



Policy: Safe Environments for Children

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**CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF
PITTSBURGH**

Policy: Safe Environments for Children

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PURPOSE

To take reasonable measures to assure that Church Personnel, as defined below, comply with all required certifications and background checks to permit the necessary assessment of suitability for contact with children with the purpose of providing a safe environment for children.

APPLICABILITY

All Church Personnel are required to obtain certain certifications and background checks as set forth below. Upon obtaining the results of any background check that contains reports of any convictions for any Disqualifying Offense, as listed on pages 8 and 9, that person is not eligible for hire or for retention.

The Diocese has determined that, minimally, this policy applies to those Church Personnel or their equivalent as named in **Appendix A**. In keeping with the purpose and spirit of this policy, and in light of the definitions provided below, a pastor or administrator may determine that the policy also applies to positions not listed in **Appendix A**. When in doubt, the pastor or administrator is urged to apply this policy to the fullest extent possible in the interest of protecting children.

DEFINITIONS

Church Personnel:

- All bishops and priests (active and retired), religious men and women on assignment in the Diocese, deacons and seminarians;
- All diocesan, school and parish employees. This would include any individual 14 years of age or older applying for or in a paid position as an employee responsible for the welfare of a child or having contact with children.
- All school volunteers; and
- All diocesan and parish volunteers who perform a service where they have direct access to children.

Child, Children or Minor:

- All persons under the age of eighteen.

Diocese:

- The Pittsburgh Catholic Diocese, including parishes, schools, and institutions that are directly accountable to the Diocese.

Safe Environment Coordinator:

- The person appointed by the pastor, principal or administrator to oversee compliance with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People and the Diocese's Safe Environments Policy.

POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Required Background Checks and Certifications

The following criminal background checks (“Background Checks”) must be completed by all Church Personnel prior to commencing service:

1. **Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Report**
2. **Pennsylvania Department of Human Services Report (Child Abuse)**
3. **FBI Criminal History Report (Fingerprinting)**

Exception to FBI Criminal History Report for Eligible Volunteers

A volunteer may be excused from the FBI Criminal History Report requirement if he or she has been a Pennsylvania resident continuously for the previous 10 years, has not been convicted of a “Disqualifying Offense” as listed on pages 8 and 9 and signs a Volunteer Disclosure Statement Application to this effect (see **Appendix B**). Volunteers who are current residents of Pennsylvania (but have not been residents for the entire 10 years prior) need only obtain an FBI Criminal History Report once at any time since establishing residency in Pennsylvania and, thereafter, must complete a Volunteer Disclosure Statement Application Form.

Exception to FBI Criminal History Report for Minor Employees

Employees ages 14-17 do not need an FBI clearance if:

- Minor has been a Pennsylvania resident continuously for the past 10 years, and
- Minor and his/her parent or legal guardian signs a Disclosure Statement Application for Minor Employees (see **Appendix C**) that the minor has not committed child abuse or been convicted of “Disqualifying Offense” as listed on pages 8 and 9.

Exception to Background Check Requirements for Adult Students

18+ year old high school students do not need to obtain Background Checks to be in contact with children during their school-related volunteer activities if:

- The student is currently enrolled as a student in the school;
- The student is not responsible for the child’s welfare (i.e. care/ supervision in lieu of a parent);
- The student is volunteering for an event occurring on school grounds;
- The event is sponsored by the school in which the student is enrolled; and
- The event is not for children who are in the care of a child-care service.

The diocesan policy requires that the following also be completed:

4. Database Application

A database application must be completed by all Church Personnel. Database applications can be obtained online through the diocesan website at www.diopitt.org under the Office for the Protection of Children and Young People.

5. Diocesan Code of Pastoral Conduct Acknowledgement

All Church Personnel are to receive, be oriented in, and electronically sign the "Acknowledgement of Receipt" page from the diocesan *Code of Pastoral Conduct*.

6. Reporting of Child Abuse and the Child Protective Services Law of Pennsylvania Acknowledgement

All Church Personnel are to receive, be oriented in, and electronically sign the "Acknowledgement of Receipt" page from the diocesan *Reporting of Child Abuse and the Child Protective Services Law of Pennsylvania* brochure.

7. Protecting God's Children (Virtus®) Training

All Church Personnel are to complete the Virtus® training program, *Protecting God's Children*, at either a diocesan-sponsored class or through the Virtus® online training course within 90 days of commencement of service. Information about live classes offered throughout the Diocese and online training can be accessed through the diocesan website at: www.diopitt.org and clicking on the Safe Environment link.

8. Online Mandated Reporter Training For Mandated Reporters

The following individuals designated under Pennsylvania law as mandated reporters must complete the online Mandated and Permissive Training Course offered by the University of Pittsburgh within 90 days of commencement of service:

All clergy, all school employees, all school volunteers and all other employees and volunteers who are responsible for the welfare of a child or have regular contact with children (including, at a minimum to those individuals or their equivalent as named in **Appendix D**).

Information about the online training can be accessed through the diocesan website at: www.diopitt.org and clicking on the Safe Environment link.

Catholic School Employees

In addition to the above mentioned Background Checks and certifications, employees of the Catholic Grade Schools and Catholic High Schools of the Diocese of Pittsburgh will be required to have Act 24 clearances and to follow the requirements of PA Act 168 and Act 126. Currently, the online Mandated Reporter Training Course offered by the University of Pittsburgh meets Act 126 requirements and could satisfy one five (5) year training cycle requirement. Please consult with the Office for Catholic Schools for the Diocese of Pittsburgh for further clarification and assistance by calling (412) 456-3090.

Responsibility for Assuring Compliance with Background Check and Certification Requirements

The General Secretary of the Diocese or the pastor/parish life collaborator/ deacon administrator/school principal/administrator, in his/her respective role, is responsible for ensuring compliance with these policies. To assist in discharging this responsibility, every diocesan parish, school and institution is to name a safe environment coordinator who will ensure that all Church Personnel have completed all required training and obtained necessary Background Checks and certifications. All records of compliance with these policies, including the signed "Acknowledgement of Receipt" from the Code of Pastoral Conduct and Mandated Reporter and Child Protective Services Law brochure, records of attendance at the Virtus® Protecting God's Children Training Course and the Mandated and Permissive Training Course, and Background Check reports, are to be provided to the safe environment coordinator. The safe environment coordinator is then responsible for tracking records of compliance in the diocesan-wide database established for this purpose.

- ***Annual Verification***

The pastor/parish life collaborator/deacon administrator/ school principal/administrator will be required annually to complete and sign a verification letter affirming that the parish, school or institution has implemented all aspects of the diocesan safe environment policy.

- ***Limited Database Access***

Write access to the diocesan-wide database developed for tracking compliance with this policy is restricted to the safe environment coordinator, school principal (or principal's delegate) and/or catechetical administrator. Write access to the database cannot be delegated to other staff both for reasons of confidentiality and for reasons of quality control of the data. Write access to the database is part of an administrative oversight responsibility and should be treated as such. Giving access to the database to anyone other than those specified in this policy is to be considered a grave matter that is subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Prospective Church Personnel

Prospective Church Personnel (paid or volunteer) must have all required Background Checks and certifications in place *prior to* being offered a position or commencing service in the Diocese except for Protecting God's Children training and Mandated and Permissive Training, which must be completed within ninety (90) days of commencement of employment or service.

All prospective and current Church Personnel are to be informed that functioning as Church Personnel is contingent on the results of any background investigation and successful adherence to these policies.

Certification Renewals

The Pennsylvania State Police Criminal History Report, the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services Certification, and the FBI Criminal History Report must be renewed every five (5) years. A Volunteer Disclosure Statement Application Form must be signed by applicable Church Personnel every five (5) years. Volunteers who are current residents of PA (but have not been residents for the entire 10 years prior) need only obtain an FBI report once at any time since establishing residency in PA and, thereafter, complete a Volunteer Request for Waiver Form every five (5) years.

Continuing Compliance Obligations

All Church Personnel must notify their employer or administrator in writing within 72 hours after an arrest or conviction for a Disqualifying Offense (as listed on pages 8 and 9) or notification of listing as a perpetrator of child abuse in the Pennsylvania statewide database.

The employer or administrator who is responsible for hiring or the approval of volunteers must demand that an employee or volunteer produce new Background Checks if the employer or administrator has a reasonable belief that the employee or volunteer has been arrested for or convicted of a crime that would require disqualification from employment or approval as a volunteer or that the employee or volunteer has been named as the subject of an indicated or founded report of child abuse.

Responsibility for Criminal Background Check Costs

All prospective paid Church Personnel (employees) are responsible for the cost of obtaining required Background Checks. Background Check renewal costs for paid Church Personnel shall be the responsibility of the parish or diocesan office. Schools may, as a part of its personnel policies, stipulate that employees are responsible for such renewal costs. The parish, school, or applicable diocesan office shall pay the cost for obtaining required Background Checks for all volunteers.

Transfer of Background Checks

For all Church Personnel other than volunteers: Background Checks may be transferred to another entity of the Diocese during the length of time such Background Checks are current. Background Checks from a non-diocesan entity cannot be transferred.

For all volunteers: Any volunteer who obtained their Background Checks within the previous 5 years (60 months) may transfer the Background Checks from non-diocesan entities.

Grounds for Denying Employment

- **Disqualifying Offenses**

Current and/or Prospective Church Personnel shall not be hired, approved for service as a volunteer, or continue employment or volunteer service where the criminal Background Checks disclose a conviction of a "Disqualifying Offense" as listed below:

- ◆ An offense under one or more of the following provisions of Title 18 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes or equivalent crime in another state, territory, commonwealth or foreign nation:
 - Chapter 25 (relating to criminal homicide).
 - Section 2702 (relating to aggravated assault).
 - Section 2709 (relating to stalking).
 - Section 2901 (relating to kidnapping).
 - Section 2902 (relating to unlawful restraint).
 - Section 3121 (relating to rape).
 - Section 3122.1 (relating to statutory sexual assault).
 - Section 3123 (relating to involuntary deviate sexual intercourse).
 - Section 3124.1 (relating to sexual assault).
 - Section 3125 (relating to aggravated indecent assault).
 - Section 3126 (relating to indecent assault).
 - Section 3127 (relating to indecent exposure).
 - Section 4302 (relating to incest).
 - Section 4303 (relating to concealing death of child).
 - Section 4304 (relating to endangering welfare of children).
 - Section 4305 (relating to dealing in infant children).
 - Section 5902(b) (relating to prostitution and related offenses).
 - Section 5903(c) or (d) (relating to obscene and other sexual materials and performances).
 - Section 6301 (relating to corruption of minors).
 - Section 6312 (relating to sexual abuse of children), or an equivalent crime under Federal law or the law of another state.
- ◆ An offense designated as a felony under the Act of April 14, 1972 (P.L. 233, No. 64) known as "The Controlled Substance, Drug Device and Cosmetic Act." committed within the past five (5) years.
- ◆ Being named in a statewide database as a perpetrator of a founded report of child abuse.

- **Procedure When Volunteer Approval is Questionable**

When there are any questions or concerns regarding whether or not the results of a criminal Background Check poses a threat to children, the procedures set forth in **Appendix E** will be followed. In light of the USCCB *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* as well as the accompanying Essential Norms, any question or concern regarding whether a conviction poses a threat to children will be resolved in favor of protecting children.

- ◆ When there are questions regarding whether or not a criminal conviction poses a threat to children, the individual concerned must not begin his/her ministry until the matter can be resolved.
- ◆ Under no circumstances should anyone on the staff of the parish provide legal counsel on any matter relating to the implementation of this policy. All questions should be referred to the diocesan Director of the Office for the Protection of Children and Youth.

- **Failure to Comply With Policy Grounds for Dismissal**

Failure to comply with these policies by Church Personnel shall be grounds for dismissal of any employee and shall preclude a volunteer from engaging in Church activity of any kind that involves possible contact with children.

Only the diocesan bishop can determine suitability to hold ecclesiastical office. Accordingly, if a person who holds ecclesiastical office fails to comply with these policies, the general secretary or his designee will handle the matter in accord with universal Church law and the policies of the Diocese.

Independent Contractors

Independent contractors, such as a janitorial service or food service company, who have direct access to children on parish, school or diocesan property or through parish, school or diocesan-related programs, are to verify that their employees have obtained all necessary Background Checks and are required to submit an *Affidavit of Compliance With Required State and Federal Criminal Background Checks* as set forth on **Appendix G**.

APPENDIX A
Background Checks by Ministry
(includes the equivalent of these positions)

1	Altar Server - Adult	33	Fund Raising Worker/Volunteer (e.g. bingo, festival, fish fry, etc.)
2	Athletic Coach/Volunteer - School/CYO	34	Housekeeper/Cook
3	Athletic Trainer	35	Janitor/Maintenance Worker
4	Bereavement Team Coordinator/Volunteer	36	Lector/Reader
5	Bus Driver	37	Liturgical Art and Environment Coordinator/Volunteer
6	Business Manager/Bookkeeper	38	Organist/Instrumentalist
7	Cafeteria Worker	39	Outreach Coordinator/Volunteer
8	Campus Minister	40	Parish Advocate - Persons with Disabilities
9	Cantor	41	Parish Advocate - Tribunal
10	Catechetical Administrator	42	Parish Employee
11	Catechist	43	Parish Finance Council Member
12	Catechist Aide	44	Parish Nurse
13	Catechumenate Director	45	Parish Safe Environment Coordinator
14	Catholic Committee on Scouting Leader/Volunteer	46	Parish Pastoral Council Member
15	Chaperone	47	Parish Social Minister
16	Child Care Giver (e.g. cry room, pre/after school program, babysitter, etc.)	48	Parish Wedding Coordinator
17	Choir Director - Vocal/Bell	49	Pastoral Associate/Minister
18	Choir Member - Vocal/Bell	50	Pastoral Health Care Minister
19	Coordinator of Evangelization	51	Playground Monitor
20	Coordinator of Liturgy	52	Preschool Employee
21	Deacon - Permanent/Transitional	53	Preschool Volunteer
22	Diocesan Bishop	54	Refugee Sponsorship Coordinator/Volunteer
23	Diocesan Priest Incardinated in the Diocese and On Assignment or Retired in the Diocese	55	Religious Men and Women On Assignment in the Diocese
24	Diocesan Priest Not Incardinated in the Diocese and On Assignment or In Residence in the Diocese	56	Respect Life Coordinator/Legislative Advocate
25	Diocesan Employee	57	Sacristan
26	Director of Music Ministry	58	Secretary - Parish/Religious Education/School/Youth Ministry
27	Elderly Outreach Coordinator/Volunteer	59	Seminarian
28	Elementary/Secondary School Board Member	60	Trainer - Youth Altar Server and/or Lector
29	Elementary/Secondary School Employee	61	Usher/Greeter/Minister of Hospitality
30	Elementary/Secondary School Volunteer	62	Youth Minister
31	Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion	63	Youth Ministry Volunteer
32	Family Life Minister/Volunteer		

APPENDIX B

Volunteer Disclosure Statement Application Form

DIOCESE OF PITTSBURGH DISCLOSURE STATEMENT APPLICATION FOR VOLUNTEERS

**Required by the Child Protective Service Law
23 Pa. C.S. Section 6344.2
(relating to volunteers having contact with children)**

I swear/affirm that I am seeking a volunteer position and **AM NOT** required to obtain a background check through the Federal Bureau of Investigation, as:

- the position I am applying for is unpaid; **and**
- I have been a resident of Pennsylvania during the entirety of the previous ten-year period.

I swear/affirm that I have **NEVER** been named as a perpetrator of a founded report of child abuse within the past five (5) years as defined by the Child Protective Services Law.

I swear/affirm that I have **NEVER** been convicted of any of the following crimes under Title 18 of the Pennsylvania consolidated statues or of offenses similar in nature to those crimes under the laws or former laws of the United States or one of its territories or possessions, another state, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico or a foreign nation, or under a former law of this Commonwealth:

- Chapter 25 (relating to criminal homicide)
- Section 2702 (relating to aggravated assault)
- Section 2709 (relating to stalking)
- Section 2901 (relating to kidnapping)
- Section 2902 (relating to unlawful restraint)
- Section 3121 (relating to rape)
- Section 3122.1 (relating to statutory sexual assault)
- Section 3123 (relating to involuntary deviate sexual intercourse)
- Section 3124.1 (relating to sexual assault)
- Section 3125 (relating to aggravated indecent assault)
- Section 3126 (relating to indecent assault)
- Section 3127 (relating to indecent exposure)
- Section 4302 (relating to incest)
- Section 4303 (relating to concealing death of child)
- Section 4304 (relating to endangering welfare of children)
- Section 4305 (relating to dealing in infant children)
- Section 5902(b) (relating to prostitution and related offenses)
- Section 5903(c) or (d) (relating to obscene and other sexual material and performances)
- Section 6301 (relating to corruption of minors)
- Section 6312 (relating to sexual abuse of children), or an equivalent crime under Federal law or the law of another state.

I have not been convicted of a felony offense under Act 64-1972 (relating to the controlled substance, drug device and cosmetic act) committed within the past five years.

I understand that I shall not be approved for service if I am named as a perpetrator of a founded report of child abuse or have been convicted of any of the crimes listed above or of offenses similar in nature to those crimes under the laws or former laws of the United States or one of its territories or possessions, another state, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico or a foreign nation, or under a former law of this Commonwealth.

I understand that if I am arrested for or convicted of an offense that would constitute grounds for denying participation in a program, activity or service under the Child Protective Services Law as listed above, or am named as perpetrator in a founded or indicated report, I must provide the administrator or designee with written notice no later than 72 hours after the arrest, conviction or notification that I have been listed as a perpetrator in the Statewide database.

I understand that if the person responsible for employment decisions or the administrator of a program, activity or service has a reasonable belief that I was arrested or convicted for an offense that would constitute grounds for denying employment or participation in a program, activity or service under the Child Protective Services Law, or was named as perpetrator in a founded or indicated report, or I have provided notice as required under this section, the person responsible for employment decisions or administrator of a program, activity or service shall immediately require me to submit current background checks obtained through the Department of Human Services, the Pennsylvania State Police, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The cost of background checks shall be borne by the employing entity or program, activity or service.

I understand that if I willfully fail to disclose information required above, I commit a misdemeanor of the third degree and shall be subject to discipline up to and including denial of a volunteer position.

I understand that the person responsible for employment decisions or the administrator of a program, activity or service is required to maintain a copy of my background checks.

I hereby swear/affirm that the information as set forth above is true and correct. I understand that false swearing is a misdemeanor pursuant to Section 4903 of the Crimes Code.

Printed Name _____ Signature _____

Witness Printed Name _____ Witness Signature _____

Date _____

APPENDIX C

Disclosure Statement Application for Minor Employees Form

DIOCESE OF PITTSBURGH DISCLOSURE STATEMENT APPLICATION FOR MINOR EMPLOYEES

Required by the Child Protective Service Law
23 Pa. C.S. Section 6344.2

(relating to minor employees having contact with children)

I swear/affirm that I am seeking a paid position and **AM NOT** required to obtain a certification through the Federal Bureau of Investigation, as:

- I am between 14 and 17 years of age; **and**
- I have been a resident of Pennsylvania during the entirety of the previous ten-year period or, if not a resident of Pennsylvania during the entirety of the previous ten-year period, have received a FBI Fingerprint Check at any time since establishing residency in Pennsylvania and have attached a copy of the certification to the employer.

I swear/affirm that I have **NEVER** been named as a perpetrator of a founded report of child abuse within the past five (5) years as defined by the Child Protective Services Law.

I swear/affirm that I have **NEVER** been convicted of any of the following crimes under Title 18 of the Pennsylvania consolidated statutes or of offenses similar in nature to those crimes under the laws or former laws of the United States or one of its territories or possessions, another state, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico or a foreign nation, or under a former law of this Commonwealth:

- Chapter 25 (relating to criminal homicide)
- Section 2702 (relating to aggravated assault)
- Section 2709 (relating to stalking)
- Section 2901 (relating to kidnapping)
- Section 2902 (relating to unlawful restraint)
- Section 3121 (relating to rape)
- Section 3122.1 (relating to statutory sexual assault)
- Section 3123 (relating to involuntary deviate sexual intercourse)
- Section 3124.1 (relating to sexual assault)
- Section 3125 (relating to aggravated indecent assault)
- Section 3126 (relating to indecent assault)
- Section 3127 (relating to indecent exposure)
- Section 4302 (relating to incest)
- Section 4303 (relating to concealing death of child)
- Section 4304 (relating to endangering welfare of children)
- Section 4305 (relating to dealing in infant children)

- Section 5902(b) (relating to prostitution and related offenses)
- Section 5903(c) or (d) (relating to obscene and other sexual material and performances)
- Section 6301 (relating to corruption of minors)
- Section 6312 (relating to sexual abuse of children), or an equivalent crime under Federal law or the law of another state.

I have not been convicted of a felony offense under Act 64-1972 (relating to the controlled substance, drug device and cosmetic act) committed within the past five years.

I understand that I shall not be approved for service if I am named as a perpetrator of a founded report of child abuse or have been convicted of any of the crimes listed above or of offenses similar in nature to those crimes under the laws or former laws of the United States or one of its territories or possessions, another state, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico or a foreign nation, or under a former law of this Commonwealth.

I understand that if I am arrested for or convicted of an offense that would constitute grounds for denying participation in a program, activity or service under the Child Protective Services Law as listed above, or am named as perpetrator in a founded or indicated report, I must provide the administrator or designee with written notice no later than 72 hours after the arrest, conviction or notification that I have been listed as a perpetrator in the Statewide database.

I understand that if the person responsible for employment decisions or the administrator of a program, activity or service has a reasonable belief that I was arrested or convicted for an offense that would constitute grounds for denying employment or participation in a program, activity or service under the Child Protective Services Law, or was named as perpetrator in a founded or indicated report, or I have provided notice as required under this section, the person responsible for employment decisions or administrator of a program, activity or service shall immediately require me to submit current background checks obtained through the Department of Human Services, the Pennsylvania State Police, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The cost of background checks shall be borne by the employing entity or program, activity or service.

I understand that if I willfully fail to disclose information required above, I commit a misdemeanor of the third degree and shall be subject to discipline up to and including denial of a volunteer position.

I understand that the person responsible for employment decisions or the administrator of a program, activity or service is required to maintain a copy of my background checks.

I hereby swear/affirm that the information as set forth above is true and correct. I understand that false swearing is a misdemeanor pursuant to Section 4903 of the Crimes Code.

Check one that applies:

- I have been a resident of Pennsylvania during the entirety of the previous ten-year period.
- I have NOT been a resident of Pennsylvania during the entirety of the previous ten-year period but I have received a FBI Fingerprint Check since establishing residency in Pennsylvania and have attached a copy of the certification.

Printed Name

Signature

Parent/Guardian Printed Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Witness Printed Name

Witness Signature

Date

APPENDIX D
Individuals Required to Obtain
Online Mandatory Reporter Training by Ministry
(includes the equivalent of these positions)

- Altar Server – Adult
- Athletic Coach/Volunteer
- Bus Driver
- Cafeteria Worker
- Catechetical Administrator
- Catechist
- Catechist Aide
- Catholic Committee on Scouting Leader/Volunteer
- Chaperone
- All Clergy and Religious
 - ◆ Deacon-Permanent/Transitional
 - ◆ Diocesan Bishops
 - ◆ Diocesan Priest Incardinated in the Diocese and on Assignment or Retired in the Diocese
 - ◆ Diocesan Priest not Incardinated in the Diocese, on Assignment or in Residence in the Diocese
 - ◆ Seminarians
 - ◆ Religious Men and Women on Assignment in the Diocese
- Childcare Giver (e.g. cry room, pre-/afterschool program, babysitter, etc.)
- Music Ministry Staff, Paid and Volunteer
- Parish Nurse
- Parish Safe Environment Coordinator
- Parish Social Minister
- Pastoral Associate/Minister
- Pastoral Healthcare Minister
- Playground Monitor
- Preschool Administrator/Aide
- Sacristan Trainer – Youth Altar Servers and/or Lectors
- School Employees
- School Volunteers
- Youth Ministry Volunteers

APPENDIX E

Process for Evaluating Records

- The Director of the diocesan office for the Protection of Children and Young People will review all records found and dates of occurrence as a result of Background Checks.
- If any information is incomplete or unclear, the Director will contact the firm that conducted the Background Check for clarification or rechecking of original sources.
- If the applicant's duties and extent of contact with children cannot be determined from reviewing the database application, the safe environment coordinator will be contacted.
- Any applicant whose background search reveals a conviction for any abuse of children (physical, sexual or mental) shall automatically receive a "rejected" status and be prohibited from employment or volunteering within the parishes or institutions that are part of or related to the Diocese of Pittsburgh.
- If the records found are of a more serious nature (i.e., driving under the influence, illegal use of a controlled substance, etc.) and the violation(s) are recent (within 5 years) or the individual has had more than one violation (regardless of time period), the matter will be presented to an Examination Board consisting of the Vicar for Canonical Services or his designee, a representative from the Legal Department, the Director of the Office for the Protection of Children and Young People, the Vicar for Clergy Personnel or his designee, a representative from the Secretariat for Evangelization and Catholic Education, the Secretary for Parish Life or his designee, and the Diocesan Assistance Coordinator. The Examination Board will determine whether the applicant should be given an "approved" "rejected" or "restricted" status. The pastor and safe environment coordinator will be notified of the board's decision. If the decision recommends/directs a "restricted" status, the employee or volunteer would have to agree in writing to the restriction and a copy shall be kept on file by the safe environment coordinator. (See **Appendix F** for the template for giving notice of a restriction.)
- If the records found are minor in nature (i.e., traffic violations) and unrelated to duties of the applicant, the applicant shall be given an "approved" status. In all instances, the safe environment coordinator should be informed of all records found and be responsible for informing the pastor.
- The pastor or program director may be more restrictive than the diocesan-assigned status (e.g., rejecting someone whom the diocese has restricted) but he/she cannot assign a status that is less restrictive than the diocesan-assigned status (e.g., restricting someone whom the diocese has rejected).
- In the event that a pastor or an applicant disagrees with the report of the records found or how the process for evaluating records was handled, he/she shall have the right to file a written appeal to the diocesan Office for Administrative Procedures within 30 days of being informed of the decision for resolution. The decision of the Office for Administrative Procedures is always final.

APPENDIX F
Letter Acknowledging Restriction in Ministry with Children

PARISH LETTERHEAD

Date

Mr. /Ms. _____
Address

Dear Name:

As you are aware from our previous discussion, a record was found in the background check completed as part of your application. The information found requires that your ministry in our parish as a _____ be restricted. This restriction does not prohibit you from all ministries in our parish; it only restricts you specifically from _____.

This decision has been made with careful thought and only after consultation with the Diocesan Office for the Protection of Children and Young People. Among the many responsibilities of my pastoral ministry is the safeguarding of children in our parish. I believe that I have no other option in this situation but to be extraordinarily cautious.

This restriction shall remain in force until further notice. You may be assured that this matter shall be kept in strict confidence by me. By your signature at the bottom of this letter you verify that you have been informed of this restriction and you agree to abide by it. Should you choose not to abide by the restriction, further ministry in the parish will be prohibited. I am grateful for your cooperation in this matter as we work for the benefit of all members of our parish family.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Name

I, _____ (Print Name) _____, acknowledge to have received a copy of this correspondence.

Signature

Date

- The background evaluations to be completed, paid for, filed with the authorities, written responses obtained from the authorities and the originals or copies of such written responses to be retained in our files concerning the subject employees before any employee and other authorized representative of my employer are permitted to come into contact with children and young people of the parish/school/pre-school, shall consist of the following:
 - ◆ Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Report
 - ◆ Pennsylvania Department of Human Services Report (Child Abuse)
 - ◆ FBI Criminal History Report (Fingerprinting)
- I acknowledge and agree to immediately notify the above named parish/school/pre-school if the criminal report discloses a criminal record and/or the child abuse report discloses that an employee is listed in a report of child abuse. I also acknowledge and agree that we will not send the subject employee to the parish/school/pre-school.
- I acknowledge and agree that if the parish/school/pre-school requests copies of the criminal report and child abuse report on any or all of our employees, that we will provide copies upon receipt of such request.
- I acknowledge and agree that all criminal report and child abuse report checks on our employees will be not more than five (5) years old, if the same pre-date this Affidavit.
- I acknowledge that my employer and I have been informed that this is an ongoing responsibility, and that any new or additional personnel or other authorized representatives of my employer shall be subject to the same above referenced background evaluations.
- I acknowledge that my employer and I have been informed that failure to comply with these requirements may lead to a termination of my employer's business relationship with the parish/school/pre-school.
- In order to induce the parish/school/pre-school to continue our business relationship, I warrant and represent to the parish/school/pre-school that we intend to undertake all actions necessary to achieve immediate compliance with the above requirements, and that the parish/school/pre-school may rely upon this Affidavit and the warranties and representations set forth herein.

I have read the above and it is true and correct.

Signature of Management Level Employee of Vendor or Independent Contractor

Print Name of Person Signing

Name of Vendor of Goods and/or Services or Independent Contractor

Address of Vendor or Independent Contractor

Telephone Number of Vendor or Independent Contractor

Brief Description of Goods and/or Services Furnished by Vendor or
Independent Contractor: _____

SWORN TO and subscribed before me

this _____ day of _____, 20_____.

_____ (SEAL) NOTARY PUBLIC

My Commission Expires: _____



CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF PITTSBURGH

111 Boulevard of the Allies

Pittsburgh, PA 15222

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