



Background Evaluation Procedure

NOTE: This procedure is for parish and school safe environment coordinators (SECs) to use with applicants for employment and volunteer positions. The diocesan Safe Environment Coordinator will complete background checks on all priests, deacons, seminarians, deacon candidates, chancery employees and special cases. The Catholic Schools Office (CSO) will complete all background checks on head principals and substitute teachers.

1. All diocesan employees (persons on the diocesan payroll), regardless of their level of contact with children, are to have background checks and safe environment training completed before they begin their responsibilities. Note: Some steps in the procedure will vary for adult employees and for employees under 18 years of age.
2. If an applicant for employment worked for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend previously, the diocese **may** accept the background check that was conducted earlier and is on file. The background check on file will be accepted only if it is the correct background check package for the new job position and the background check results are dated within one year of the date of application for the new position. For example, an applicant for a school position must have a School Employee Background Check Package on file and it must be dated less than one year from the current date. *The local SEC must contact the diocesan Safe Environment Coordinator to confirm acceptance of a previously completed background check. At that time, the diocesan SEC will run a free search at the Indiana Courts and Clerks Access Site and share the results with the local SEC.*
3. All volunteers, who will have regular contact with children and young people, are to have background checks and safe environment training completed before they begin their responsibilities. Note: Some steps in the procedure will vary for adult volunteers and for volunteers under 18 years of age.

4. Criminal Background Check: For all applicants, the parish/school SEC will order the criminal background check using one of the methods listed below.

Age of applicant:	For:	Procedure:	Method:
Under 18 years	Parish or non-school employees; parish volunteers; school volunteers	Local SEC runs NSOPW search and prints results	<i>Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Public Website</i> (www.nsopw.gov) no permission is required to run this search and it is free of charge. Make sure you complete a national search at this website. Print results.
18 years or older	Parish or non-school employees; parish volunteers; school volunteers	Local SEC orders Barada Basic Package using one of the three methods; send request to customerservice@baradainc.com . Make sure you order the correct package and give the correct parish or school name to Barada.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask Barada to send an email to the applicant with a link to the background check package that is required. Applicant completes process online. 2. Ask applicant to complete paper forms and then send the forms to Barada with ordering information 3. Use paper forms and Barada website to "Create Profile"
18 years or older	School employees	Local SEC orders Barada School Employee Package	Same as above.
Under 18 years of age	School employees	Local SEC orders Barada School Employee Package if the employee will work directly with children Local SEC runs <i>Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Public Website</i> (www.nsopw.gov) if the employee will not work directly with children	When running the Barada School Employee Package on an applicant under 18 years of age, the paper forms must be used to ensure parental consent.

5. Application: Every applicant completes an application. All applications found at:
<http://www.diocesefwsb.org/Criminal-Background-Checks>

Note: The Catholic Schools Office will provide school administrator, teacher, and substitute teacher applications to those individuals. Check with that office to ensure the applicant has completed the appropriate application.

For:	Application to complete:
Employee (age 18 and over)	<i>Employee Application (4 pages) Ministerial or Non-Ministerial</i>
Employee (Under 18 years)	<i>Employee Application (4 pages) Ministerial or Non-Ministerial Commitment to the Code of Conduct and Authorization (2 pages)</i>
Volunteer (age 18 and over)	<i>Volunteer Application (2 pages)</i>
Volunteer (Under 18 years)	<i>Commitment to the Code of Conduct and Authorization (2 pages)</i>

When the applicant returns the completed application, it should be forwarded to the responsible person(s) at the parish/school for review. The parish/school SEC will make a copy of the applicant's photo ID and retain for the safe environment file.

6. Reference Checks and Work Verification:

For **employee** positions only – The responsible person at the parish/school must contact all references listed on the application and note responses in the file. This may be the pastor, business manager, or other designated person. References for employment must include the most recent employer.

For **volunteer** applications only – References checks are not required for volunteers. If the applicant supplies information to answer question #1 on the volunteer application that she/he has worked in another diocesan office, parish, or school, the parish/school SEC must contact that diocesan entity and inquire about the applicant's service.

7. Completion of the Background Check and Approval:

The parish/school SEC will receive an email message from the background check agency which contains the results of an applicant's background check. The results are attached in PDF format. The parish/school SEC will save all results in electronic form in a secure location. They may also be saved in written format if desired. The local SEC must review the results to ensure that all parts of the background check package are completed.

The diocesan SEC will send the local SEC an email message when any applicant has a flagged background check. The local SEC will follow the instructions in the message and reply to the diocesan SEC with the applicant's position and if the pastor or principal approved or did not approve the applicant for service.

8. Documentation in Diocesan Database:

The parish/school SEC will update the diocesan Safe Environment Program database at the Catholic Mutual Website (<https://fortwaynesouthbend.cmgconnect.org/>). This database contains information on adults who have completed safe environment requirements for the diocese. (See the last pages of this procedure for instructions on the SEP database.)

9. Addition to Payroll: For new employees, the local SEC will complete the **New Employee Verification Form** and send to the diocesan Business Office, so the new employee may be added to payroll. Do not sign or send the form until the background check is approved and training is complete.

10. Rescreening: Rescreen an employee/volunteer at any time for cause. When an adult has begun the CMG Connect safe environment training program, rescreen after four years the employee or volunteer according to diocesan policy. Rescreening requires rerunning the criminal background check as directed in the chart:

For:	Rescreening package needed:
parish employees →	Basic package
school employees →	School employee package
volunteers →	Basic package

For a young person (under the age of 18 years), rescreen and retrain them every four years. When a young person turns 18 years and if that person is actively volunteering, have the newly legal adult complete a Barada background check and begin safe environment training at the CMG learning platform.

11. Maintain all paper and electronic files for 20 years after the person terminates service.

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For new school employees (& some parish ones)

An expanded criminal history search and an expanded child protection index are required for all school employees hired after July 1, 2016. Both requirements are included in the School Employee Background Check Package (*Barada Associates, Inc.*) NOTE: If an employee on the parish payroll will spend at least 40% of his/her time working in a school, the parish should also complete the expanded criminal background check and expanded child protection index on that employee.

1. Indiana state law requires this expanded criminal history search and expanded child protection index for all school employees. This includes employees under the age of 18 years.
2. A principal may request permission from the Superintendent to allow a prospective employee to begin work if:
 - Application is completed
 - Reference checks and work verification completed by hiring supervisor
 - all criminal searches are completed on the School Employee Package,
 - no convictions are found on any of the searches,
 - the applicant has submitted all information and permission to request the Dept. of Child Services search,
 - and all safe environment training is completed.

The request must be made in writing to the Superintendent by the principal. A written response must be received.

3. The school SEC will input all information into the diocesan Safe Environment Program database for all persons regardless of age.

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STUDENT TEACHERS, STUDENTS completing a PRACTICUM (FIELD STUDY), & NURSING STUDENTS IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

To fulfill the safe environment requirements of our diocesan program, **student teachers and students completing a practicum (field study) will complete the following:**

- 1) A BASIC criminal background check
 - a. The employee or volunteer application, references, and expanded searches are not required.
- 2) Safe environment training at the Catholic Mutual Website.

To fulfill the safe environment requirements of our diocesan program **nursing students will complete the following:**

- 1) A BASIC criminal background check
 - a. The employee or volunteer application, references, and expanded searches are not required.
- 2) No safe environment training is required for nursing students.
- 3) The employee or volunteer application, references, and expanded searches check are not required since the individual will be under continual supervision of the mentor.

All documents should be kept on file at the school with the other confidential safe environment files.

If a student teacher/student completing a practicum or nursing student comes with written verification that his/her university has performed a background check already, the diocesan SEC will contact the university to learn the details. If it meets diocesan standards, the diocesan SEC may accept the college's background check results and waive the Barada background check requirement for that student.

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SCHOOL CONTRACTORS AND VENDORS

It is the responsibility of each school to determine when contractors/vendors and their employees are required to obtain criminal background records. Diocesan School Policy 3720 identifies the type of outside service contracted employees who are required to have **expanded searches** because of their **direct and ongoing contact** with children.

*Note: Contractors, such as counselors or therapists, who are employed at another school corporation and providing services to children in one of our diocesan schools may provide a **Testimonial of Suitability** (diocesan form provided) for this purpose to verify that the person has successfully completed an appropriate background check performed by that school corporation. If the person did not undergo an appropriate background check conducted by his/her school corporation employer, then one would need to be conducted by the school at which the person is performing services.*

For other contractors who do not fall into the category who may use the Testimonial, diocesan schools must use the Barada background check with the “school employee package” option to meet the policy requirements. If the employees of an outside contractor/vendor will be on school property on a regular basis, but will not have **direct and ongoing contact** with children, the school may first ask the company to provide verification that it has obtained its own criminal history on each employee and that no employee has arrests or convictions which would pose a safety risk to minors. If the company does not conduct its own background checks, then the school should ask for a list of names of the employees who will be regularly on the school grounds. Each school should conduct a search at the **National Sex Offender Public Website** on each name. If the school wishes, it may also choose to conduct a Basic Criminal Package from Barada Associates on the person. The second search is NOT required by the diocese. If any employee of a contractor or vendor has a conviction of a sexual nature, the principal should inform the contractor that the employee may not be present on the school property at any time.

Safe Environment Program Training Procedure for Adults

1. All priests, deacons, candidates for ordination, employees, and those volunteers who will have regular contact with children or young people in their volunteer responsibilities must complete the safe environment training program.
2. Adults (age 18 and over) must begin their safe environment training by completing the INITIAL Priest, Employee or Volunteer Training Module at the Catholic Mutual Group website (<https://fortwaynesouthbend.cmgconnect.org/>). The local SEC will provide new applicants with information as to how to access the site, register themselves, and begin training. There is a Safe Environment Flyer for this purpose. Additional training modules will be assigned to adults per the diocesan curriculum. The diocesan SEC will assist all priests, deacons, seminarians, candidates for the diaconate, chancery employees and any special cases in completing their safe environment training.
3. Young person employees and volunteers (under the age of 18 years) must complete the *Commitment to the Code of Conduct and Authorization*. Parents of the young person must sign this form. This two-page form replaces all previous requirements for young person employees/volunteers.
4. Training must be completed before the employee/volunteer begins his/her responsibilities.



DIOCESE OF
FORT WAYNE-SOUTH BEND
SAFE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM

The SAFE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM DATABASE at Catholic Mutual Group Website
(<https://fortwaynesouthbend.cmgconnect.org/>)

For use by Safe Environment Coordinators for maintaining information on adults' background checks and safe environment training

Each SEC logs in with a user name and password at:
<https://fortwaynesouthbend.cmgconnect.org/>

User names are assigned by the diocesan SEC.

Each safe environment coordinator is known as a site administrator on the CMG website. Your site is the parish, school or diocesan office for which you serve as an SEC. At the CMG site, you can access and input data for your employees, educators, and volunteers. You may see all data for all adults in the diocese.

Each new adult will create a user account for himself or herself at CMG Connect Website. The adult is to assign his account to your site, choose his USCCB role, and choose how she participates in the diocese. If all these steps are completed correctly, you will see the data for the adult and the correct training modules will be assigned to this adult. You can edit these choices if they are made incorrectly. The adult "user" can also "Edit Profile" if she makes incorrect choices.

Once the adult is located at the correct site and the assigned training curriculum is completed, it will appear in the box labeled "CMG Connect Training Activity." You can see which training modules are completed, how much of each one is completed and the date of completion.

After you receive the completed background check results from Barada Associates, Inc., you must enter information in the box labeled, "Background Check Status". For each adult, you will enter the date the background check is completed, the type of background check, and the provider (Barada). You can also add 'Notes' that are important, such as a conviction found, driving restrictions, or some other important item. You can upload a copy of the PDF results of the background check also. Only the site administrator at the adult's primary site will see the PDF results. You will also enter background check status for Young Adult Employees or Young Adult Volunteers with the following data: type: Under 18; Provider: National Sex Offender Registry; or type: School employee; provider: Barada Associates

Historical information about background checks and previous safe environment training is also noted on the adult's data. Look in the box labeled, "Imported Trainings", to see data on previous training and the box labeled, "Background Check Status" to see previous background checks.

For Young Adult Volunteers or Employees, you will enter their safe environment training in the box labeled: CMG Connect Training Activity. Choose the icon to edit the training. In the curriculum field, choose the last item, "Code of Conduct for Youth Working with Younger Children."

Finally, after the applicant has returned all items that you requested, e.g. the application, a copy of ID, has completed the assigned training curriculum, and you have entered the completed background check information, you should certify the adult. Use the box labeled, "Certification Status". Enter the date that you are certifying the person (this is usually when the background check is completed, the status as either Approved, Approved, (No Driving), YES, or Yes (No Driving) and any notes that may be important. For any applicant that are not approved, certify with the status: No.

Consult the SEC site administrator's guide prepared by CMG for additional information as to how to maintain the data at the CMG Connect site. The guide is found on the Resources tab at the CMG website and on the diocesan website at: <http://www.diocesefwsb.org/Parish/School-Coordinators-Resources-And-Forms>