

## **Essential Component Number Two— Background Checks Required Prior to Day-One of Employment or Volunteering**

Dioceses/eparchies are to evaluate the background of all incardinated and non-incardinated priests and deacons who are engaged in ecclesiastical ministry in the diocese/eparchy and of all diocesan/eparchial and parish/school or other paid personnel and volunteers whose duties include ongoing, unsupervised contact with minors. Specifically, they are to utilize the resources of law enforcement and other community agencies. In addition, they are to employ adequate screening and evaluative techniques in deciding the fitness of candidates for ordination (cf. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Program of Priestly Formation* [Fifth Edition], 2006, no. 39).

*Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*  
Article 13

### **Why Do We Do Background Checks?**

The Diocese of New Ulm and its parishes/schools have an obligation to create a safe environment for the children who are entrusted into our care. One vital component of this safe environment is background checks. Background checks are done to ensure that all adults who have regular or unsupervised interaction with minors under our care do not have a history of criminal offense(s) that may make them a danger to the children. Background checks are also done on all employees, both adult and those under 18, to search for evidence of a criminal history that may adversely affect their work for the diocese/parish/school. Background checks are to be completed and clearance received prior to Day-One of the individual's service regardless if it is employment service or volunteer service.

### **Background Check Policies and Procedures**

The Background Check Policy is found in the Diocese of New Ulm Policy Manual, Administration 13.3, on the Diocese of New Ulm Web site, and in the "Policies, Codes, and Forms" section of this manual. The Background Check Policy states which categories of persons at the diocesan/parish/school level require a background check.

The procedures and instructions for implementing the Background Check Policy are found in this section of this manual. The key instruction for background checks is in the determination of which check or checks need to be completed on an individual and when it is necessary to repeat the required check(s).

#### **In summary,**

New Employees and new volunteers are to complete the appropriate background checks related to the position each holds. Visiting clerics and religious involved in service at the diocesan/AFC/parish/school level who will be involved in service in the diocese are also required to have appropriate clearance through the Bishop's Office as defined in this section of the manual. Faith topic presenters for the diocese are required to have appropriate approval as defined by Bishop—background check approval when presenting at an event where children or youth are the main audience. Background checks are processed by the diocese and all cleared or completed checks are documented in the VIRTUS database. Visiting

cleric and religious clearance as well as outside speaker clearance is not documented in VIRTUS. Letters of good standing or suitability and applicable speaker background checks are kept on file.

The local entity is not required to retain any documentation regarding the employee and volunteer background checks but may run a VIRTUS background check site report if proof of completed background checks is required by an accrediting agency or for site verification. The local entity is notified when clearance or a complete background check report is received.

The background check release forms that are to be used as a part of this process are found in the “Policy, Codes, and Forms” section of this manual as well as on the Diocese of New Ulm Web site.

Applicable policies and forms—found in the “Policy, Codes, and Forms” section of this manual:

1. Diocese of New Ulm Administration Policy 13.3
2. Fair Credit Report Rights Information
3. Background Check Consent Forms
  - a. Investigative Consumer Report, Consumer Report Disclosure, and Consent Form  
(National Background Check: Company Currently Used: Integrated Screen Partners)
  - b. Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Comprehension (BCA—Minnesota Background Check including Juvenile Records)
4. Other Forms
  - a. Clerics: Notification and Approval Form for Visiting Clerics: Verification of Receipt of Acceptable Letter of Good Standing
  - b. Minnesota Education Licensing Teacher Disciplinary Review Statement—Licensed Teachers
  - c. Speakers: Notification and Approval Form for Faith Speakers