



# FOR THE SAKE OF GOD'S CHILDREN

## PART I – BACKGROUND CHECKS

DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON  
Revised 2005

## INTRODUCTION

### FOR THE SAKE OF GOD'S CHILDREN

The document *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* was approved by the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops (USCCB) in June of 2002. In July of that same year Bishop Saltarelli appointed three committees to develop the response of the Diocese of Wilmington. These committees were composed of lay men and women from throughout the Diocese in differing areas of competence. Additionally, priest representation and staff members were appointed. These forty men and women worked for seven months to produce a final recommendation to the Bishop in March of 2003. The committees determined that the recommendation to the Bishop was to create our own safe environment program and with the submission of "For the Sake of God's Children" the task was complete. The Bishop approved the program and called for its immediate implementation.

In May of 2003 the Diocese convened more than 15 meetings around the Diocese for parish leadership, priests, employees and deacons. Special sessions were conducted later that summer for seminarians.

By August of 2003 all priests, deacons, diocesan employees and all those who either as employee or volunteer worked on a regular recurring basis with young people were introduced to the program. Thus began the ongoing process of background screening, ethical standards of behavior/covenants and the educational processes aimed at maintaining a safe and secure environment for the children.

This manual presents the processes for use in parishes and their programs for completion of background checks, ethical standards or covenants and safe environment checklists for activities involving youth. Additionally the manual provides an outline for use in introducing the program, education formats and a series of resources for use at the local level.

The Diocesan website contains the full program at [www.cdow.org](http://www.cdow.org). Click on the logo. For additional information you may contact : Diocesan Human Resources Director at 302-573-3126.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	3
POLICIES.....	4
CATALOG OF VOLUNTEERS.....	5
PART I: CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS LOCAL AGENCY .....	6
PART II: CIMINAL BACKGROUNC CHECKS : STATE MANDATED .....	8
PROCEDURES .....	9
REVIEW PANEL.....	16
CONFIDENTIALITY .....	17
STANDARDS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT .....	17
FEE FOR BACKGROUND CHECK .....	18
ACCOUNTABILITY/COMPLIANCE .....	18
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS .....	25
BACKGROUNDSCREENING FORM.....	28
DEFINITIONS .....	32
COMMITTEE ON ARTICLE 13.....	33

### Website

The entire manual is provided on line for use by parish leadership. Please go to [www.cdow.org](http://www.cdow.org) and click on the *For the Sake of God's Children* logo.

## POLICIES

### DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS

- I. Criminal background checks are required for individuals currently employed or volunteering, being hired or beginning their ministry, referred to here as Church Personnel, in the Diocese if they are to have regular, recurring contact with minors or young people:
  - ❖ All paid parish and diocesan employees, priests, seminarians, deacons, religious brothers and women religious.
  - ❖ All volunteers (18 and over) whose ministry will require their close association with minors in diocesan or parish activities on a regular, recurring basis, and any volunteer who is to serve as a chaperone for activities involving minors on an overnight basis, if only a single activity.
- II. For those identified above, employment, ministerial placement or volunteer services are contingent upon favorable results of the Criminal Background Check.
- III. All criminal background check screenings will be conducted either by the States of Maryland or Delaware or by an investigating agency retained by the Catholic Diocese of Wilmington.
- IV. Volunteers under 18 will not be required to have a background check but will always be supervised by **a cleared** adult when working with minors.
- V. All Church Personnel will review the Diocesan Standards for Ethical and Behavioral Norms and sign an Acknowledgement of Receipt Form.

All Church Personnel will annually review the Diocesan Standards as part of the annual performance appraisal process. (Deacons, Seminarians, Employees)

Volunteers will annually review and sign the Volunteer Covenant.
- VI. Every five years, employees and volunteers will complete a background screening.

## **CATALOG OF VOLUNTEERS:**

### **THOSE REQUIRED TO HAVE A BACKGROUND CHECK**

**Church Personnel who are required either by law or by the Standards of the Diocese of Wilmington to have a background check prior to participating in ministry or activities where they are involved on a regular basis with youth and young people are identified in the catalog that follows. Those in Part I of the Catalog are those individuals whose background check will be conducted by the investigating agency engaged by the Diocese of Wilmington. Those in Part II of the Catalog are required by law to have the background check conducted by a law enforcement agency.**

Additions for those required to have a background check conducted by the investigating agency (Part I of the Catalog) may be made subject to the approval of a Pastor, School Administrator or Diocesan Director of Human Resources.

Any staff member in a parish, school or at the diocesan level wishing to place a volunteer or hire a new employee should be aware of the requirement for a criminal background check if the individual is to work with/minister to minors. Time for planning and scheduling of personnel is essential to the proper functioning of programs, so it is imperative that those charged with staffing responsibilities advise potential volunteers or employees of the process required as soon as possible.

**PART I: CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS WILL BE CONDUCTED BY AN INVESTIGATING AGENCY HIRED BY THE DIOCESE FOR THE FOLLOWING:**

**Section A: All priests and deacons living/ministering in or incardinated with the Diocese**

**Section B: Religious Education Programs**

Directors of Religious Education  
Coordinators of Religious Education  
PREP Catechists  
Classroom Aides  
Session Principals  
Sacramental Preparation Team Members  
RCIA adapted for Children Team Members  
Hall Monitors  
Special Events Teams (Seasonal Programming)  
Vacation Bible School Teams

**Section C: Schools**

Cafeteria Workers  
Regular Volunteers  
Coaches/sponsors of extra curricular activities  
Persons who provide services from other organizations in our schools (Reading Assist, speech therapists etc.) unless their own organization provides details of a criminal background check certifying the person's suitability for work with children.

### Section D: Catholic Youth Ministry

Persons hired or appointed by parishes as:

- Director of Youth Ministry
- Coordinator of Youth Ministry
- Youth Minister
- Primary Youth Ministry Contact

Youth Ministry Council/Team

Confirmation Team

All Chaperones

Anyone driving youth to/from an event

All Regular Volunteers

All Head Coaches

All Assistant Coaches

Athletic Association Presidents

All CYM Board and Committee Members

Sports Coordinators

Scouting

### Section E: Parish Ministries

Music or Liturgy Director **who have regular contact with children.**

Secretary, Bookkeeper, Business Manager **who have regular contact with children.**

Grounds /Maintenance Personnel

Any volunteer **who ministers to or works with minors in the following areas.**

Liturgical ministers who train servers.

Sacristans

Liturgical ministers who train children's choirs

Adults who train youth lectors.

All nursery volunteers 18 and over. Those under 18 will not be required to have a background check but should not attend to children without cleared adult supervision.

### Section F: Diocesan Staff

All paid employees.

**PART II: IN ACCORD WITH THE LAW, CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS  
WILL BE CONDUCTED BY THE STATE OF MARYLAND OR  
DELAWARE FOR THE FOLLOWING:**

**SCHOOL PERSONNEL**

Principals  
Assistant Principals  
Teachers  
Office Staff

Guidance Counselors  
School Nurses

Before/After School Workers

Maintenance/Janitorial

Paid lunch supervisors (if lunch is not supervised by teachers or other paid staff with appropriate clearance.)  
Classroom assistants and aides (if not supervised by teachers or other paid staff with appropriate clearance.)

**CATHOLIC CHARITIES PERSONNEL**

Counselors on staff with Catholic Charities working with families and children.

Residential Care Facility Workers

After school or child care programs sponsored by Catholic Charities  
Teachers  
Teacher's Assistants  
Teacher's Aides

Any volunteer working with Catholic Charities who will have regular contact with children.

## PROCEDURES

### PROCEDURAL INFORMATION FOR BACKGROUND CHECKS CONDUCTED BY THE INVESTIGATING AGENCY (Applies to those in PART I of the Catalog)

#### SCREENING FORM

The screening form for a background check to be conducted by the investigating agency will have two parts:

Part 1: Background Check: this part is used by the investigating agency in the actual check of a person's criminal history.

Part 2: DMV Information: this is used by parishes and schools to ensure that only safe drivers are transporting our young people. This part of the form will be returned to the local parish by the agency.

#### AT THE PARISH, SCHOOL OR DIOCESAN LEVEL WHAT MUST OCCUR?

1. The **screening form for criminal background checks** is given to any **current and prospective parish and diocesan employees and volunteers** who will have regular recurring contact with minors or young people. This form must be completed in its entirety and returned to the investigating agency.
2. Before engaging in ministry all **new employees and volunteers** who have regular contact with minors must also complete and submit the Screening Form for a criminal background check.
3. **Applicants for the seminary and diaconate** are screened as part of their admissions interview.
4. **Priests, Deacons and Religious assigned to ministry in the Diocese will have a criminal background check.**

## **COMPLETING THE SCREENING FORM FOR AGENCY INVESTIGATION**

In the parishes, all employees, volunteers and priests may obtain the form from the person responsible for the ministry in which the individual will be engaged, from the pastor or his designee, or may download it from the Diocesan Website.

At the Diocesan level forms are available through Human Resources or can be downloaded from the Diocesan Website at [www.cdow.org](http://www.cdow.org).

## **REPORTS OF CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS BY INVESTIGATING AGENCY**

Because of the confidential nature of information which could be obtained through a criminal background check, these will be conducted with great care and sensitivity and in keeping with the confidentiality policies of the Catholic Diocese of Wilmington and State and Federal laws.

The results of the Criminal Background Check will be forwarded in confidence to the Director of Human Resources and a copy sent to the individual by the Investigating Agency. The Director of Human Resources and a review team will review the form based on the following criteria:

If there is no arrest, conviction, probation or deferred adjudication, finding, or a domestic violence protective order, the individual is eligible for placement and the appropriate supervisory personnel at the parish, school or Diocese will be notified.

If there has been an arrest, conviction, probation or deferred adjudication, findings, or a domestic violence protective order, the following factors will be considered in determining whether to place the individual with such a criminal record:

- a. type, frequency and severity of the offense
- b. maturity of the individual at the time of the offense
- c. nature of the work and qualifications required (i.e. is the offense an impediment to the ministry in which this person will work?)
- d. date of the offense

Where any one of the above criteria is present, the individual will have the opportunity to address the issue with the Director of Human Resources

and the review team so that a determination of fitness for ministry participation can be made based on the information obtained.

If non-acceptance is based on the criminal background check and the individual feels that an error has been made by the investigating agency, the individual shall be given the name and address of the investigating agency reporting the criminal history of such applicant, such that he or she may have the opportunity to contest the information with that agency.

### **DISQUALIFYING OFFENSES FOR ALL CHURCH PERSONNEL**

No person may serve with minors who has ever been convicted of any disqualifying offense, been on probation or received deferred adjudication, findings or a domestic violence protective order or has presently pending any criminal charges of any disqualifying offense before a determination of guilt is made, including any person who is presently under deferred adjudication.

#### **Disqualifying offenses are as follows:**

- A. A felony or misdemeanor classified as an offense against the person or family.

**Examples:**

Offenses against the person include, but are not limited to, murder, assault, battery, sexual assault, injury to a child and abandoning or endangering a child.

Offenses against the family include, but are not limited to, bigamy, incest, interference with child custody, enticing a child, and harboring a runaway child.

- B. A felony or misdemeanor classified as an offense against public order.

**Examples:**

Offenses against public order include but are not limited to, prostitution, obscenity, sexual performance by a child, possession or promotion of child pornography.

- C. A felony or misdemeanor violation of any law intended to control the possession or distribution of any substance included as a controlled substance in the State of Maryland or State of Delaware.

**NOTE:** While a serious offense, driving while intoxicated may not be a disqualifying offense for volunteering but does disqualify someone from

driving any church vehicle or any other vehicle on church sponsored activities or events.

A Credit Check is NOT a part of the screening process.

**PROCEDURAL INFORMATION FOR BACKGROUND CHECKS REQUIRED BY LAW**

\*\*\*\*\***(Applies to those in PART II of the Catalog)**\*\*\*\*\*

**All principals, assistant principals, teachers, nurses, guidance counselors, librarians, before and after school workers and staff (office, classroom assistants/ aides, maintenance) and paid lunch supervisors if not supervised by a cleared adult will have a criminal background check as required by law in either the state of Delaware or Maryland .**

**Child care workers, residential facility employees and those engaged in counseling are required by the states of Delaware and Maryland to have a background check by the state in which they are employed.**

**PROCEDURAL INFORMATION FOR OBTAINING A CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK IN THE STATE OF MARYLAND**

For Maryland residents or those employed in the State of Maryland:

Criminal background History Checks can be obtained at any police station which does finger printing and has Form #CJIS 011. Call your local police station and inquire about the nearest station which performs this service.

Check with your diocesan/parish/school before you apply for this investigation. You will need to provide an **AUTHORIZATION NUMBER** on form CJIS 011. The School or Parish should have this number. If it does not, check with the Human Resources Office at 302-573-3126 to obtain it.

When filling out Form CJIS 011, check the boxes indicating that you wish to have a State and FBI check done for Child Care purposes.

Be sure to indicate the correct place to have this form mailed.

**PROCEDURAL INFORMATION FOR RECEIVING A CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK IN THE STATE OF DELAWARE Applies to Part II of the Catalog.**

Schedule of times and locations for fingerprint processing.

1. NEW CASTLE COUNTY (By Appointment Only)

Delaware State Police  
Troop #2

100 Lagrange Ave. Newark, DE 19702  
Tuesday and Thursday (excluding Holidays) 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Please call 1-800-464-4357 to schedule an appointment.

2. KENT COUNTY

Delaware State Police  
State Bureau of Identification  
(Headquarters Complex)  
Route 13  
Dover, Delaware

Monday (Every other) 9:00 AM – 7:00 PM  
Monday thru Thursday 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM  
Excluding Holidays

Please call 1-800-464-4357 to schedule an appointment.

3. SUSSEX COUNTY

Delaware State Police (By appointment only)  
Troop #4  
Route 113  
Georgetown Delaware

Wednesday (Every other) 12:00 PM – 6:30 PM  
Excluding Holidays.

Please call 1-800-464-4357 to schedule an appointment.

## **REPORTS OF CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS RECEIVED FROM LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES**

Because of the confidential nature of information which could be obtained through a criminal background check, these will be conducted with great care and sensitivity and in keeping with the confidentiality policies of the Catholic Diocese of Wilmington and State and Federal laws.

The results of the Criminal Background Check are mailed by the law enforcement agency to the Director of Human Resources and the original is sent to the individual. The Director of Human Resources and a review team will review the form based on the following criteria:

If there is no arrest, conviction, probation or deferred adjudication, finding, or a domestic violence protective order, the individual is eligible for placement and the appropriate supervisory personnel at the parish, school or Diocese will be notified.

If there has been an arrest, conviction, probation or deferred adjudication, findings, or a domestic violence protective order, the following factors will be considered in determining whether to place the individual with such a criminal record:

- e. type, frequency and severity of the offense
- f. maturity of the individual at the time of the offense
- g. nature of the work and qualifications required (i.e. is the offense an impediment to the ministry in which this person will work?)
- h. date of the offense

Where any one of the above criteria is present, the individual will have the opportunity to address the issue with the Director of Human Resources and the review team so that a determination of fitness for ministry participation can be made based on the information obtained.

If non-acceptance is based on the criminal background check and the individual feels that an error has been made by the law enforcement agency, individual address this matter with the law enforcement agency that conducted the check.

## Review Panel

The Diocese has appointed a Review Panel composed of attorney members of the Diocesan Review board and a diocesan attorney, all of whom are familiar with the Safe Environments Program. The specific responsibility of this panel is to review any criminal background investigative report presented to them by the Human Resources Director and determine the eligibility of the person for service in the Diocese.

All information is brought to the Panel without identifying data so that the individual's identity is protected.

If the individual is determined to be ineligible for service, the Director of Human Resources conveys this in writing to the individual and to that person's pastor.

Once the individual receives the determination of the Panel he or she may petition for a review. The individual may present information in written form or may choose to meet with representatives of the Panel. The results of the review are final and the individual is again notified in writing.

Should the review of a determination alter the status of the individual the Human Resources Director advises the Pastor of that change in writing.

The findings of the Review Panel are retained in a permanent file.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

**Application/screening information** shall be treated as confidential. If any inaccurate information is provided by the applicant, or if information is not included which should have been, the individual will be considered to have falsified his/her application/screening form and thus ineligible for service. The individual receives a letter from the Director of Human Resources and is invited to review the inaccurate or missing information. The additional information gained from this discussion by the Human Resources Director is reported to the Review Panel who determine eligibility for service. The individual is then notified by mail of the decision of the Review Panel.

The **individual reports** resulting from a background check will be kept in restricted data files in the Diocesan Human Resources Office: -- one with an alpha listing of those whose applications/screening form provided information which prevents the individual from participating in the ministry and a second file in alpha order of all those who have been approved for consideration for ministerial participation.

**All criminal background checks conducted by the State of Maryland or Delaware for school personnel will be kept in restricted files in the Diocesan Catholic Schools Office.**

**Criminal background checks conducted for all departments of the Diocese and will be retained in the individual's employee or volunteer file.**

## STANDARDS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT

All Church Personnel will review and sign the Standards acknowledgement of receipt upon receiving and reviewing the Standards. This will occur prior to service and will be conducted by the supervisor of the individual.

Volunteers will sign the covenant on an annual basis. This will occur prior to service and will be conducted by the supervisor of the volunteer.

Only those individuals with a cleared status and who have completed this form may engage in ministry in the Diocese.

## FEE FOR BACKGROUND CHECK

The fee for screening done by the agency identified by the Diocese will be \$30.00 and should accompany the screening form when it is sent to the investigating agency.

**Or**

In the event the parish will be paying for the background check, the individual should deliver the completed screening form in a sealed envelope to the parish office. The individual should sign the envelope across the seal. The parish should then forward the amount necessary to the investigating agency with the sealed envelopes.

## ACCOUNTABILITY/COMPLIANCE

1. The individual volunteer or employee assumes responsibility to complete a criminal background check prior to being cleared for ministry in parish or diocesan service.
2. A listing of all cleared individuals within a given area of ministry or activity who are eligible for service in parish or diocesan ministry will be maintained at the parish /diocesan level.

The term **“cleared” means** that the results of the criminal background check make them eligible to be placed in service in a diocesan/parish ministry.

## COMPLIANCE PROCESS

### Basic Principles/Guidelines

1. The implementation of the program will reflect what is right and reasonable.
2. Consistent application of the program will be the norm: e.g. background checks, standards/covenants etc.
3. Implementation will rest at the local level with the Pastor, Principal, Director of Religious Education, Youth Ministry Coordinator and Athletic Association President.
4. The role of the Diocesan Offices is to support and assist with local implementation.

### Parish / Local Gatekeepers

1. Parishes should identify one person who will be responsible for compliance, for being sure that the records are in order and that the program is being monitored by the individuals with ministry responsibility. (Principal etc.)
2. Principals, Directors of Religious Education, and Youth Ministers are responsible for knowing the status of implementation within their programs. This means that they are to have accurate records on the status of the background checks, the standards or covenants and any educational processes which have been undertaken within their area of responsibility for the program.
3. Athletic Association Presidents are responsible for the status of implementation with coaches and volunteers working with the programs so that the required documents are completed and filed and any education required has been completed.

### Diocesan Responsibilities

Offices working with schools, religious education programs, youth ministry and athletic associations will integrate a compliance review into their existing processes:

Religious Education Office	DRE Yearly Orientation
	Accreditation
Catholic Schools Office	Tracking Process
Catholic Youth Ministry	Standards
Athletic Programs	Only those cleared for service may coach.

Annually, required orientation for all NEW: principals, directors of religious education, coordinators or directors of youth ministry, pastors, newly ordained and athletic association presidents. This would include education on “For the Sake of God’s Children” process and content, as well as an understanding of their responsibilities for the program, and information on how to educate those new to the ministry in the parish community. This session is conducted by the Diocesan Staffs responsible for these areas of ministry and coordinated by the Director of Human Resources.

The Diocese has established a Diocesan Compliance Oversight Committee with responsibility to monitor the level of compliance within the Diocese and to review the program/policies as required. This committee reviews and recommends any changes or revisions to policy, recommending such to the Vicar General for Administration who in turn, will discuss the recommendations with the Bishop and Review Board.

## **BACKGROUND CHECKS**

The tracking of the status of individual background checks is done locally, meaning at the parish/school level. The appropriate gatekeeper should know who is to have a background check in accord with the guidelines set by the Diocese and should track if the background checks have been applied for, completed, and / or need renewal. (Five years or older)

The Schools Office retains copies of all background checks for teachers/principals and is looking at a new employee report which will facilitate monitoring of the compliance level.

Currently the Schools Office provides an annual report to parishes on the status of compliance within the schools.

Religious Education has a turnover rate of approximately 1/3 annually. The cleared for service records are maintained locally. The catechists file now has an indicator on the front cover which stipulates whether the individual is cleared for service in the Diocese. Annually the Human Resources Office conducts an audit of the rosters for all religious education programs.

## **Standards**

Annually the person responsible at the local level should see that the standards are reviewed with all paid employees. These forms are only signed at the time of hire and are thereafter maintained in the personnel file.

Volunteer covenants are to be completed annually and filed for every cleared volunteer. These are to be kept at the local level with the information maintained on volunteers.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **ROLE OF THE INVESTIGATING AGENCY**

1. Receive Screening Forms from the individuals or parishes for criminal background check.
2. Conduct background check for each employee or volunteer.
3. Notify HR Director and individual of results of background check.
4. Be available to those whose background check results in need for further information on the individual.
5. Provide a database to the HR Director of those cleared for service by the Charter Identification # assigned to each parish/school or institution.
6. Maintain the process/procedures established with the Human Resources Office.

### **ROLE OF HUMAN RESOURCES**

1. Work with investigating agency to implement the approved process.
2. Provide forms to diocesan offices or programs and to parishes for use with individuals needing to complete a screening form for service as part of educational materials.
3. Receive information about those whose background check needs to be reviewed by the Review Panel . Meet with the Review Panel to discuss possible issues relative to whether an individual will be cleared for service and report their determination to the individual. Report the determination of disqualification to the Moderator of the Curia and the Pastor of the parish indicated by the individual and the individual. The report only indicates that sufficient grounds exist to disqualify the individual from service. Should the individual petition for a hearing with the Review Panel, the Director of Human Resources sets this meeting up and is in attendance with one or two members of the panel. The results of this review are noted on the file including the final determination. Any change in qualification is reported to the individual and the pastor.
4. Maintain files and databases of those cleared for service and those not cleared. Provide parishes and Diocesan offices responsible for the related ministries the list of those cleared for service on a monthly basis.
5. Maintain a historical record of the causes for disqualification to provide a consistent basis of action on the part of the Review Panel.
6. Conduct an audit of the databases on a periodic basis.

7. Catalog all background checks and as a five year cycle occurs notify the parish of the individual(s) who will need to renew their background check for continued service.
8. Monitor returned background checks for those which have expired and update database indicated renewal.

### **ROLE OF THE INDIVIDUAL**

1. Obtain and complete the screening form.
2. Submit the form with the appropriate check.
3. Review the results of the criminal background check for accuracy.
4. Check with parish contact to be sure they have received cleared for service notice and at that time complete Volunteer Covenant or Standards Acknowledgement Form.
5. Update individual information relative to any incident which may jeopardize one's ability to continue in service in the Diocese; any arrest, change of name, address or phone number, car/insurance information.
6. Receive, review and fully understand the applicable Diocesan Standards. Submit signed Acknowledgement of Receipt Form or for volunteers the Volunteer Covenant.
7. Review and act in accord with all Diocesan policies applicable to area of ministry.
8. Every five years background checks will be renewed by the individual who wishes to continue in service in the Diocese.

## **ROLE OF PARISH/SCHOOL/DIOCESAN CONTACT**

1. Provide screening forms to those needing background checks.
2. Maintain a list of cleared individuals in each area of service.
3. Accept for service only those who have been cleared for service.
4. Advise those completing the form of the financial responsibility.
5. Follow procedures for submission of screening form. Provide parish charter number to individuals filling in a form.
6. Provide information about time/location of service, for those who are required by law to have their background check conducted by a law enforcement agency.
7. Insure that the Standards Acknowledgement Form has been received, reviewed and is signed filed for each person.
8. Insure that individuals are aware of applicable Diocesan policies in the area of ministry in which they are engaged.
9. Identify an individual who will serve as local compliance person for the program and whose responsibility it is to process criminal background checks and monitor compliance with the Diocesan Program.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **What is “For the Sake of God’s Children”?**

For the Sake of God’s Children is the comprehensive plan developed by the diocese in response to the Charter adopted by the bishops at their semi-annual meeting, held in Dallas, Texas in June 2002. Among the aspects of the program are:

- a process of assessing suitability for ministry through criminal background checks
- Ethical and Behavioral Standards for all Church Personnel
- Guidelines for establishing a safe environment in the parish communities and institutions of the diocese
- Educational information for local training.

### **Who is affected by the program?**

Parishes and other institutions will be responsible for the execution of many aspects of the Program. Diocesan offices will assist the parishes in the process and parishes will be held accountable for the timely implementation of the Program at the local level. Parishes will be held accountable for the timely execution of various aspects of the program. When the process is fully in place, all professional Church Personnel and all non-compensated personnel who have regular contact with children and youth will be required to participate in the training and have the appropriate background checks completed before beginning their ministry.

### **How is the program implemented?**

Each parish/school should annually conduct an orientation, training program for all employees/volunteers within the respective areas of ministry. During this session those engaged in ministry will review the program, receive training relative to Safe Environments and if necessary complete the forms for background checks, volunteer covenant or /and Ethical Standards. Diocesan Offices with responsibility for ministry oversight are available to assist parishes and other programs with this process.

### **What if we do not have a professional staff for a specific parish ministry?**

You may designate someone from your various ministries to become the person accountable for overseeing the implementation of the Charter in your parish.

**Why are we doing this?**

In the wake of the scandals that were brought to light in the last few years, the bishops of the United States examined all of their policies and procedures relating to the protection of children and youth particularly with regard to sexual abuse. They determined that these new times demanded a much stronger and more comprehensive approach throughout the Church to ensure the protection of children and youth.

**What about criminal background checks?**

All diocesan personnel and parish personnel who have contact with youth will be required to have a criminal background check as a requirement for employment. Volunteers who interact on a regular or ongoing basis with children or youth will be required to have a criminal background check prior to being eligible for service.

**How do I explain this to our volunteers?**

We are taking these steps to do all that we can reasonably do to make sure our environments are safe and our children and youth as well as the adults engaged in activities at the parish or diocesan level are protected.

**What if someone does not have a background check done?**

Only cleared adults will be eligible to service in a leadership role with young people.

**How long does it take to have a check done?**

If the person has lived in Delaware or Maryland for the last seven years, the background check can be completed in less than two weeks. If the person has lived in several states over the last several years, the process may take a little longer. It is up to the parish or institution to provide training and complete the local process.

**What if I have had a background check at work or for another diocese?**

If the background check has been completed within the last six months and you can provide the report from the agency who conducted the investigation it will be accepted as a substitute for the Diocesan process. You will still be required to complete the parish/institution's requirements for placement. However, it is important to note that only criminal background checks are acceptable, not security clearances. If another Diocese has provided you with a certificate which indicates you have complied with the requirements of the charter, that will be accepted provided the Diocese providing the certificate is in compliance with the Charter.

**Will the background check have to be repeated every year?**

No. However, every five years individuals will be asked to renew the process. The Behavioral Standards for Church Personnel require all individuals report any changes that may prevent their continued work with youth or young people.

**What are the Ethical Standards?**

The Standards for Church Personnel are clear and concise statements that set for behaviors which are appropriate and acceptable in our ministerial environments. The Standards are specific and clear, are expected to be part of ongoing supervision with employees and will be a part of annual evaluation for employees. The Volunteer Covenant is a set of behavioral Standards which detail expectations of our volunteers as they engage in ministerial activities in our communities. These are renewed annually.

**Aren't our environments already safe?**

We are confident the programs held at our parishes and schools provide adequate supervision and an environment in which no child or young person is intentionally harmed. This new document, however, provides guidelines, requirements and a framework for insuring environments that meet or exceed policies in place in the Diocese of Wilmington.

**When did the provisions of the Charter go into effect?**

September 1, of 2003 was the date that the background check policy was implemented in all parish and institutions of the diocese. The provisions of the Charter went into effect at that time. Training for parish leadership and subsequent training on the local level began in May 2003. New personnel will be required to have a background check as part of their initial screen for employment or participation in a parish or school program

Parishes and institutions began implementing other aspects of the plan during this same timeframe. Each year the diocese will monitor the implementation of the various parts of the program to develop a report which is required by the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops.



# BACKGROUND SCREENING FORM

## Diocese of Wilmington

CHARTER \_\_\_\_\_

**INSTRUCTIONS:** This form contains four sections, all of which must be fully completed. Please type or print legibly in ink. Section I is the basis for your background check that will be conducted by Hyden and Associates, Inc., an investigative agency under contract to the Diocese. You must complete the entire form. Indicate "none" or "DNA"(does not apply) where applicable. You and the Diocese will receive a copy of the results of this investigation upon completion. This form, along with payment, should be **mailed to Hyden and Associates, Inc., PO Box 268, Georgetown, DE 19947 with the \$30 fee.**

**RELEASE:** By signing this form, I understand an investigation will be conducted of all information contained in Section I of this form. I also understand that the results of the investigation will be considered, along with all other information submitted on this form, in making a decision concerning my suitability as an employee or volunteer for the Diocese of Wilmington. The information contained in this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I further understand that inaccurate or untruthful responses to the questions contained in this form may be the basis for refusal to employ or allow volunteer participation. I understand that all criminal background checks will be treated as confidential. I understand and authorize the access to any and all information and records relating to my criminal history or criminal offense committed or alleged arrest, alleged criminal acts and criminal offenses committed. I understand if a disqualifying offense is found in a criminal background check, I will be given the opportunity to verify information and correct errors. I intend this to be a legally binding release, which I have read and understand. I understand that I may consult with an attorney before signing this document.

Signature (black ink) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Section I: Background**

1. Name : Last	First	MI	2. Maiden / other name
3. BIRTHDATE (mm/dd/yyyy):	4. SEX: (Circle One) MALE      FEMALE	5. SSN:	
6. MAILING ADDRESS (Street / City / State / Zip):			
7. E-MAIL ADDRESS (username@domain.com):		8. Phone / Cell number:	
9. CURRENT EMPLOYER / City / State:			
10. EMPLOYMENT PHONE NUMBER: (      )			
11. NAME OF SPOUSE(S)		12. DATE OF MARRIAGE(S)	

13. LIST CITY, COUNTY, AND STATE OF RESIDENCE FOR PAST 7 (Seven) YEARS.  
PLEASE BEGIN WITH THE MOST RECENT.

CITY	COUNTY	STATE	DATES

14. HAVE YOU EVER BEEN ARRESTED FOR OR CONVICTED OF A MISDEMEANOR OR FELONY OFFENSE? Circle **Yes** or **No**

15. HAVE YOU BEEN CONVICTED OF DRIVING WHILE UNDER INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL/ DRUGS, DRIVING WHILE IMPAIRED?  
Please Circle **Yes** or **No**

If you answered yes to either of the above questions (14, 15), provide the details below

COUNTY/STATE OF ARREST	CHARGE	DISPOSITION / YEAR

16. NAME

Charter ID # \_\_\_\_\_

Last	First	Middle
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**Section II: Parish**

17. Indicate parish in which you are registered	18. Indicate parish or school in which you wish to volunteer
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19. List all other churches you have attended or been involved with during the past 7 years.

Church & Address	Involvement	From – To
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20. Have you ever been dismissed or suspended from any activity, program, project or event providing services to youth? (Including sports, scouts etc...) Please Circle YES or NO If yes, please explain.

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**Section III: Additional Information**

21. Activity for which you wish to volunteer. Check as many as are applicable.

<input type="checkbox"/> School	<input type="checkbox"/> Parish Youth Ministry (includes athletics/scouting)	<input type="checkbox"/> Parish Religious Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify):
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NOTE: If your volunteer activities involve driving young people, the following information is required. All coaches and youth Ministry volunteers are required to complete this section.

**Section IV: Motor Vehicle Information**

22 NAME (as it appears on your Driver's License) :  Please check if name does not match name given on line # 1

Last	First	Middle	Suffix
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23. Address on License:

24. Driver's License #	25. State Issued:	26. Date of expiration:
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27. Has your driver's license ever been suspended? NO YES

28. Has your driver's license ever been revoked? NO YES

If yes, please explain:
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**VEHICLE THAT WILL BE USED**

29. Name / Address of Owner:
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30. Model/ Year of Vehicle:	31. License Plate / Expiration date #
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If more than one vehicle is to be used, this information must be provided for each vehicle.

**INSURANCE INFORMATION The insurance coverage is limited to the coverage of vehicles listed above.**

32 Insurance Company
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33. Policy #	34. Date of Expiration:
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35 Signature:
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Please review this form to assure that all parts have been completed. Incomplete forms will be returned and may delay the start of your ministry in the diocese.

Forward with \$30.00 check payable to Hyden and Associates Inc. to:

Hyden & Associates, Inc., PO Box 268, Georgetown, DE 19947

## DEFINITIONS

**Church Personnel:** any priest, deacon, religious brother or sister, employee or regular volunteer working in or on behalf of the Diocese or Parish/School.

**Children:** all persons under the age of eighteen.

**Volunteer:** any uncompensated person engaged in or involved in a Diocesan , Parish or School activity on a regular, recurring basis (and any volunteer who will be with minors on an overnight basis, even though it may be a single activity) and who may be entrusted with the care and supervision of minors.

**Cleared:** the results of the criminal background check do not preclude the individual from being considered eligible to be placed in service in a diocesan or parish ministry.

## COMMITTEE ON ARTICLE 13

### CHARTER FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Suzanne M. Donovan SC, Co-Chair  
Director Human Resources

Mr. Doug Salter, Co-Chair  
VP Corporate Security MBNA

Br. Jim Malone CFX  
Superintendent of Catholic Schools

Dr. Jack Neill  
Former School Administrator  
Retired

Mr. Ed Gordon  
Secretary  
Catholic Education Office

Ms. Bern L. Zaruba  
Parent / Catechist

Mr. Joseph McNesby  
Coordinator of Athletic Program  
Catholic Youth Ministry

Mr. Michael Connelly  
Conmac Security

Mr. Patrick Donovan, Director  
Catholic Youth Ministry

Ms Donna Wakeman  
Youth Minister Holy Family

Mr. Kevin McCormick  
Artisan Bank

Sergeant Gerry Donovan  
New Castle County Police

Sr. Sally Russell, SSJ  
Assistant Director  
Office of Religious Education

Mr. Robert Stewart Esq.  
Dilworth Paxson LLP