to report on. You may need several rows and/or pages. You may use several lines, if necessary for one individual.
7. When finished, be sure you **SAVE THE DOCUMENT** on your computer, then send it as an attachment to the Diocesan office as shown on the form, to PGC@patersondiocese.org. This is not a link, therefore, you must send as an email with an attachment or fax to 973-777-4928 (Attention: Joanne Mikolajczyk).

SECTION G - REVIEW OF MONTHLY REPORTS

Each month the Diocesan office prepares a Child and Youth Protection Report that is sent to all locations with the most current status of their staff.

How do I review the report?

1. Look at the **LOCATION TYPE**. In most cases, it should be either Parish or School. The individuals under location type PARISH need to be associated with Parish activities. Likewise, those under location type SCHOOL need to be associated with School activities.
2. Next review any names that might appear under the heading **APPROVED FOR 90 DAYS TO WORK WITH CHILDREN**. In the sample, the names listed were properly background checked, and are awaiting their scheduled VIRTUS training class. Confirm they have scheduled a training class.
3. Under the heading **APPROVED TO WORK WITH CHILDREN**, verify the names on the report with your own current listing for your location. Are the names correct? Are they spelled correctly? Did we miss someone? Are the dates correct? Are we missing any dates? Did someone leave and need to be deleted or replaced?
4. If you have the heading, **NOT APPROVED TO WORK WITH CHILDREN**, verify why these names are listed. Do they belong to your location? Have they gone for training and not had a background check? Have you done the background check and they have passed the 90 days without going for training? Have they left your location and this was not communicated?
5. If there are discrepancies and information needs to be communicated with the Diocesan Child Protection Office, the local Coordinator needs to follow the procedures for PGC Change Forms. We also accept changes made directly onto the report. Make the changes by printing clearly, and then fax the report back to 973-777-4928 (Attention: Joanne Mikolajczyk). You may also scan the report with changes and email to pgc@patersondiocese.org.

Additional information:

1. An individual who has returned to volunteer should be added as a new volunteer using the PGC Change Form. This will re-activate their status and they will appear on your next report.
2. When an individual is no longer volunteering/working with children, write in the last day worked in the "End Date" column, on the row with their name and fax the report back to 973-777-4928 (Attention: Joanne Mikolajczyk).
3. The Start Date column was in the past automatically populated by the Database. Currently, it is your choice to use it. You can write in the start date on the Monthly Report and fax it to 973-777-4928 or use the PGC Change Form

DIOCESE OF PATERSON CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

By virtue of my position at _____

(Please Print Name of Location)

I will have access to personal information concerning current and prospective employees and volunteers including consumer reports and criminal history background information.

I understand and agree to follow the following rules:

1. All documents related to criminal history background checks, including consumer reports, must be maintained in a confidential manner and stored in a locked cabinet.
2. Such information may be accessed and reviewed as needed only by the Youth Protection Coordinator, the Pastor/Administrator, Principal, or other institutional Head as the case may be, the Diocesan Office of Child and Youth Protection, the Diocesan Attorney, and in the case of schools, the Diocesan Catholic Schools Office. An individual may review their own criminal history reports and consumer reports relating shall be given copies of those documents upon request.
3. Access to information stored on a computer must be similarly limited and the Information protected from disclosure to unauthorized individuals.
4. The Diocesan Office of Child and Youth Protection and the Diocesan Attorney must be consulted before information may be disclosed to anyone other than those individuals identified in paragraph 2.

I will follow these rules and will maintain the confidentiality of all criminal history background check information, including consumer reports. This means not only the documents cannot be shown to unauthorized individuals, but that I may not disclose information contained in the documents to unauthorized individuals. This obligation applies to prospective employees and volunteers whether or not they actually become employees or volunteers, employees and volunteers during their terms of service, and former employees and volunteers.

Date: _____ Signature: _____

Phone: _____ Printed Name: _____:

Email: _____