

## Diocese of Fort Wayne – South Bend ---Safe Environment Program

### Background Evaluation Procedure

**NOTE: This procedure is for parish and school background screeners to use on applicants for employment and volunteer positions. The diocesan SEC completes background checks on all priests, deacons, seminarians, and chancery employees. The CSO completes all initial background checks on applicants for teaching and administrative positions as well as all substitutes. Student teachers and student observers are explained in a separate document. Local schools complete all rescreening for all school employees.**

Many forms and educational materials are in Spanish on the SE website.

<http://www.diocesefwsb.org/safe-environment/safe-environment-education/spanish-resources/>

1. All employees, regardless of their level of contact with children, are to have background evaluations and safe environment education completed before they begin their responsibilities.
2. All volunteers, who will have regular contact with children and young people as part of their volunteer duties, are to have background evaluations and safe environment education completed before they begin their responsibilities. Note: Some steps in the procedure will vary for adult volunteers and for those volunteers of age 14-17.
3. Employee or volunteer completes appropriate form(s). Forms are available at the diocesan website under the Safe Environment Department.

<http://www.diocesefwsb.org/safe-environment/forms-and-background-checks/>

Employees (age 18 and older)	Complete <i>Application for Employment</i> (4 pages) and <i>Authorization and Release for Background Check Information</i> (1 page)
Employees (age 14-17)	Complete <i>Young Person Employee Authorization</i> (1 page)
Volunteers (age 18 and older)	Complete <i>Volunteer Application</i> (2 pages)
Volunteers (age 14-17)	Complete <i>Young Person Volunteer Authorization</i> (1 page)

4. Review application for signature and completion.
5. Check a photo ID if the person is not known.

6. For employees and volunteers age 18 or over, conduct two searches:
  - a. **Indiana Limited Criminal History Search** ([www.in.gov](http://www.in.gov))
    - i. Permission is required to complete this search (use *Authorization and Release Form*)
    - ii. No fee is charge when using an ISP number
    - iii. Maintain copies of search results in employee's or volunteer's SE file.
  - b. **Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Public Website** ([www.nsopw.gov](http://www.nsopw.gov))
    - i. No permission is required to run this search.
    - ii. Search is free.
    - iii. Make sure you complete a national search at this website.
    - iv. Run a check on every last name that the person provides, e.g. married and maiden names.
    - v. Maintain copies of search results in employee's or volunteer's SE file.
  
7. For those age 14-17, conduct search at:
  - a. **Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Public Website** ([www.nsopw.gov](http://www.nsopw.gov)) → no permission is required to run this search. Search is free. Make sure you complete a national search at this website.
  - b. Maintain copies of search results in employee's or volunteer's SE file.
  
8. In addition to the two searches listed in #6 (above), employees and volunteers, age 18 or over that have not resided in Indiana for the last 10years, must complete a permission form for a national search provided by *Lexis Nexis, Inc.* The specific permission form for this national search is on the Safe Environment website. The two signed **Disclosure** forms are mailed to the diocesan SEC at the address on the instruction sheet. Results are mailed back to the parish. A fee is charged for this search.
9. If a person age 18 or over cannot provide a social security number for the *Lexis Nexis, Inc.* national search, we will accept the results of the other two searches. This is permissible only if the person does not have a SSN to offer, not when the person refuses to give his/her SSN.
10. Check all references listed on application form.
11. Complete *Employee/Volunteer Applicant Checklist* and file with all other documents. Maintain all files for 20 years after the person terminates service.
12. Recheck an employee/volunteer at any time for cause and complete another checklist.
13. RESCREENING -- After five years the two website searches completed in step #6 must be updated. A new permission form is used for the ILCH recheck. The form is available on the diocesan SE website (*Authorization for Recheck...*) Documentation of the search results is kept. If the person moved out of state or the country, the national background search must also be repeated.



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### Education (Training) Procedure for Adults

1. All priests, deacons, employees, and volunteers (who will have regular contact with children or young people in their volunteer responsibilities) must participate in the safe environment education program. **This includes young person employees and volunteers.**
2. The employee/volunteer must read the *Personal Conduct and Policies Manual for Employees/Volunteers* and sign a receipt for it. The signed receipt must be kept in the employee's or volunteer's SE file. Manuals are available on the diocesan website.  
<http://www.diocesefwsb.org/safe-environment/safe-environment-education/>
3. The last page of the manual is the signage page for verification of receipt.
4. The employee/volunteer must watch the diocesan video, *Safe Environment Training* (created 2/21/2004). Documentation of viewing date must be kept by the parish. A person must only watch the video one time. The video is also available on line.  
<http://www.diocesefwsb.org/safe-environment/safe-environment-education/>
5. A form is also online to verify watching the video.
6. All education must be completed before the employee/volunteer begins his/her responsibilities.